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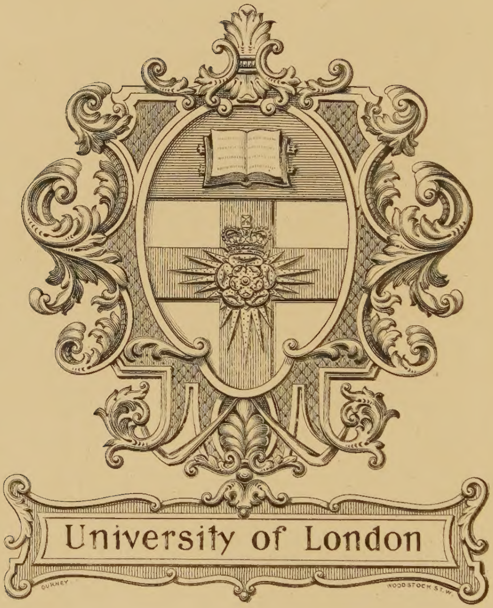

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# HANSARD'S
# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

## THIRD SERIES:

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

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50° VICTORIÆ, 1887.

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VOL. CCCXII.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM

THE ELEVENTH DAY OF MARCH 1887

TO

THE THIRTIETH DAY OF MARCH 1887.

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**THIRD VOLUME OF THE SESSION.**

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SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—THE VOTE ON ACCOUNT—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .... .. .. .. .. 378

## *ORDER OF THE DAY.*

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE)—RULE 1 (CLOSURE OF DEBATE)—RESOLUTION—ADJOURNED DEBATE [TWELFTH NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Main Question, as amended:—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* .. 379

Amendment proposed,

In line 12, after the word "Debate," to insert the words "Provided, That whenever the Chair does not withhold its assent to a Motion of Closure which, if carried, would withdraw from consideration any Amendment of which Notice has been given, the Chair shall declare whether such an Amendment is an abuse of the Rules of the House, or has been sufficiently discussed under some other form,"—(*Mr. E. R. Russell*) .. .. .. .. .. 383

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 146, Noes 215; Majority 69.—(Div. List, No. 62.)

Amendment proposed,

In line 12, at the end, to insert the words, "Provided always, That in Committee of Supply, when a Vote is under consideration, and to the particular items of which more than one Notice of Amendment has been given, if, after discussion on one of such items, the Rule for closing that discussion is put in force, the fact of its adoption shall not be held to apply to Amendments to the other sub-items of that Vote,"—(*Mr. Dillwyn*) .. .. .. .. .. 395

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

After debate, Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment,

To leave out from the word "consideration," to the end of the Amendment, in order to add the words "it shall not be competent for a Member to make any Motion to bring to a decision any Question already proposed from the Chair for the granting a whole Vote, in case any Member proposes to move the reduction of the Vote by omitting or reducing a sub-head thereof, the omission or reduction of which has not been previously moved,"—(*Mr. Chance*) .. .. .. 423

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the said proposed Amendment:"—After further short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Question put, "That the words 'Provided always, &c.' be there inserted:"—The House *divided;* Ayes 130, Noes 216; Majority 86.—(Div. List, No. 63.)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE)—*continued.*

Amendment proposed,

At the end of line 12, to insert the words, " Provided, That no Motion for a Closure of the Debate may be made on a Tuesday or a Wednesday,"—(*Colonel Nolan*) .. 432

Question proposed, " That those words be there inserted : "—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 13, after the word "That," to insert the words " Questions that the Question that certain words of any Clause defined in the Motion stand part of the Clause, or that any Clause stand part of or be added to the Bill be now put, shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear by the numbers declared from the Chair that such Question has been supported by a number of Members at least twice the number of the Members voting against it, and that other,"—(*Mr. Parnell*) .. .. .. .. .. 436

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted:—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 49, Noes 191 ; Majority 142.—(Div. List, No. 64.)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed .. .. 444

*Moved,* " That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Gedge* :)—Question put, and *agreed to* :—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

## *MOTION.*

**Bankruptcy Offices (Sites) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. David Plunket, Mr. Jackson*) ; *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 197] .. .. .. 444

[1.15.]

## COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16.

## *ORDER OF THE DAY.*

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE) — RULE 1 (CLOSURE OF DEBATE)—RESOLUTION—ADJOURNED DEBATE [THIRTEENTH NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Main Question, as amended :—Question again proposed :—Debate *resumed* .. 445

Amendment proposed,

In Rule 1, line 15, to leave out from the word "by," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words " a majority which consisted of not less than One Hundred Members, and which bore to the minority the proportion of three or more to two,"—(*Mr. Gedge*) .. .. .. .. .. 454

Question proposed, "That the words 'more than,' stand part of the Question : "—After debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in line 16, to leave out " Two Hundred," in order to insert " Three Hundred,"—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor*) .. .. 467

Question proposed, " That 'Two Hundred' stand part of the Question : " —After short debate, Question put :—The House *divided;* Ayes 222, Noes 120 ; Majority 102.

Division List, Ayes and Noes .. .. .. 475

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words, "Provided always, That this Rule shall be put in force only when the Speaker or the Chairman of Ways and Means is in the Chair,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*) .. .. .. 478

Question proposed, "That those words be there added : "—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words, "Provided that the Member who shall claim the application of this Rule shall inform the House that he has previously had no communication with the Chair, direct or indirect, as to the propriety of making such Motion,"—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor*) .. .. .. 480

Business of the House (Rules of Procedure)—*continued.*

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 55, Noes 304; Majority 249.—(Div. List, No. 66.)

Amendment proposed,

At the end of Rule 1, to add the words—"Provided also, That any number of Members exceeding Ten, who shall be dissatisfied with such decision, shall be entitled, at the next Sitting of the House, to make a collective protest in writing, which shall be recorded in the Journals of the House,"—(*Mr. Parnell*) .. .. 487

Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After short debate, Debate *adjourned* till *Friday*.

## *MOTION.*

**Reformatory Schools Act (1866) Amendment Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Dugdale, Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Curzon, Mr. Dixon, Mr. Mark Stewart*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 198] .. .. .. .. .. 491

[5.50.]

## LORDS, THURSDAY, MARCH 17.

**Pharmacy Acts Amendment Bill** (No. 28)—

*Moved,* "That the Bill be now read $2^{a}$,"—(*The Earl of Milltown*) .. 491

Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read $2^{a}$ accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow.*

**Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill** (No. 40)—

*Moved,* "That the Bill be now read $3^{a}$,"—(*The Lord Chancellor*) .. 493

Motion *agreed to*:—Bill read $3^{a}$ accordingly.

On Question, "That the Bill do pass?"—After short debate, Bill *passed,* and sent to the Commons.

**Glebe Lands Bill** (No. 41)—

Amendments *reported* (according to Order) .. .. .. 496

Bill to be read $3^{a}$ on *Tuesday* next; and to be *printed* as amended. (No. 45.)

Ireland (City of Limerick)—The Asylum Rate—Motion for Papers—

*Moved,* for—

"Correspondence between the Irish Government and the Mayor of Limerick with reference to the rate ordered to be levied upon the City of Limerick for the maintenance of lunatics in the city and county asylum,"—(*The Earl of Camperdown*) .. 500

After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Correspondence *ordered* to be laid before the House.

Lord Ashbourne and Home Rule—Observations, The Lord Chancellor of Ireland (Lord Ashbourne) .. .. .. .. 501

[5.45.]

## COMMONS, THURSDAY, MARCH 17.

## *QUESTIONS.*

Admiralty—Dock Accommodation at Bombay for Her Majesty's Navy—Questions, Admiral Field; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) .. .. .. .. .. 502

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IRISH LAND COMMISSION—Question, Sir Joseph M'Kenna; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) .. .. 504

FISHERIES (IRELAND)—BOARD OF FISHERY CONSERVATORS—Question, Mr. W. Abraham (Limerick, W.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. .. .. .. 504

ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE—DELAY OF CAUSES—INSUFFICIENCY OF COURTS—Question, Mr. Baggallay; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) .. .. .. .. 505

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EGYPT—ARMY OF OCCUPATION—MAJOR MACDONALD—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) .. 509

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—IRREGULAR CONVICTION AT NEW ROSS POLICE STATION—Questions, Mr. J. E. Redmond, Mr. M'Cartan; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes).. .. 510

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POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF POOR LAW GUARDIANS TO THE MALLOW UNION—Questions, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. .. .. 513

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ADMIRALTY—WILLIAM ROPER, AN ARTIZAN OF DEVONPORT DOCKYARD—Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) .. .. .. .. 515

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND)—DECREES FOR RENT, CO. DONEGAL—WRONGFUL ACTION OF A BAILIFF—Question, Mr. O'Doherty; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) .. .. 516

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POOR LAW—DEATH OF ELIZA RYAN IN ST. PANCRAS WORKHOUSE—Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) .. .. .. .. 517

Supply—Navy Estimates—Committee—*continued.*

Original Question again proposed .. .. .. .. 69
Original Question put, and *agreed to.*
(2.) £2,940,700, Wages, &c. to Seamen and Marines.
(3.) £277,000, Supplementary, Navy Services.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

**Merchant Shipping (Fishing Boats) Acts Amendment Bill—**
Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Baron Henry De Worms*) .. .. .. 698
Motion *agreed to:*—Bill *considered* in Committee.
After short time spent therein, Bill *reported,* without Amendment; to be read the third time upon *Monday* next.

## *MOTION.*

**Isle of Man (Customs) Bill—***Considered* in Committee:—Resolution *agreed to,* and *reported:*—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Jackson, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 199] .. .. .. .. 70

[2.40.]

## LORDS, FRIDAY, MARCH 18.

Imperial and Colonial Government—The Conference in London—Question, Observations, The Earl of Harrowby; Reply, The Under Secretary of Sate for the Colonies (The Earl of Onslow) .. 701

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## COMMONS, FRIDAY, MARCH 18.

## *QUESTIONS.*

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Law and Justice (Scotland)—Imprisonment of William Cassels—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) .. .. .. .. .. 70

Jurors (Ireland)—Return—Question, Mr. Chance; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. .. 70

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Parliament—The New Rules of Procedure (1882)—Rule 2 (Adjournment of the House) — Law and Justice (Ireland) — Arrest of Father Keller—
*Moved,* "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Dillon*) .. 734
After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 88, Noes 226; Majority 138.
Division List, Ayes and Noes .. .. .. 781

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

Business of the House (Rules of Procedure)—Rule 1 (Closure of Debate)—Resolution—Adjourned Debate [Fourteenth Night]—
Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on the Amendment to the Main Question, as amended:—Question again proposed, "That those words be there added:"—Debate *resumed* .. .. 783
After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 60, Noes 281; Majority 221.—(Div. List, No. 68.)
Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words "Provided also, That in any such Division the votes shall be taken by secret ballot,"—(*Mr. M. J. Kenny*) .. .. .. 793
Question proposed, "That those words be there added:"—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*
Main Question, as amended, again proposed .. .. 797
After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 262, Noes 41; Majority 221.
Division List, Ayes and Noes .. .. .. 798
*Moved,* "That this Resolution be a Standing Order of the House,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*) .. .. .. .. 800

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE)—*continued.*

After debate, Question put, and *agreed to* :—*Resolved,* That this Resolution be a Standing Order of the House.

SUPPLY
**Army (Annual) Bill**

Resolutions [17th March] *reported,* and *agreed to.*

*Ordered,* That the Resolution which, upon the 15th day of this instant March, was reported from the Committee of Supply, and which was then agreed to by the House, be now read, and the same was read, as followeth :—

"That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 149,341, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on 31st day of March 1888."

*Ordered,* That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide, during Twelve Months, for the Discipline and Regulation of the Army; and that Mr. Secretary Stanhope, Lord George Hamilton, and The Judge Advocate General do prepare and bring it in.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 202] .. .. .. 801

## *MOTIONS.*

**Waterworks Valuation and Rating (Scotland) Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. Barbour, Mr. Hugh Elliot*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 203] .. .. 802

PARLIAMENT—ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—
*Moved,* "That this House do now adjourn" .. .. 802
Question put, and *agreed to.* [1.20.]

## LORDS, MONDAY, MARCH 21.

INDIA—THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE CELEBRATION—RELEASE OF 25,000 PRISONERS—Question, Observations, Lord Stanley of Alderley; Reply, The Secretary of State for India (Viscount Cross) .. .. .. 802

**Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment Bill** (No. 10)—
House in Committee (according to Order) .. .. .. 804
Amendments made :—The Report thereof to be received on *Monday* next; and Bill to be *printed* as amended. (No. 49.) [6.15.]

## COMMONS, MONDAY, MARCH 21.

## *QUESTIONS.*

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—ALLEGED ILLEGAL ARRESTS—CHARGE AGAINST SERGEANT WHARTON—Questions, Mr. J. E. Ellis, Dr. Tanner, Mr. Chance; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) .. 816

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ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—TOWN COMMISSIONERS OF BOYLE, CO. ROSCOMMON—SUB-INSPECTOR BABBAGE—Question, Mr. O'Kelly; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) .. .. 820

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—o—

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PARLIAMENT—ORDER—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — ORDER OF THE DAY FOR COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY—EXCLUSION OF MOTIONS—Questions, Observations, Mr. T. P. Gill, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Conybeare; Replies, Mr. Speaker .. .. .. .. .. 858

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## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—NAVY ESTIMATES—

(In the Committee.)

Mr. COURTNEY in the Chair. [5.15 P.M.]

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £992,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of Victuals and Clothing for Seamen and Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888" .. .. .. .. 860

After short debate, *Moved,* "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Labouchere :*)—Question put :—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 71, Noes 196; Majority 125.—(Div. List, No. 71.) [1.20 A.M.]

Original Question again proposed .. .. .. .. 980

After short debate, *Moved,* "That the Chairman do now leave the Chair,"—(*Dr. Cameron :*)—After further debate, Question put :—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 61, Noes 199; Majority 138.—(Div. List, No. 72.) [3.35 A.M.]

Original Question again proposed .. .. .. .. 1005

After short debate, *Moved,* "That the Question be now put,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith :*)—Question put :—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 207, Noes 54; Majority 153. [5.40 A.M.]

Division List, Ayes and Noes .. .. .. .. 1017

Original Question put :—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 210, Noes 52; Majority 158.—(Div. List, No. 73.)

CIVIL SERVICES.

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £3,624,100, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or or towards defraying the Charge for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, viz. :— [Then the several Services are set forth] 1019

*Moved,* "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Labouchere*) .. .. .. .. .. 1023

[Mr. RAIKES (Postmaster General) took the Chair.] [5.45.]

After long debate, Question put :—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 57, Noes 141; Majority 84.—(Div. List, No. 74.) [7.40 A.M.]

[Sir JOHN GORST (Under Secretary of State for India) took the Chair.] [7.45 A.M.]

Original Question again proposed .. .. .. .. 1054

*Moved,* "That the Item of £6,000, for Royal Palaces, be reduced by the sum of £5,000,"—(*Mr. Labouchere :*)—After short debate, Question put :—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 53, Noes 121; Majority 68.—(Div. List, No. 75.) [8.15 A.M.]

Original Question again proposed .. .. .. .. 1060

*Moved,* "That the Item of £500, for Marlborough House, be omitted,"—(*Mr. Conybeare :*)—Question put :—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 49, Noes 115; Majority 66.—(Div. List, No. 76.) [8.30. A.M.]

Original Question again proposed .. .. .. .. 1061

*Moved,* "That the Item of £17,000, for Royal Parks and Pleasure Grounds, be reduced by the sum of £14,000," — (*Mr. Labouchere :*) — After short debate, Question put :— The Committee *divided;* Ayes 54, Noes 144; Majority 90.—(Div. List, No. 77.) [9.20. A.M.]

Original Question again proposed .. .. .. .. 1068

*Moved,* "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor :*)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed .. .. .. .. 1070

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES—Committee—*continued.*

*Moved,* "That the Item of £1,500, for the Metropolitan Police Courts, be omitted,"—(*Mr. Labouchere*) .. .. .. .. 1071

[Mr. COURTNEY here resumed the Chair] [9.35 A.M.]

After short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 51, Noes 186; Majority 135.—(Div. List, No. 78.) [9.40 A.M.]

Original Question again proposed .. .. .. .. 1073

*Moved,* "That a sum, not exceeding £3,614,100, be granted, &c.,"—(*Mr. Labouchere*:)—Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 49, Noes 204; Majority 155.—(Div. List, No. 79.) [10.10. A.M.]

Original Question again proposed .. .. .. .. 1075

After debate, *Moved,* "That the sum of £3,622,600, be granted, &c.,"—(*Mr. Dillon*:)—After short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 80, Noes 255; Majority 175. [1.0 P.M.]

Division List, Ayes and Noes .. .. .. .. 1120

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

**Bankruptcy Offices (Sites) Bill** [Bill 197]—

*Moved,* "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Plunket*) .. 1123

Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee of Five Members, Three to be nominated by the House and Two by the Committee of Selection.

**Isle of Man (Customs) Bill** [Bill 199]—

*Moved,* "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Jackson*) .. 1124

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

**Small Debts (Scotland) Bill** [Bill 42]—

*Moved,* "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Caldwell*) .. 1124

Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Wednesday.*

**Pauper Lunatic Asylums (Ireland) Superannuation Bill** [Bill 62]—

*Moved,* "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Chance*) .. 1125

Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Tuesday* 19th April.

WAYS AND MEANS—

*Considered* in Committee

(In the Committee.)

(1.) *Resolved,* That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the Service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, the sum of £1,251,076 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

(2.) *Resolved,* That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the Service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, the sum of £12,078,800 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

[1.20 P.M.]

## LORDS, TUESDAY, MARCH 22.

THE COLONIAL CONFERENCE—REPRESENTATION OF MALTA—Question, Earl De La Warr; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (The Earl of Onslow) .. .. .. .. 1126

**Church Patronage Bill** (No. 44)—

Amendments *reported* (according to Order) .. .. .. 1127

Bill to be read 3ª on *Tuesday* next; and to be *printed* as amended. (No. 52.)

**Church Sites (Compulsory Powers Repeal) Bill** (No. 22)—
*Moved*, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee on the said Bill,"—(*The Lord Bishop of Lichfield*) .. .. 1131
After short debate, on Question? *Resolved* in the *negative*.

Law and Justice (Ireland)—The Arrest of Father Keller—Question, Observations, The Earl of Camperdown; Reply, The Lord Privy Seal (Earl Cadogan) .. .. .. .. 1133

**Sheriffs (Consolidation) Bill** [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Lord Chancellor*); read 1ª (No. 50) .. .. .. .. .. 1137

[6.45.]

## COMMONS, TUESDAY, MARCH 22.

## *QUESTIONS.*

Scotland—Crofters' Commission—Valuers and Assessors—Applications—Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) .. .. .. .. .. 1138
War Office—Official Statement—Alleged Deficiency of £635,735—Naval Ordnance—Question, Mr. H. F. Pease; Answer, The Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Northcote) .. .. 1138
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Post Office—Leasehold Insurance—Question, Colonel Makins; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. .. .. 1140
Roadways and Streets (Metropolis)—Canterbury Road, Camberwell—Question, Mr. Baumann; Answer, The Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) .. .. 1141
Navy—Dockyards—Discharges from Haulbowline—Questions, Mr. J. O'Connor, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) .. .. .. .. 1142
Egypt (Finance, &c.)—The Land Tax—Question, Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) .. 1143
Committee on Indian Affairs—Question, Mr. King; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) .. .. 1144
Post Office (Ireland)—Manorhamilton District, Co. Leitrim—Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. .. .. .. .. 1144
Duchy of Lancaster—The Middleman System—Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .. 1145
Coal and Wine Duties (Metropolis)—Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, The Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) .. .. .. .. 1145
Prisons (Scotland) Act, 1877—Lunacy Districts—Question, Mr. Hozier; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) .. 1145
Inland Revenue—Stamp Duty on Yearly Leases in Scotland—Question, Mr. Watt; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) .. .. .. .. .. 1146
Law and Justice (Ireland)—The Riots at Youghal—Coroners' Inquests—Questions, Sir John Swinburne, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes); Question, Mr. P. O'Brien [No reply] .. .. .. 1146
London Coal and Wine Duties Continuance Bill—Public Park in Tottenham—Question, Mr. J. Howard; Answer, Sir Robert Fowler .. 1147

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EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY BILL — LEGISLATION — Question, Mr. Broadhurst; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) .. .. .. .. .. 1148

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT, 1886 — PLEURO-PNEUMONIA (SCOTLAND)—Question, Sir Charles Palmer; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .. .. .. 1148

FINANCE—TREASURY BILLS—Question, Mr. Caldwell; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) .. .. .. 1149

CONVEYANCING (SCOTLAND) ACT (1874) AMENDMENT BILL — Question, Mr. J. B. Balfour; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1149

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881, AND THE PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACT, 1885—THE ROYAL COMMISSION—MR. KNIPE'S REPORT—Question, Mr. Coleridge; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .. .. .. .. .. 1150

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT, 1886—ANTHRAX IN CHESHIRE—Questions, Mr. Tollemache, Sir John Swinburne; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .. .. 1151

EVICTIONS (IRELAND) — MR. SHIRLEY'S FARNEY ESTATE, MONAGHAN — Question, Mr. P. O'Brien; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .. .. .. .. 1152

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—DELIVERY OF LETTERS AT NEWTOWNARDS, &c. — Question, Mr. M'Cartan; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. .. .. .. .. 1153

ANGLO-AMERICAN FISHERIES CONVENTION, 1818 — PURCHASE OF ARMED CRUISERS—Questions, Mr. Gourley, Sir George Campbell; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) .. .. .. .. .. 1153

## *MOTION.*

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT (IRELAND) BILL—MOTION FOR URGENCY [FIRST NIGHT]—

*Moved,* "That the introduction and several stages of the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motion, including the Rules of Procedure, whenever the Bill shall be set down for consideration by the Government as the first business of the day,"—(*Mr. William Henry Smith*) .. .. .. .. .. 1158

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House declines to set aside the business of the Nation in favour of a measure for increasing the stringency of the Criminal Law in Ireland, whilst no effectual security has been taken against the abuse of the Law by the exaction of excessive rents,"—(*Mr. John Morley*) .. .. .. 1174

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Colonel Hughes-Hallett*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

## *ORDER OF THE DAY.*

WAYS AND MEANS—
**Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill**

Resolutions [March 31] *reported,* and *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Courtney, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Jackson*); *presented,* and read the first time .. 1221

[11.20.]

## COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23.

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## QUESTIONS.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIOTS AT YOUGHAL—CORONER'S WARRANT—Questions, Mr. Chance, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) .. .. 1221

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—ARREST OF FATHER KELLER—VALIDITY OF THE WARRANT—Questions, Mr. Chance; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) .. .. .. 1222

## ORDER OF THE DAY.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT (IRELAND) BILL—MOTION FOR URGENCY—RESOLUTION—ADJOURNED DEBATE [SECOND NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [22nd March:]—Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—Debate *resumed* 1223

After long debate, it being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

## MOTION.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—

*Moved,* "That this House do now adjourn:"—

CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT (IRELAND) BILL—DEBATE ON THE MOTION FOR URGENCY—Observations, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), Mr. W. E. Gladstone, Mr. Parnell .. .. 1277

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIOTS AT YOUGHAL—THE INQUEST ON HANLON—Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) .. .. .. 1279

Motion *agreed to.* [5.55.]

## LORDS, THURSDAY, MARCH 24.

AFRICA (SOUTH)—AFFAIRS OF SWAZILAND—Question, Observations, Viscount Midleton; Reply, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (The Earl of Onslow) .. .. .. .. 1280

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—HELMETS FOR THE MILITIA REGIMENTS—Question, Observations, Lord Fitzgerald; Reply, The Under Secretary of State for War (Lord Harris) .. .. .. 1284

NORTH-EASTERN ASIA—THE COREA—FOREIGN OCCUPATION OF PORT HAMILTON—MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS—

*Moved,* "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for copy of any written pledges, should such pledges exist, on the part of the Empires of Russia and China with the Government of this country in reference to the occupation for military or naval purposes of the harbour of Port Hamilton or any portion of the territory of Corea,"—(*The Viscount Sidmouth*) .. .. .. .. 1285

After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.* [5.0.]

## COMMONS, THURSDAY, MARCH 24.

## PRIVATE BUSINESS.

*Kensington Vestry Bill* [*Lords*] (*by Order*)—
*Moved*, "That the Bill, as amended, be now considered,"—(*Mr. Dodds*) 1287
Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," in order to add the words "this day six months,"—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)
Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:" —After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 190, Noes 170; Majority 29.—(Div. List, No. 81.)
Main Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill *considered* .. .. 1309
New Clause (Consent of Vestry to erection of destructors,)—(*Mr. Pitt-Lewis,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time .. .. 1310
*Moved*, "That the Clause be read a second time:"—*Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Chance:*)—Question put, and *negatived.*
Original Question again proposed .. .. .. 1310
After short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to.*
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Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [22nd March: ]—Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question : "—Debate *resumed* 1352

After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre* :)—Question put, and *agreed to* :—Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow*.

**Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Bill** [Bill 1]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [28th February], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" (for Committee on the Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Bill:)—Question again proposed :—Debate *resumed* .. .. .. .. 1438

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill *considered* in Committee .. .. .. .. 1447

After short time spent therein, Committee report Progress ; to sit again upon *Tuesday* next.

**Accumulations Bill** [Bill 31]—

*Moved*, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Cozens-Hardy*) 1448

Question put, and *agreed to* :—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* 2nd May.

## *MOTIONS.*

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**Union Assessment Committee Act (1862) Amendment Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Holloway, Colonel Hughes*) ; *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 204] .. 1449

[2.10.]

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**Probation of First Offenders (No. 2) Bill** (No. 20)—

*Moved*, "That the Order for the Second Reading be discharged,"—(*The Earl of Belmore*) .. .. .. .. 1450

Motion *agreed to* ; Order *discharged*.

**Tithe Rent-Charge Bill**—

Bill to amend the law with respect to the recovery and redemption of tithe rent-charge in England—*Presented* (*The Marquess of Salisbury*) .. 1451

After short debate, Bill read 1ª. (No. 54.)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—

Standing Order No. XXXV. to be considered on *Monday* next in order to its being suspended. [5.45.]

## COMMONS, FRIDAY, MARCH 25.

## *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

*Metropolitan Railway Bill*—

*Moved*, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir Charles Forster*) 1464

Bill to be read a second time upon *Friday*.

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*Regent's Canal, City, and Docks Railway Bill—*
*Moved*, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir Charles Forster*) 1464
Bill to be read a second time *To-morrow.*

*Walton-on-Thames and Weybridge Gas Bill—*
*Moved*, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir Charles Forster*) 1465
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Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [22nd March :]—Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question :"—Debate *resumed* 1477

After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Parnell :*)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put :—The House *divided;* Ayes 349, Noes 260; Majority 89.

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Amendment proposed, to add, at the end of the Question, the words "except on Friday,"—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added :"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bankruptcy Offices (Sites) [Consolidated Fund]—

Order for Committee read :—*Moved*, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Mr. Plunket*) .. .. .. .. 1587

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(In the Committee.)

*Resolved*, That it is expedient to authorise the grant, out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom, of a sum to meet any deficiency which may arise in the payment of the expenses of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Works and Public Buildings incurred under the provisions of any Act of the present Session for the acquisition of property and the provision of new buildings for the Bankruptcy Department.

Resolution to be reported upon *Monday* next.

## *MOTIONS.*

**Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Secretary Matthews*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 208] .. .. 1588

**Licensing Laws Amendment Bill**—*Considered* in Committee :—Resolution *agreed to*, and *reported :*—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Houldsworth, Colonel Bridgeman, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. Whitmore*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 207] .. .. 1589

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**Mining Leases (Devon and Cornwall) Bill**—

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*Moved*, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Akers-Douglas*) .. 1589

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Colonies (Naval and Military Services)—Motion for an Address—

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**Consolidated Fund (No. 1) Bill—**

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[1.0. A.M.]

## QUESTIONS.

—o—

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The Queen's Jubilee Celebration—The Public Holiday—Question, Mr. Hanbury; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .. .. .. .. .. 1621

Registration of Parliamentary Voters—Legislation—Question, Mr. Chance; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1622

Parliament—Adjournment and Sittings of the House—The Easter Recess—Questions, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Conybeare, Sir George Campbell, Mr. W. H. James; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .. .. .. 1622

Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill—The Division on the Motion of Urgency—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Speaker 1623

## *MOTION.*

**Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill**—Motion for Leave—First Reading [First Night]—

*Moved,* "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make better provision for the prevention and punishment of Crime in Ireland; and for other purposes relating thereto,"—(*Mr. Arthur Balfour*) .. .. .. .. 1624

After long debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Illingworth*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

## *ORDER OF THE DAY.*

**Metropolitan Open Spaces Act (1881) Extension Bill** [Bill 171]

Bill *considered* in Committee .. .. .. .. 1730

After some time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Thursday.*

[*March* 28.] *Page*

## *MOTION.*

**Metropolis Management Acts Amendment (Westminster) Bill** — *Ordered* (*Mr. Burdett-Coutts, Mr. John Talbot, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Seager Hunt*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 208] .. .. .. .. 1744
[2.15.]

## LORDS, TUESDAY, MARCH 29.

**Railway and Canal Traffic Bill** (No. 32)—
House in Committee (according to Order) .. .. .. 1745
After some time spent therein, House to be again in Committee on *Friday* next.

ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACT, 1869, AND AMENDING ACTS — SCHEMES OF THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS—
*Moved,* "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying that Her Majesty will withhold her assent from the schemes of the Charity Commissioners relating to (1) the Foundation for a school and almshouses, and for other purposes, in the parish of West Lavington, otherwise Bishop Lavington, in the county of Wilts, founded under the will of Alderman William Dauntsey, dated 10th March 1542, and since further endowed; and (2) for dealing with the Endowment of the Wilts County School, in the county of Wilts,—(*The Lord Stanley of Preston*) .. .. 1761
Motion *agreed to*:—Ordered that the said Address be presented to Her Majesty by the Lords with White Staves. [8.0.]

## COMMONS, TUESDAY, MARCH 29.

## *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

*Regent's Canal, City, and Docks Railway Bill* (*by Order*)—
*Moved,* "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Dodds*) .. 1761
After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

*Belfast Main Drainage Bill*—
*Moved,* "That the Lords Amendments be now considered,"—(*Mr. Dodds*) 1767
*Moved,* "That the Debate be adjourned till Thursday next,"—(*Mr. Sexton*:)—After short debate, Motion *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *Thursday.*

## *QUESTIONS.*

NORTH SEA FISHERIES — DEPREDATIONS BY FOREIGN ON ENGLISH FISHERMEN—THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE—Question, Sir Savile Crossley; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) .. .. .. .. .. 1768
SCOTTISH UNIVERSITIES ENDOWMENTS—LEGISLATION—Question, Mr. Bryce; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) .. .. 1768
ROYAL COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SURGEONS — FEES FOR ADMISSION—Question, Mr. Wallace; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) .. .. .. .. .. 1768
POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—Question, Mr. O'Hanlon; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. .. .. 1769
SEED SUPPLY (IRELAND) ACT, 1880—ISSUE OF SEED—Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. 1769

[*March* 29.] *Page*

Law and Justice (Ireland)—Robert Kelly and Thomas Scully—Questions, Mr. Gilhooly, Mr. Mac Neill; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) .. .. .. 1770

Poor Law (Ireland) — Elections — Bantry Union — Question, Mr. Gilhooly; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. .. .. .. .. 1771

Weights and Measures—Corn Measures—Legislation—Question, Mr. Rankin; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) .. .. .. .. .. 1771

Royal Irish Constabulary—Force in Milltown — Question, Colonel Nolan; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1772

The Magistracy (Ireland)—Vacant Coronership of Donegal—Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. .. .. .. 1772

Piers and Harbours (Ireland)—Arklow Harbour Works — Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) .. .. .. .. .. 1773

Labourers' Acts (Ireland)—Working of the Acts—Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. .. .. .. .. 1774

Poor Law (Ireland)—Donegal Workhouse—The Board of Guardians—Questions, Mr. Mac Neill, Mr. Chance; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. .. .. 1774

Crime and Outrage (Ireland) — The Riots at Youghal — Death of Hanlon — Arrest of Sub-Inspector Somerville and Constable Ward—Question, Mr. Chance; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. .. .. .. 1775

Law and Police (Ireland) — Sub-Inspector Milling—Question, Mr. Chance; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1776

Emigration and Immigration—Statistical Tables — Question, Captain Colomb; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) .. .. .. .. .. 1777

Post Office (Ireland)—Wages, &c. of Limerick Postmen — Questions, Mr. H. J. Gill; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. 1777

Law and Police (Ireland)—Arrest of John Malone and Richard Magee — Questions, Mr. J. E. Redmond; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) .. .. .. 1778

Post Office (Scotland)—Post Office Savings Bank at Archiestown and Dallas, Morayshire—Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. .. .. 1779

River Thames—Pollution by House Boats, &c.—Question, Colonel Dawnay; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) .. .. .. .. .. 1779

Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland)—The Debate—The Chief Secretary's Speech—Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. .. .. 1780

Law and Justice—Colonial Judgments—The Colonial Conference—Question, Mr. Osborne Morgan; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Sir Henry Holland) .. .. .. 1780

The Magistracy (Ireland)—Youghal—County Inspector Brownrigg—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) .. .. .. .. 1781

Contagious Diseases (Animals)—Inoculation for Anthrax — Question, Mr. H. Gardner; Answer, The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Lord John Manners) .. .. .. .. 1781

Palace of Westminster—Palace Yard—A Glass Shelter—Question, Mr. W. Beckett; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) .. .. .. .. .. 1781

Navy—H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught—Inspection at Aden—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) .. .. .. .. 1782

Egypt—Detention of Zebehr Pasha—Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Dillon, Mr. O'Kelly; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) .. .. .. 1782

The Magistracy (Ireland)—Mr. Jeremiah Hegarty, J.P., Co. Cork—Questions, Dr. Tanner, Mr. Chance; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour).. .. .. .. 1784

Army and Navy Estimates—A Select Committee of Examination—Question, Mr. Mason; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .. .. .. .. 1785

Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Chance; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .. .. .. .. .. 1785

Parliament—Divisions of the House (Pairing)—Divisions on the 21st March—Questions, Mr. Broadhurst, Mr. Arnold Morley, Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. R. W. Duff; Answers, Mr. Bristowe, Mr. Speaker, The Patronage Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Akers-Douglas) .. .. .. .. 1786

## *ORDER OF THE DAY.*

**Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill**—Motion for Leave—First Reading—Adjourned Debate [Second Night]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [28th March:]—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* .. .. 1790

After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Mac Neill:*)—Motion *agreed to*:—Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

## *MOTIONS.*

**Municipal Franchise (Belfast) Bill**—

*Moved*, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to extend the Municipal Franchise of the Borough of Belfast,"—(*Colonel Saunderson*) .. 1876

Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Colonel Saunderson, Colonel King-Harman, Colonel Waring, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Lea*); *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 211.]

*Moved*, "That the Bill be read a second time upon *Wednesday* 18th May,"—(*Colonel Saunderson:*)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill to be read a second time upon *Wednesday* 18th May.

Adjournment—

*Moved*, "That this House do now adjourn:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.* [12.40.]

## COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

**Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill**—Motion for Leave—First Reading—Adjourned Debate [Third Night]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [28th March:]—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* .. .. 1877

After long debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Labouchere:*)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

**Mining Royalties Bill** [Bill 23]—

*Moved*, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Conybeare*) .. 1932

*Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Tomlinson*:)—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *Wednesday* 27th April.

**High Sheriff Disqualification (Ireland) Bill** [Bill 85]—

*Moved*, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. John O'Connor*) 1932

*Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. De Lisle*:)—Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *Wednesday* 20th April.

## *QUESTION.*

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—Question, Mr. Henry H. Fowler; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1933

## *MOTION.*

**Newspaper Libel Law Amendment Bill**—*Ordered* (*Mr. Jennings*, *Mr. Addison*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 212] .. .. .. 1934

[5.55]

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# LORDS.

## SAT FIRST.

MONDAY, MARCH 14.

The Earl of Chesterfield, after the death of his father.

# COMMONS.

## NEW WRIT ISSUED.

MONDAY, MARCH 14.

For *Derby* (*Ilkeston Division*), *v.* Thomas Watson, esquire, deceased.

## NEW MEMBER SWORN.

MONDAY, MARCH 28.

*Derby* (*Ilkeston Division*)—Sir Balthazar Walter Foster, knight.

# HANSARD'S
# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE

*SECOND SESSION* OF THE *TWENTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*,
APPOINTED TO MEET 5 AUGUST, 1886, IN THE FIFTIETH
YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

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THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1887.

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## HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Friday*, 11*th March*, 1887.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Report* — Truro Bishopric and Chapter Acts Amendment* (33).

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL—*Third Reading* — Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland)* (29), and *passed.*

### FOREIGN HORSE-BREEDING DEPOTS.

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

THE EARL OF **STRAFFORD**, in moving—

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, for copies or extracts of reports of Her Majesty's diplomatic agents at Paris, Vienna, and Berlin, on the subject of horse-breeding depôts, forwarded to the Foreign Office in the year 1884,"

said, that his noble Friend (Lord Ribblesdale), who raised the question of our horse supply a few nights ago, had expressed his intention of submitting to their Lordships a scheme for the supply of horses, particularly for military purposes. In the meantime it would, he believed, be interesting to know what foreign countries were doing in the matter. He had reason to believe that at the Foreign Office there were Reports on this subject sent by Her Majesty's Diplomatic Agents from Paris, Vienna, and Berlin; and, through the courtesy of the noble Earl who was, in 1884, at the Foreign Office, he (the Earl of Strafford) had the opportunity of looking into them. They were very interesting, and were not very voluminous. They dealt with the subject of horse-breeding depôts; and the financial part of the question was also dealt with, and showed that a large sum of money was expended in promoting horse-breeding in France, Germany, and Austria. It would be of great service if their Reports could be given to the public, so that those interested in the subject might have an opportunity of studying them. He hoped the noble Marquess would not object to the production of these Reports.

Address for—

"Copies or extracts of reports of Her Majesty's diplomatic agents at Paris, Vienna, and Berlin, on the subject of horse-breeding depôts, forwarded to the Foreign Office in the year 1884."—(*The Earl of Strafford.*)

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): There is no objection whatever to the production of the Reports, which I am quite willing should be laid upon the Table.

Address *agreed to.*

## UNIVERSAL PENNY POSTAGE.

### MOTION FOR A PAPER.

*Moved*, for—

"The fourth letter written by Mr. Henniker Heaton, M.P., to the Postmaster General on the subject of the universal penny postage."—(*The Earl of Crawford.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Friday*, 11*th March*, 1887.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee* —*Resolution* [March 10] *reported.*

PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Coroners' Elections * [193]; Merchandise Marks Law Consolidation and Amendment * [194].

*Withdrawn* — Criminal Law (Scotland) Procedure * [131].

## LONDON CORPORATION (CHARGES OF MALVERSATION).

SIR JOHN R. MOWBRAY *reported* from the Committee of Selection, That, in pursuance of the Order of the House, they had nominated the following Five Members to constitute the Select Committee on the London Corporation (Charges of Malversation):—

*The Earl of Strafford*
Marquess of Hartington;
Sir Joseph Bailey;
Lewis Llewelyn Dillwyn, esquire;
William Henry Houldsworth, esquire;
James Cochrane Stevenson, esquire;

and had also named,—

Charles Bradlaugh, esquire, and
John Compton Lawrance, esquire,

to serve on the Select Committee to propose and examine witnesses, but without the power of voting.

*Ordered*, That the Report do lie upon the Table.

## QUESTIONS.

## ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—CONSTITUTION OF THE FORCE.

CAPTAIN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the strength of the Royal Irish Constabulary; what is the number of Roman Catholics in the Force; whether the Force is chiefly recruited from agricultural districts of Ireland, and largely composed of sons of tenant farmers in Ireland; what was the number of evictions in Ireland in each of the years 1882, 1883, 1884, 1885, and 1886, respectively; what was the number of applications for admission to the ranks of the Royal Irish Constabulary in each of those years respectively; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will consider the propriety of so amending the law that offences, such as firing a revolver, or other fire-arms, at members of that Force when discharging their duty with bâtons, may be dealt with by the same criminal tribunals in Great Britain as deal with similar offences against members of the English Police Force in the execution of their duty?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University) (who replied) said: The present strength of the Royal Irish Constabulary is 12,554 men, of whom 9,205 are Roman Catholics, and the circumstances as to recruiting and the composition of the force are correctly stated in the Question. As to the number of evictions, the Government have no further information than that already before the House in the Returns periodically laid upon the Table. It is not practicable to tabulate the number of mere applications for admission to the Constabulary (which come from all parts of the three kingdoms); but the number of accepted candidates was 3,344, 657, 542, 1,040, and 1,425 respectively in the five years mentioned. I fear that I do not quite understand the last paragraph. I am not aware of any difference between the law in Great Britain and in Ireland in regard to the matter referred to.

### MARRIAGE ACT — NONCONFORMIST MARRIAGES—LEOMINSTER.

Mr. T. BLAKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has seen a letter in *The Christian World*, of March 3, by the Reverend J. J. Squire, Primitive Methodist Minister, of Leominster, stating that immediately after a marriage duly performed by him, in the presence of the Registrar, in the Primitive Methodist Chapel at that place, on the 16th of February, the Reverend A. Garthwaite, the curate of Kimbolton, near Leominster, persuaded the parties to go through the marriage service in Kimbolton Church, on the ground that it was not right to marry in a chapel, and afterwards entered the marriage in the parish register; and, whether, if Mr. Garthwaite has been guilty of an illegal act, legal proceedings will be taken against him?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I have seen the letter in question, and I have received a communication from the vicar of Kimbolton, from which it appears, not that the curate persuaded the parties to be married in church on the ground that it was not right to marry in a chapel, but that the vicar was informed that the parties were to be married at the Registrar's Office, and themselves desired to have the marriage ceremony afterwards performed in the church, in which the man had for 16 years been a member of the church choir. The vicar assures me distinctly that neither he nor his curate knew at the time the marriage service was performed, that any religious ceremony had taken place between the parties. This was explained two days afterwards to the minister of the Primitive Methodist Chapel, and I am told that he then expressed himself perfectly satisfied. The vicar also informs me that he was not acquainted with the provisions of the Marriage Act of 1856 when the marriage was entered in the parish register. I am not aware that there were no banns or licence.

### INDIA—TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT.

Colonel HUGHES-HALLETT (Rochester) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, When the Papers relating to claims of the Indian Telegraph Department will be produced; when the scheme of re-organization will be sanctioned, and who is responsible for the delay in granting measures of relief; and, whether some measure of relief could be afforded by amalgamating, as in England, the Telegraph and Postal Services?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): The case of the Telegraph Department has been referred to the Finance Commission which was recently appointed in India to consider what reductions can be made in the Public Expenditure. The hon. Member will see that until this Report has been received it is impossible to give the information he desires.

### LAW AND JUSTICE—COURT HOUSES—ACCOMMODATION FOR PRISONERS AWAITING TRIAL.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, What action he proposes to take on the Report of the Committee on the Accommodation for Untried Prisoners?

Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Caleb Wright, Mr. Shirley, Mr. Channing, had also given Notice of Questions to the same effect.

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I will answer the Questions of the right hon. Gentleman and the hon. Baronet the Member for Honiton (Devon) and of the hon. Members for Leigh (Lancashire), of Doncaster (Yorkshire), and of East Northampton at the same time. The importance of the matter to which these five Questions refer cannot be exaggerated; and I am determined to do all that is in my power to remedy a state of things which, in my mind, constitute a serious evil. Places for the detention of prisoners immediately before and after trial appear to be excluded by the Prison Act of 1877 from the jurisdiction of the Secretary of State. Their control and management remains, therefore, where it always has been—with the Justices in counties and the Town Council in boroughs. A week ago, I gave instructions for a Circular to issue to all the County and Borough Authorities in England and Wales calling on them at once to take this matter into their serious consideration, and to inform me what improvements they mean to carry out in their respective Court-houses and other places of detention. I feel sanguine that they will everywhere co-operate with me in finding a remedy for evils which the Report of the Committee wisely appointed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh has brought to light. In reply to the Question of the hon. Member for East Northamptonshire, I can only say that after the replies of the Local Bodies have been received the Government will consider what action on their part may be necessary.

### LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—DUNMANWAY PETTY SESSIONS—CASE OF FELIX SWEENY.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) (for Dr. KENNY) (Cork, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a man, named Felix Sweeny, was arrested at Dunmanway for breaking a pane of glass value 6*d*; whether he was sent to the County Cork Gaol to await his trial; whether he was brought to the Dunmanway Petty Sessions for trial; if, in default of paying a fine of 5*s*. he was sent to the County Cork Gaol for seven days; whether the expenses in connection with this case were £3 10*s*. 6*d*.; and, whether, in future, the necessity of incurring large expenses in such trivial cases will be obviated?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University) (who replied) said: The man referred to is a tramp who deliberately broke a pane of glass upon being refused alms. The statements in the second, third, fourth, and fifth paragraphs of the Question are substantially accurate. Offences of this kind must be punished, and some expenses attendant thereon cannot be avoided.

### NAVY—EMPLOYMENT OF MARINES ON PRIVATE SERVICE.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether information has reached him that, on the 11th ultimo, the Captain of Marines aboard the *Shannon*, stationed in Bantry Bay, sent a party of Marines to polish the floor of a house in which a ball was held, and that it is the practice of this officer to send Marines to prepare the tennis ground and to do various other works foreign to their ordinary duties; and, if so, whether such employment is sanctioned by the regulations of the Service?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): Some of the Marines of the *Shannon* appear to have volunteered their services in preparing a room for dancing and a tennis court on shore at Bantry. The men were not there during their working hours, and were remunerated privately. The Admiralty, under the circumstances, see no reason for interference.

### EVICTIONS (IRELAND) — MR. JOHN FROST, CO. CLARE—TRAVELLING EXPENSES OF THE POLICE FORCE.

MR. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) (for Mr. Cox) (Clare, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state the amount of money expended in travelling expenses, &c., for the police force engaged in carrying out the eviction of Mr. John Frost, Rosmanagher, County Clare?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University) (who replied) said: I am unable to give this information. It requires a great deal of clerical labour to extract these expenses; and, although this has been done in a few cases, it cannot be carried further without neglect of other duties by the official staff.

### AGRICULTURE (IRELAND) — EDUCATIONAL STATIONS.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has received from Dr. Hodges, of the Chemico-Agricultural Society of Ulster, a communication urging the desirability of establishing throughout the country educational stations for the improvement of the method of agriculture; and, whether it is the intention of the Government to make provision for the establishment of such stations in their promised legislation on the Irish Land Question?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University) (who replied) said: The communication mentioned was received by the late Chief Secretary, who regretted he did not feel able to promote the request conveyed in it. The subject appears also to have been under the notice of previous Governments, none of whom took a favourable view of the proposal.

### CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIOTS AT BELFAST—REPORTS OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF INQUIRY.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government have yet completed their consideration of the Report of Sir John Day and his colleagues on the Belfast Riots; how soon they will communicate to the House their proposals with respect to social order in Belfast; how soon the Report and Evidence are likely to be in the hands of Members; and, whether the Government have abandoned the expectation of receiving a Report from Mr. Wallace MacHardy?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University) (who replied) said: This subject is still under consideration. The Report and Evidence have been laid on the Table. The Government, though unable to account for Commander MacHardy's continued silence, are unwilling to come to the conclusion that it is not his intention to make his expected Report.

### CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIOTS AT BELFAST—COLONEL FORBES, R.M., AND MR. M'CARTHY, R.M.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether there is any truth in the report that the Irish Government have it in contemplation to remove Colonel Forbes, R.M., and Mr. M'Carthy, R.M., from Belfast; whether, if so, the Government have consulted the Members of the Royal Commission on the Belfast Riots in reference to the matter; how long Colonel Forbes and Mr. M'Carthy have served in Belfast; have they satisfactorily discharged their duties; were they complimented by the Royal Commission, and did the Commission report that the stipendiary magistrates had discharged their duties "undoubtedly very well;" have they requested to be removed from Belfast; is the removal due to any complaint; and, if so, of what nature, and by whom made; whether it was established in evidence before the Royal Commission that certain Local Justices had set themselves to procure the removal of Colonel Forbes; and, whether, considering the recommendations of the Commission in regard to the Local Justices, the Government will take no step concerning Colonel Forbes and Mr. M'Carthy until the recommendations of the Commission can be dealt with as a whole?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University) (who replied) said: Colonel Forbes and Mr. M'Carthy, Resident Magistrates, have been informed that they are about to be transferred from Belfast. The Executive have taken this step on their own responsibility in view of the recommendations of the Belfast Commission, which include a strong suggestion that the Resident Magistrates in Belfast should be barristers. No slur is thereby cast on these two Resident Magistrates, and they have been so informed. Their duties in the past have been satisfactorily performed. One of them has served for over three years in Belfast, the other over four years. All Resident Magistrates are liable to transfer at the discretion of the Executive.

### LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—EVIDENCE IN REVENUE CASES.

MR. GODSON (Kidderminster) asked Mr. Attorney General, Why, in cases of infringement of the laws relating to the Inland Revenue, defendants are not allowed to give evidence on their own behalf, while in certain cases concerning the Customs, by 39 & 40 *Vict.* c. 36, s. 259, "the defendant shall be competent and compellable to give evidence;" and, whether he will take immediate steps to remove this disability?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): In reply to the hon. and learned Member, if his Question refers to proceedings in the Superior Court, defendants are competent and compellable to give evidence in Inland Revenue as well as in Customs cases; but if, as I rather gather, the Question refers to charges before magistrates, the ordinary rule applies that the defendant cannot give evidence in a criminal matter except in the particular cases authorized by statute. Her Majesty's Government hope that a Bill will pass both Houses of Parliament this Session to enable the defendant to give evidence in all criminal cases.

## POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS AT ENNISKILLEN, &c.

Mr. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether letters posted in Enniskillen for Dublin and Belfast, after 7 o'clock p.m., are delivered next morning; and, if so, at what hour; and, if not, whether he will make arrangements to have letters that are posted during the night in Enniskillen and the following towns—namely, Clones, Newbliss, Cootehill, Bailieborough, Castleblayney, and Carrickmacross, forwarded by the train leaving Enniskillen at 6.20 a.m ?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): Letters can be posted in Enniskillen up to 8 p.m. for delivery the first thing next morning in both Dublin and Belfast. It is doubtful whether a sufficient number of letters are posted late at night in Enniskillen and the other towns mentioned to warrant an additional despatch by the train leaving Enniskillen at the early hour of 6.20 a.m.; but I will have inquiry made upon this point.

## SOUTH AFRICA (NATAL)—THE CHIEF LANGALIBALELE.

Mr. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether arrangements have been made for the return of the Chief Langalibalele to Natal; and, if so, under what conditions ?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Sir Henry Holland) (Hampstead): The Legislative Council of Natal has agreed to the return of Langalibalele to the Colony under the following conditions:—(1) That Langalibalele be placed in the Zwart Kop location, near Pietermaritzburg, under the charge of the Chief Teteleka; (2) that only such Natives as are *bonâ fide* members of his family be allowed to live with him; (3) that he be debarred from exercising any authority whatever as a Chief, or from claiming any privilege as such. £50 per annum has been voted for his maintenance. I may add that permission was given, in a despatch dated January 27 last, to make such arrangements as might be necessary for Langalibalele's return; but that there has not yet been time to learn what action has been taken in the matter.

## POLICE (METROPOLIS) — DAYLIGHT ROBBERIES IN THE STREETS.

Mr. KNOWLES (Salford, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in view of the fact that on Friday last a lady was robbed in Westbourne Terrace in broad daylight, and that many similar offences have been committed recently in that neighbourhood, he proposes to take steps, by the employment of detectives or otherwise, to increase the security of the public ?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): It is a fact that a lady was robbed on Friday last in Westbourne Terrace at 3.30 p.m. on a very foggy day. The Commissioner of Police tells me that he is not aware that many similar offences have been committed in that neighbourhood. Such an augmentation of the Police Force as would make impossible in this great Metropolis an outrage such as this of snatching away a purse openly carried in a lady's hand, would entail an expenditure of which the taxpayers might reasonably complain.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD—MULTIPLE APPOINTMENTS IN BAMPTON DISTRICT, OXFORDSHIRE.

Mr. F. W. MACLEAN (Oxford, Woodstock) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to the appointment of the same gentleman to fill the offices of Surveyor of Highways of the Bampton East Highway District, Oxfordshire (containing a mileage of 138 miles), and of Sanitary Inspector of the Bampton Rural Sanitary District (consisting of 42 parishes and covering 70,048 acres); whether, having regard to the large and increasing duties of such offices, it is possible for one person adequately to discharge the same; whether complaints have been received by the Local Government Board from the ratepayers of the district in relation to such appointments; whether the Board has been urged by many of such ratepayers not to sanction the appointment of the same person to both offices; and, whether, under these circumstances, the Local Government Board will direct inquiry to be made into the soundness or otherwise of such complaints, and not sanction the appointment during the coming year unless satisfied that there is no ground for such complaints?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): In 1885, when the Local Government Board were informed that the Inspector of Nuisances of the district in question had been re-appointed, and that it was proposed that he should also hold the office of Surveyor of Highways, the Board objected to the two offices being held by the same person. But, having received particulars of the work which had been done by the Inspector of Nuisances, and the Medical Officer of Health for the county having borne testimony to the efficiency with which that officer discharged his duties; the Board considered that there was no sufficient reason for their withholding their assent to an arrangement which had been unanimously approved by the Sanitary Authority. The Inspector has now been re-appointed for another year. The only communication which the Board has received objecting to the re-appointment is from the waywarden of one of the 38 parishes in the highway district. The Board, before arriving at a decision on the subject, will ask for the observations of the Sanitary Authority on the statements in that communication.

## LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—CASE OF WILLIAM CASSELS.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is the case that William Cassels, sentenced on the 5th instant by the Sheriff Substitute at Portree to three weeks' imprisonment from his committal on December 23, had been kept in prison awaiting trial ten weeks from that date, or seven weeks beyond the term of his actual sentence; and, if he will explain why a prisoner ultimately tried summarily before a Court whose powers of imprisonment are limited to two months, was detained in prison ten weeks awaiting trial?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities): William Cassels was detained in prison for ten weeks before trial, which was, in my opinion, most improper in such a case, unless there were exceptional circumstances to explain the delay. I think it necessary to make a full inquiry, and I shall feel obliged if the hon. Member will postpone his Question for a week.

## THE CURRENCY, GOLD AND SILVER (ROYAL COMMISSION).

MR. MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether his attention has been called to a paragraph in *The Standard* of the 8th March, which contains the following statement with regard to the Gold and Silver Commission:—

> "The Commissioners will probably hold only two or three further meetings."

Whether he is aware that the Commissioners have only recently entered into an inquiry as to bi-metallism, which was the main object of their appointment; and, whether, considering the important character of the subject, he can inform the House if the Commissioners will close their inquiry without calling upon well-known authorities to give evidence as to the advisability of promoting an international agreement for the introduction of bi-metallism?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): My attention has not been drawn to the paragraph in question. My impression is that there is no foundation for such a statement. As the hon. Member is aware, the Commissioners act entirely on their own responsibility, and the Government do not interfere with the discharge of their duties. I should think that the Commission will not break up without dealing with all the important questions that were referred to it.

## ARMY MEDICAL STAFF (INDIA)—BRIGADE-SURGEONS.

COLONEL HUGHES-HALLETT (Rochester) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will take into consideration the case of brigade-surgeons on the Medical Staff in India, having regard to the severe examinations they have to pass for their promotion, with a view to placing them, as was contemplated by the Royal Warrant of 2nd

December 1879, on the same footing as brigade-surgeons in all other parts of Her Majesty's Dominions, as regards pay, position, and pension, instead of allowing them to remain, as at present in India, on the same pay after 25 and 30 years' service as surgeons-major, and subject at times to routine duties under medical officers of the latter rank who may be their juniors?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham) (who replied) said: When the Royal Warrant created the rank of brigade-surgeon in 1879 the Secretary of State for India declined to allow any increased expenditure to be cast on the Revenues of India by reason of that Warrant, and the present Secretary of State adheres to that determination.

## INLAND REVENUE—THE COLLECTORSHIP AT SLIGO.

MR. KENNEDY (Sligo, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is the intention of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue to abolish the collectorship at Sligo, the most important port and town on the West Coast of Ireland after Limerick; and, if so, whether there will then be no Head Office between Londonderry and Galway; whether the Corporation, the Grand Jury, the Harbour Board, and trading community of Sligo have passed Resolutions and forwarded Memorials against the abolition of this office; and, whether the traders of the counties of Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, and Longford have given expression to their opposition to the proposed change; and, if so, whether the public feeling will be considered by the Inland Revenue Commissioners?

MR. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has received a copy of the Resolution unanimously passed at a meeting of the merchants of Sligo and the adjoining counties, protesting against the contemplated removal of the Collector of Inland Revenue and his staff from Sligo; and, if not, whether he will inquire into the matter, and recommend to the Commissioners of Inland Revenue to consider the wishes of the traders of four out of five of the counties of Connaught?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said, the question of abolishing the collectorship at Sligo was under consideration. In the event of its being abolished there would be no other collector between Londonderry and Galway; but there would be several supervisors and officers, and no inconvenience would be caused. Memorials had been received from the Corporation, the Harbour Board, and also from the public living in the district with reference to the proposed change, and these Memorials would be fully considered.

## CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—REMOVAL OF CATTLE FROM IRELAND—PLEURO-PNEUMONIA.

COLONEL GUNTER (Yorkshire, W.R., Barkstone Ash) asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether any precautionary measures are adopted to prevent the removal inland of cattle landed at Liverpool or elsewhere in Great Britain from Ireland, that are known to have been herded with, or in contact with, animals suffering with pleuro-pneumonia?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY (Lord JOHN MANNERS) (Leicestershire, E.): An Order of Council has been approved, and will shortly be passed, to enable Local Authorities to deal with animals which have been exposed to contact with diseased animals while in transit, whether from Ireland or other parts of the United Kingdom.

## PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (IRELAND)—NORTH ANTRIM.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on the occasion of the recent Parliamentary Election for North Antrim, Captain Robinson, the only available magistrate in the town of Portrush, refused, on the day previous to the polling, to take the declarations of secrecy of the agents of the Liberal candidate, who attended before him for the purpose; whether he first refused on the ground that the declarations were not stamped; whether he was entitled to offer such an objection; whether the documents having been stamped at his direction, he a second time refused to sign them, on the plea that they were not properly drafted; whether he did not sign them until after he had caused much annoyance and loss of time; and, what notice will be taken of his conduct?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Holmes) (Dublin University) (who replied) said: The Government have no knowledge of, and have received no information as to, the alleged occurrence. If any person thinks he has cause for complaint against the action of any Justice of the Peace in his magisterial capacity, the proper course is to communicate with the Lord Chancellor, who will take the necessary action.

### MERCHANT SHIPPING — THE WRECK OF THE "FLAMINGO."

Mr. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether a portion of the wreck of the iron steamer *Flamingo* still lies off the north-east headland of St. Margaret's Bay, near the South Foreland, in the course of small craft going round the point; and, if so, whether he will consider the advisability of having it removed?

The SECRETARY (Baron Henry De Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The Trinity House, who are the executive authority in this matter, despatched on the 8th instant a steamer and diver to complete the dispersion of what remains of the wreck of the *Flamingo*.

### CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS — SHIPMENT OF INFECTED CATTLE FROM DUBLIN — PLEURO-PNEUMONIA.

Colonel GUNTER (Yorkshire, W.R., Barkstone Ash) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he is aware that cows belonging to a dairyman in Dublin were exposed for sale in the Dublin Cattle Market whilst suffering with pleuro-pneumonia on the 14th of February; that they were subsequently sent to the Dublin Steamship Company's wharf with a large number of cattle to be shipped for Liverpool; that the Veterinary Inspector there detected the diseased animals and ordered them to be slaughtered; that the shipping of the animals that had been in contact with those slaughtered continued; and that the Inspector's orders for closing the yard as an infected place were unattended to, as no orders to that effect had been received from Dublin Castle?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Holmes) (Dublin University) (who replied) said: The facts are substantially as stated in the Question. There is no power to detain any animals during transit except those found to be diseased. The Privy Council were advised by their professional officer that an order declaring the yard an infected place should not be made. The dairyman has since been prosecuted, and fined £2 and costs.

### ARMY—MUSKETRY—EFFICIENCY OF THE INFANTRY.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the Secretary of State for War, What proportion of the effective strength of the Infantry of the Line, and of the Infantry Militia, were put last year through a course of musketry, and what proportion of such number did not succeed in making sufficient points to get out of the third class?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The proportion of the effective strength of the Infantry of the Line that was put through a course of musketry was—trained soldiers, 89 per cent; recruits, 64 per cent. In the Militia the proportion of men trained was 87 per cent of those battalions and half-battalions which were able to go through a course of musketry. Of the trained soldiers of the Infantry, 46 per cent failed to obtain sufficient points to pass out of the third class; and of the recruits, 23·5 per cent. Of the Militia, 38 per cent failed to pass out of the third class. These numbers are based upon the musketry practice of the Army for the year ending March 31, 1886, and of the Militia for the year 1886. As I presume that the object of my hon. Friend is to make a comparison between the shooting of the Army and Militia and of the Volunteers, I should like to say that the conditions are wholly different. In the case of the Army, it is necessary to get 110 points in 80 rounds to get into the second class, and this has been found so onerous that the qualification is to be reduced. In the case of the Militia, a man must make 39 points out of 30 rounds. In the case of the Volunteers, on the other hand, all that is necessary to get out of the third class is to make 45 points out of a maximum of 60 shots; and the recruit will don will be defrayed; and, whether the Government will insist that the public shall not be entirely deprived of their long-continued enjoyment of this open space, and will prevent the erection upon it of buildings that would be injurious to the surrounding property?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford): The cost of the conversion of Burton's Court into a recreation ground for the troops of the London garrison will be borne mainly by private subscriptions; but a grant of £800 has been made from Army Votes towards the expense of re-laying the ground. I understand the public will still have access to the ground at certain hours of the day and on Sundays. The site is not War Department property; and the question of erecting buildings thereon will be for the consideration of the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital, before whom I will take care to bring any complaint which my hon. Friend may forward.

## PUBLIC PARKS AND WORKS BILL—THE VICTORIA PARK ESTATE.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether the lands managed in connection with Victoria Park, which, by the Public Parks and Works Bill, it is proposed to transfer to the Metropolitan Board, include the whole of the property known as the Victoria Park Estate?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): There is no Estate under the management of the Office of Works outside the actual limits of Victoria Park, and no such estate is intended to be transferred by the Public Parks and Works Bill. The expression "land managed in connection with Victoria Park," referred to by the hon. Member, was used by the draftsman, as he informs me, because the limits of the Park are not legally defined in the Acts of Parliament under which the Park was formed.

## POST OFFICE—ADDRESS TO THE POSTMASTER GENERAL.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked the Postmaster General, Whether any official document has been put before him, submitting for his consideration the address recently presented to the Secretary of the Post Office by certain subordinate officials of that Department; and, whether he has taken any official notice of it?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): An official Minute was placed before me a few days ago, submitting for my consideration the Address to which my hon. Friend refers. This Minute the Secretary subsequently requested my permission to withdraw, and I allowed that course to be taken, being reluctant, as I have already stated in this House, to take official cognizance of the incident in question.

## ARMY (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—CONTRACT FOR CARTRIDGES.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, Whether it is the case that the firm of Kynoch and Co., of Birmingham, have lately executed a contract, either wholly or in part, of cartridges for the British Government; whether this contract was completed within the time specified in the contract; and, what percentage, if any, of this order was rejected on account of bad construction?

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL (Mr. NORTHCOTE) (Exeter): A contract for 10,000,000 cartridges was obtained by competition by Messrs. Kynoch and Co. in October, 1885. The execution of the contract, for various reasons, some of which were beyond Messrs. Kynoch's control, has been seriously delayed. The percentage of rejections was a little over 20 per cent, and a Special Committee assembled to consider an appeal from Messrs. Kynoch and Co. against these rejections, has reported that they were undoubtedly due to inferior workmanship.

## METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—SEWAGE PRECIPITATION WORKS AT BARKING.

MR. SALT (Stafford) asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, Under what Parliamentary powers the Board is acting in accepting a tender of £406,000 for sewage precipitation works at Barking; whether this expenditure is final; and, what further expenditure is contemplated at the outfalls of Barking and Crossness?

THE CHAIRMAN (Sir JAMES M'GAREL HOGG) (Middlesex, Hornsey): I may state that a tender, amounting to £406,000, for the sewage works about to be executed at Barking was accepted by the Board, in pursuance of the powers of the 135th Section of the Metropolis Management Act, 1875, and of other provisions conferring jurisdiction upon the Board with reference to the disposal of sewage and refuse from the sewers of the Metropolis, and for the purpose of preventing the discharge of sewage sludge into the Thames. The £406,000 applies to the works at Barking only, and is not final. A further sum will probably have to be expended in the completion of the works at both outfalls and the purchase of sludge ships.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (IRELAND)—THE BOROUGH OF NEWRY AND THE COUNTIES OF DOWN AND ARMAGH—FISCAL RELATIONS.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) (for Mr. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY) (Newry) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has any objection to lay upon the Table a Copy of the Report of Mr. R. Hamilton, Local Government Board Inspector, and of the evidence given before him at the inquiry held in Newry on the 4th January last, and of all Correspondence and Letters passing between the Local Government Board, or Mr. Hamilton, their Inspector, and the officials or members of the Grand Juries of Armagh or Down relative to the fiscal relations between the borough of Newry and the counties of Armagh and Down?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University) (who replied) said: I cannot undertake to lay on the Table the Report made by the Inspector to the Local Government Board, as it is not usual to publish documents of that character. There is no Departmental objection to the publication of the evidence and the correspondence mentioned; but they are very voluminous, and, perhaps, the hon. Member's object would be sufficiently attained by being given the opportunity of seeing copies.

### THE EXHIBITIONS OF 1884, 1885, 1886.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If any Accounts or Receipts and Expenditure have been rendered by the Royal Commissioners for the International Health Exhibition of 1884, the Inventions Exhibition of 1885, and the Indian and Colonial Exhibition of 1886; and, if he will cause such Accounts to be laid upon the Table?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Government have been in no way connected with the various Exhibitions recently held, and, therefore, the Government have no official cognizance of their accounts. I am under the impression that the accounts of the earlier Exhibitions have already been made public; and I believe it is the intention of His Royal Highness, the President, who has taken so much interest in these Exhibitions, and to whose personal energy so much of their success is due, to cause the remainder of the accounts to be made public as soon as they admit of being finally rendered. I may point out that it was only one Exhibition—namely, the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, which was held under the authority of a Royal Commission.

### THE IRISH LAND QUESTION—LEGISLATION.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government intend to legislate upon the Irish Land Question during the present Session?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Sir, my answer is, Yes.

MR. COBB: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether the Land Bill will be introduced before or after the Coercion Bill; and whether or not it will be introduced in the same House?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I can give no further information, Sir, than I have already given in this House.

### PUBLIC OFFICIALS—THE DOCKYARDS—BETRAYAL OF TRUST.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If the Government are aware that the plans and specifications to which Mr. Young Terry, late draftsman at Chatham Dockyard, obtained access whilst in Government employ, were communicated to a European friendly Power; and, if so, whether he will inform the House which Power so received the information?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing) (who replied) said: As I stated yesterday, it would not be for the public interest that at present any reply to Questions of this character should be made. But I think it only right to state, inasmuch as a number of statements in reference to this case have appeared in the public Press, that they have been made without the authority of the Admiralty, and must, therefore, be treated with caution.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he wished to put a further Question. In the morning papers of that day there was a telegram from New York stating that the Secretary to the Navy at New York had denied that any information had been received through the American Legation from the London Correspondent of *The New York Times*. As the report was calculated to damage that gentleman, he wished to know whether there was any ground for saying that the London Correspondent of *The New York Times* had anything whatever to do with the matter?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: As I stated before, I must answer all these Questions with some reserve. What I said in the earlier part of the evening was that statements which had appeared in the newspapers relative to this case were made without the authority of the Admiralty; and I have no objection to supplement my statement by saying that no official of the Admiralty has made any charge or allegation against any member of the American Legation, or, as far as I know, against any American newspaper.

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## THE CONTRACT SYSTEM OF THE ADMIRALTY—THE ROYAL COMMISSION —IRREGULAR PUBLICATION OF EVIDENCE—PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

SIR WILLIAM PLOWDEN (Wolverhampton, W.): Sir, I rise with great reluctance to ask the indulgence of the House while I refer to a matter personal to myself. I am compelled to take this step in consequence of a Question which was put and answered in the House during my unavoidable absence on Tuesday last. The Question referred to certain extracts which appeared in *The Times* on Monday morning from the evidence taken by the Contracts Committee of the Admiralty. Now, Sir, when I found on Monday morning that the Question was on the Notice Paper, I wrote at once to the hon. Member for East Bradford (Mr. Byron Reed), who had placed it on the Paper, and also to the hon. Member for the Ormskirk Division of Lancashire (Mr. Forwood), the Secretary to the Admiralty, who was likely to respond to it. In those letters I pointed out that I should unavoidably be absent from my place on Tuesday, and I said that it would be convenient to myself if the Question could be postponed until my return. I must, at the outset, acknowledge the courtesy and kindness with which I was treated by the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Bradford; and I have his permission to read the letter he sent to me in reply to my request. I cannot say that I am able to extend the same gratitude to the hon. Member for the Ormskirk Division of Lancashire. The hon. Member for East Bradford sent a note to me at a quarter past 4 o'clock on Tuesday, when I was on my way to Wolverhampton, and in that note he said—

> "On my arrival here at the House I at once saw the hon. Member for the Ormskirk Division, and I have shown him your note. He, however, objects to the Question being postponed, as the matter it refers to is one of administrative importance, and, therefore, will not brook delay; and, besides, he says that he has heard from you on the subject this morning, and that you agree that the Question should be put."

Now, it is a curious fact that I received from the hon. Member for Ormskirk, on Tuesday morning, a telegram, in which he stated—

> "I propose, in answer to the Question on the Paper for to-night, to read the first two letters of our correspondence."

Having at that time sent a letter to the hon. Gentleman, couched in the same terms as that to the hon. Member for East Bradford, I telegraphed in reply to the telegram of the Secretary to the Admiralty—

> "Good; but see my letter posted this morning: shall be away at Wolverhampton this afternoon."

No doubt, it was natural that the Secretary to the Admiralty should be anxious, for Departmental reasons, that the matter should be disposed of at once; and I can understand, from circumstances which have since transpired, that the hon. Gentleman was not at all unwilling that his answer should be given in my absence. ["Oh!"] I think I shall make this clear to hon. Gentlemen opposite; but, however that may be, whether I am right or wrong in that conjecture, I do not understand why the hon. Member for Ormskirk, unwittingly —for I am sure he would not have done it purposely—should have misled the hon. Member for East Bradford, and induced him to bring on the Question, because, had he shown the whole of my telegram to the hon. Member for East Bradford, I am perfectly convinced that the hon. Member would have been the last man in the world to insist on bringing forward the Question in my absence, and would have refused altogether to be the medium of eliciting an answer from the Secretary to the Admiralty. This may be considered comparatively unimportant; but still it is one which I think I ought to bring under the notice of the House. And now I will turn to what was stated by the hon. Member for Ormskirk in the answer to the Question which he gave in my absence; and I must say that I was extremely surprised to find what I can only describe as a very nasty insinuation — ["Oh!"] — yes, a very nasty insinuation indeed—contained in it towards the close of the answer. I say again that I have no desire to impute to the hon. Member for Ormskirk any intention to make a nasty insinuation; but, as it stands, I will ask the House whether what he said in answer to a Question put to him in my absence does not contain a very nasty insinuation. The hon. Gentleman said, at the close of his reply—

> "I am sorry that the hon. Member"—that is myself—"does not state what he did with the notes he says he took of the Report, seeing that some of the comments in *The Times* had reference to some of the extracts from the Report."

Then the hon. Gentleman goes on to say, in singular contrast to the terms of my letter—

> "As the hon. Member for Wolverhampton is not in his place, it is right to say that I communicated with him and received his consent to the production of the correspondence."

Now, I accept the entire responsibility for the publication of the extracts from the evidence. I am bound to do so. I regret extremely—and I place myself unreservedly in the hands of the House in the matter—that through misapprehension—how it has arisen I cannot at present understand—but, under a complete misapprehension, I took away, in the fullest possible belief that it was public property given to me to do what I liked with, what is said to be a confidential document. Now, there were two documents; one the Report of the Committee on Admiralty Contracts, and the other a Report of the evidence adduced before the Committee. I wish the House to understand clearly what my position was. I had no knowledge whatever of the evidence having been printed, but I had considerable knowledge in reference to the Report. The hon. Gentleman will be aware that on the 18th of February a summary appeared in *The Daily Telegraph* which purported to be a *résumé* of the Report of the Committee on Contracts, and rumours were circulated about for some time that there were considerable differences of opinion in regard to the Report, and that the delay in producing it before the House was occasioned by those differences of opinion. I was very anxious to see the Report, if it was to be presented to the House, and to compare it with the *résumé* in *The Daily Telegraph*, which I had in my possession. With that object I called at the Admiralty and asked the hon. Member for Ormskirk to allow me to see the Report. There was some difficulty as to my seeing it, but eventually the hon. Gentleman consented to my seeing it as a confidential document. Immediately after he had consented to my seeing the Report I asked if I could see the corrected proof, and I was informed that the proof had been returned to the printers, and that I could not see it. I mention this in reference to my letter of the 4th of March. It occurred to me that although the proof might have gone back to the printers there might possibly be a rough copy which I might be allowed to see. I, therefore, went to the Admiralty on Saturday last and asked to see the document, and, with great kindness, the hon. Member for Ormskirk, through his private secretary, allowed me to see a copy of the Report. The secretary told me that the Report was a confidential communication, and that I should not be allowed to take away a copy of it; but he said I might read it and take notes from it. He then pointed to a second set of papers, and said, "There is the Report of the evidence; you can have that." I said, "I should be glad to have it; may I take it away with me?" He said, "Yes; we do not care for it." I took it away with the intention of reading it afterwards. I read the Report; and, after I had done so, I took away the other collection of papers, with the complete understanding, on my part, that the second bundle of papers was absolutely open to the public. I was fully aware that the Report itself was strictly confidential. I read the evidence in the course of the afternoon, and then handed it over to a friend, with whom I had some conversation about it. I said, "It is public property; you may take it away with you." He did so; and on the Monday morning certain extracts from the evidence appeared in *The Times*. I can only say that I am extremely sorry that, through a misapprehension—but through no breach of confidence, for I wish altogether to dissever myself from any imputation of that kind—these extracts should have appeared in *The Times*. And now let me turn to the matter in which I say a nasty insinuation is contained in the reply of the Secretary to the Admiralty on Tuesday to the Question put to him by the hon. Member for East Bradford. In the remarks of the hon. Member for Ormskirk, which I quoted just now, he said—

> "I am sorry the hon. Member does not state what he did with the notes which he states he took of the Report, seeing that some of the statements of *The Times* had reference to the extracts from the Report."

Now, the hon. Gentleman is not altogether correct. If he had taken the trouble to look at the leading article in *The Times*, he would have found that there was no reference to any extracts from that Report. There is not a single comment of the nature to which he refers. I have here *The Times* in question, and I challenge the hon. Gentleman to point to one single extract from the Report or one single comment on such an extract. I hope, then, that I have satisfied the hon. Gentleman in regard to his curiosity, which, I admit, was perfectly natural. I took no notes whatever from the Report, and very naturally, because I had been told that it was a confidential document. It would have been perfectly useless for me to have taken notes from it, when it was given to me as a confidential Report, and I knew that in the course of a few days the public would have it in the usual way. The hon. Gentleman is altogether inaccurate in his statement—unintentionally, of course—when he says I have stated that I took notes of the Report. I never made any statement of the kind. I never said that I took notes from the Report. I suppose the hon. Member has arrived at the conclusion that I did take notes from the Report, because I say in my letter, of the 7th of March, that—

> "On visiting the Admiralty on Saturday, I was permitted to read and to take notes of the Report on Contract."

He gathers from that that I did take notes. It is true that I had permission to take notes; but, as a matter of fact, I took none whatever. There is another matter to which I feel bound to refer; but I do so with great reluctance, not only on my own account, but on account of the awkward position in which it may possibly place the hon. Gentleman himself. The House will have observed that, in the telegram the hon. Member for Ormskirk sent to me on Tuesday morning, he said—

> "I am going to read the two first letters of our correspondence."

As a matter of fact, the hon. Gentleman read four. I attach no importance to that. The only remark I will make is, that it is not what the hon. Member said he was going to do; because, instead of reading two letters, he read four. What I do complain of is that, in reading the fourth letter, the name of another gentleman was unwarrantably dragged into the matter, without any permission from me, without the permission from the other gentleman named, and absolutely without the hon. Gentleman having received the letter from me. I am quite aware, from what the hon. Gentleman himself has told me, that he has been labouring under a misapprehension. He has, no doubt, thought that he received that fourth letter from me. I am sorry to trouble the House at such great length; but it is a matter of considerable importance to me; and, therefore, I will ask the House to follow me while I read the letter in question. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Ormskirk read my letter to him, of the

7th of March, and he then went on to say—

> "The hon. Member"—referring to myself—"was good enough to enclose for my information the following letter he received on Friday, March 4, from Mr. H. C. Burdett—the friend to whom, I presume, he refers in his letter of the 7th—the day he wrote appointing Saturday, the 5th, on which to peruse the report:—
>
> "'Dear Sir William,—Will you come over here as I want to explain how it will be easiest for you to get out the facts and to understand the report to-morrow. Believe me faithfully yours, H. C. BURDETT.'"

Mr. Burdett had asked me to dine with him at the St. Stephen's Club, and the letter began with these words—

> "Will you dine with me at 8 p.m.? The bearer awaits an answer. Will you come over here, &c.?"

Now this letter of Mr. Burdett has been most unwarrantably brought forward; but so far as Mr. Burdett is concerned, personally he is a gentleman who can very well take care of himself. He is a well known writer on statistics, and takes a great interest in the Spending Departments of the Government. I think I am perfectly correct in saying that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Treasury Bench and the Front Opposition Bench have on more than one occasion received from Mr. Burdett very valuable information. But whatever his position is, I altogether object to his letter to me being made use of without his consent and mine. I was greatly astonished when I returned to London on the Wednesday morning to find what had occurred. I knew perfectly well that I had not sent this letter to the hon. Member for Ormskirk. I wrote to the hon. Member, having previously told him that he must have been aware that the letter of Mr. Burdett was not intended for him, and I asked his private secretary to inquire whether any letter of mine had been left in the Admiralty Office when I last visited it. To that letter I received a reply from the private secretary to the hon. Member, Mr. Voules—

> "In reply to your letter to-night I beg to give you the following explanation. Mr. Forwood on Monday gave me in the House of Commons a packet of correspondence which he had had with you with reference to the Report of the Committee on Admiralty Contracts. Among them I noticed one addressed to you, and signed, 'H. C. Burdett.' On the receipt of your letter as to whether any letter had been found in my room after your visit ceased, I am now informed by one of the messengers that on Monday evening he found a letter addressed to you on the floor of the room, which he placed on my desk, but without mentioning the matter to me. I can only add that I never saw this letter before Tuesday morning."

Now, I wish to relieve from any imputation whatever Mr. Voules, who gives me this information. It is quite clear that he could not have known anything about this letter, but I think the hon. Member for Ormskirk was bound to know that he had not received this letter from me on the Monday, because he replied to my letter of that date, and made no mention of the fact. All I can say is that if the hon. Gentleman conducts the business of the Admiralty in the same careless manner as that in which he conducts his own correspondence, the business of the Admiralty must be in a rather bad condition. Perhaps upon this subject I may be allowed to refer to a letter which the Secretary to the Admiralty has been good enough to send me. He says—

> "In reply to your note of the 9th, about the letter of Mr. Burdett, I first found it in the correspondence on Tuesday morning."

May I remind the House that the letter of mine in which the hon. Member says this enclosure appears, was delivered on Monday evening, and was answered by him on the Monday evening. He goes on to say—

> "I rather hastily thought that I had omitted to examine the envelope, as both seemed to "hang together."

A rather curious expression "hang together." Well, Sir, in regard to this matter, I should like to make one or two very short remarks. ["Oh!"] I am sorry to occupy so much of the time of the House, but I think the House will see that it is absolutely necessary that I should give an answer to the imputations which have been made against me. I will only point to the fact that in the letters which passed between myself and the Parliamentary Secretary of the Admiralty, there has never been one single reference to any enclosure whatever, nor has the hon. Gentleman in any reply to me made any reference to any enclosure having been received; when the hon. Member says that he found the letter of Mr. Burdett on his table on Tuesday morning, and considered that it had been enclosed to him by me, he must have jumped to a somewhat extraordinary conclusion. If I had been acting the part of a strictly honest man and wanted to point out to the Secretary to the Admiralty the name of the friend to whom I had given the collection of papers I had received, I should have mentioned the facts explicitly. But why should I go and put into my letter an enclosure which conveys no information at all, and which does not even give my name. Certainly it is addressed to "Sir William," but I imagine that there are a good many "Sir Williams" in Great Britain, and it is impossible for the hon. Member to say that this particular communication was addressed to me. All I say is that if the hon. Member treats letters in this way ordinarily, he has an extraordinary way of dealing with them. I wish again to repeat my complete denial that any suspicion can rightly attach to me that in taking this collection of papers containing the evidence, I had the least idea that I was taking away a confidential Report. I am certain that it was given to me with a clear intimation that it was a public document; and, having arrived at the conclusion, I would ask hon. Members as reasonable men to argue the matter out, and they will at once see that I came to that conclusion because I was told that the Report itself was a confidential document, and that I could not take it away; whereas the second collection of papers which I had not asked for, but which were offered to me, were represented to me to be not confidential, and I was told that I might take them away. I was further told—and it was a matter which had a considerable impression upon me—that the Admiralty "do not care about it."

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. FORWOOD) (Lancashire, Ormskirk): I hope the hon. Gentleman will remember the old proverb, that one tale is good until the other is told. At the outset, I wish to say that I accept the assurance of the hon. Member that in the mode in which he has dealt with the Papers placed before him at the Admiralty Office, he acted inadvertently and without understanding the conditions under which they were entrusted to him. But the hon. Member has made some remarks, personal to myself, in regard to which it is necessary that I should detain the House for a minute or two while I give a reply. At the outset I wish to remind hon. Members that I believe the House resents—and justly resents—the publication of confidential documents, and that the publication of confidential documents is considered to be a reflection upon the Department that has charge of them. Well, Sir, when on Monday morning I saw documents published in *The Times* which had been in the charge of a Department of the Admiralty with which I am connected, and knowing that I had permitted them to be seen by an hon. Member in whom I had reposed the confidence which one Member of this House has in the discretion of another—a confidence which has happily characterised the relations between Member and Member of this House—entertaining that opinion, and knowing that I had consented to show an hon. Member a document which was confidential in its character, I felt that if there was any reflection in regard to the publication of this document I was unwittingly the cause of it. I wrote at once to the hon. Member to whom I had lent the document and asked him if he could explain how the matter had become public. I received a reply to that letter on Monday evening, and, as the hon. Member has stated, I gave that reply, together with other documents, to my private secretary in an envelope. On Tuesday morning I saw that the hon. Member for East Bradford had given Notice of a Question which he proposed to put in the House, and I telegraphed to the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, saying that in answering the Question I should have to refer to the two letters I had received from him. I received in reply this telegram—"Good; but see my letter of to-day." The letter of the hon. Member was couched in the same terms as his letter to the hon. Member for East Bradford. It stated that the hon. Member for Wolverhampton would be unable to be in his place in the House; but as I proposed only to read the communications I had received from the hon. Member himself and to explain the matter, as the credit of the Department was at stake, and seeing that unless an answer was made at once none could be given until 72 hours afterwards, I felt perfectly justified in reading the letters I had received from the hon. Member. One word more. The hon. Gentleman has referred to what I had supposed to be an enclosure in his letter—namely, a communication from Mr. Burdett. I did not see the letter from Mr. Burdett in opening the letter of the hon. Gentleman on Monday night; but it was given to me on the Tuesday morning with the papers I had given to my secretary on the previous evening. Finding that the letter of Mr. Burdett tallied with that part of the communication of the hon. Gentleman in which he stated that he had given a copy of the evidence to a friend, I came to the conclusion that he had enclosed the letter of Mr. Burdett in confirmation of his statement that he had entrusted the copy of the evidence to a friend and had not sent it to *The Times.* It is a singular coincidence that that letter should have come into my hands. It does, however, appear that the letter had been dropped in the room of my private secretary, and being found by a messenger, was placed on the top of the letters given by me to my private secretary. In that way the whole matter is explained. I felt justified, in the interest of a Public Department, whose conduct, as I have already stated, was reflected upon by the publication of this confidential document, in taking the earliest opportunity to set the matter right with the public as to how it had occurred, and it was impossible to do so without reading the letters of the hon. Member. I regret that there should have been any misapprehension in the matter, and I regret that the hon. Gentleman should have felt aggrieved in regard to it; but I submit myself to the judgment of the House, and I maintain that what I did was right and proper in the circumstances of the case.

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## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NAVY ESTIMATES.

In reply to Dr. Cameron (Glasgow, College),

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, it was proposed to take the Naval Estimates and the Supplementary Naval Estimates afterwards on Monday evening.

## THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881, AND THE PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACT, 1885—THE EVIDENCE.

The following Question stood on the Notice Paper in the name of Mr. T. M. Healy (Longford, N):—To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, If he can explain why the evidence of the Royal Commission on the Irish Land Question, presided over by Lord Cowper, contains, as if from four witnesses, a series of statements headed "Anonymous;" and, is there any precedent for evidence to be received or published by a Royal Commission from witnesses unwilling to give their names?

Mr. T. M. HEALY said: The authorities of the House being unable to place upon the Paper the Question that I desired to put, I decline to put this Question.

Colonel HUGHES-HALLETT (Rochester) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to prosecute any official or *employé* of the Government who, either by the Royal Commissions or Committees now sitting, have recently sat, or may sit at any time in the future, to investigate matters connected with arms, stores, &c. in connection with the Military and Naval Departments of the State, or by any other means, may be found guilty of betrayal of trust in receiving payment in money or kind from contractors or others for disclosing or parting with, without high authority, plans, tracings, designs, and information generally of a most confidential character relating to Government or to Government workshops?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I understand the Question of my hon. and gallant Friend to be an inquiry whether the Government will use any powers the law may give them to punish breach of trust, fraud, or corruption in a public servant, or in any persons in relation to Public Departments over whom they have control; and my answer is that in all cases of the kind in which the law gives power to punish that power will be rigorously exercised.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston): If the law is inadequate, will the right hon. Gentleman undertake to strengthen it?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I will certainly undertake that the subject shall be carefully examined into.

## MERCHANDISE MARKS ACTS CONSOLIDATION.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If, with a view to expediting legislation to restrain the fraudulent marking of merchandise, he will grant facilities for the strictly formal Second Reading of the Merchandise Marks Act (1862) Amendment Bill and the Merchandise (Fraudulent Marks) Bill, and assent to their being referred to a Select Committee, with power to take evidence, together with the proposed Merchandise Marks Acts Consolidation Bill?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): If the House will adopt the course suggested by my hon. Friend I shall be exceedingly glad to afford all the facilities in my power, on the understanding that opportunity will be afforded for discussion on a later stage of the measure.

## THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881, AND THE PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACT, 1885—MR. KNIPE'S REPORT.

Mr. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, What is the explanation of the delay in presenting Mr. Knipe's Report to Members, and when it will be laid upon the Table of the House?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. Gentleman asks me what is the reason of the delay in presenting Mr. Knipe's Report to Members. My answer is that the fact that Mr. Knipe dissented from the Report of the other Commissioners would, I think, lead to some delay in the presentation of his Report, a delay for which Her Majesty's Government are in no way responsible, and with which they had nothing to do.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): When may we expect to have the Report?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I believe it is in print, but I am not able to say positively when it will be presented.

## *ORDER OF THE DAY.*

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## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE)—RULE 1 (CLOSURE OF DEBATE).—RESOLUTION.

ADJOURNED DEBATE. [ELEVENTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Amendment proposed to the Main Question, as amended.

"That, after a Question has been proposed, a Member rising in his place may claim to move, 'That the Question be now put,' and, unless it shall appear to the Chair that such Motion is an abuse of the Rules of the House, or an infringement of the rights of the minority, the Question, 'That the Question be now put,' shall be put forthwith, and decided without Amendment or Debate:

"When the Motion 'That the Question be now put,' has been carried, and the Question consequent thereon has been decided, any further Motion may be made (the assent of the Chair as aforesaid not having been withheld) which may be requisite to bring to a decision any Question already proposed from the Chair; and also if a Clause be then under consideration, a Motion may be made (with the consent of the Chair as aforesaid) That the Question, That the Clause stand part of, or be added to the Bill, be now put. Such Motions shall be put forthwith, and decided without Amendment or Debate:

"Provided always, That Questions for the Closure of Debate shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear by the numbers declared from the Chair, that such Motion was supported by more than Two Hundred Members, or was opposed by less than Forty Members, and supported by more than One Hundred Members."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

And which Amendment was, in line 9, to leave out after the word "Chair," to the word "such," in line 11.—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words 'and also if a Clause be then under consideration' stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): I desire to support the Amendment of the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton), proposing to leave out the words—

"And also if a Clause be then under consideration, a Motion may be made (with the consent of the Chair as aforesaid) That the Question, 'That the Clause stand part of, or be added to the Bill,' be now put;"

the object professed to be aimed at being to secure that substantial Amendments in Committee of the Whole House may not be shut out by the application of the closure. The principle for which the Irish Nationalist Party are contending in supporting the Amendment is that we refuse to trust either the Chair or a majority of the House when the passions of the House are excited. The right to move Amendments was not taken away from the Irish Members even in those days when the Irish minority was much smaller than it is now—in those days when it consisted of only 26 or 27 Members, when great urgency was pleaded, and when a state of semi-revolution prevailed in Ireland. It was not even taken away from the Irish Opposition by the Liberal Party at the time when they were introducing their first two Coercion Acts. Those Coercion Acts were carried, and admittedly carried, under Rules of Urgency which are different from the proposed clôture or any Rules that have ever been proposed in this House. Under the Rules of Urgency, it was left to us to do what we shall be prevented from doing by the Rule now proposed, and that, notwithstanding that the former Rules were much more stringent than anything that has been since suggested. It was left to us to put Amendments on the Paper, and to have them formally put from the Chair and decided by a Division. That right is now to be taken away, and it will not, under the proposed Rule, be in the power of a Member to move an Amendment himself or to have a decision formally pronounced upon it. Now what does this mean? Why, the Chairman of Committees, who will be an ordinary Member of the House and a political partizan, will not be likely to refuse a Minister permission to move the clôture; and we shall have questions put, without a word of argument or explanation, which will prevent the putting of a single one of any of the Amendments to a clause of a Bill. The Rule, as it stands, means the transfer from the Members of the House of Commons to the Leader of the House, for the time being, the functions of proposing and passing any Bill he chooses to bring forward without alteration. We cannot trust to the sense of fairness of a Conservative Administration when dealing with an Irish question. In the case of an English Bill, hon. Members would understand the merits of an Amendment, and would be influenced by that understanding as to whether or not they would allow the Amendment to be squashed. On the eve of a Coercion Bill, it is positively indecent—nay, more, it is an outrage—for the Government, with an eye to that Coercion Bill only, to ask the House of Commons to pass a Rule containing such a provision as this. The Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) will not help minorities in the slightest degree. It leaves the position of the minority unaltered; nay, it leaves the position of the minority worse—in fact, infinitely worse—because it enables the majority to save an Amendment from the operation of the Rule, while it leaves the minority exactly as it is now. I think I have shown that the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale does not meet the question from the point of view of the protection of the minority. It may meet the question from the point of view of the majority, but it does not touch the question which we have raised by our Amendment. I am surprised that a better production than this miserable Amendment has not been forthcoming; at all events, it does not meet the objection which we urged to the operation of the Rule. In these circumstances, I cannot advise my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast to withdraw the Amendment he has moved. I would urge my hon. Friend still to persevere with his Amendment, and to go to a Division upon it. It will also be the duty of the Irish Members to move an Amendment to that of the noble Lord, when, in its turn, it comes to be proposed, with the object of providing that it should be a satisfactory compromise with reference to the question as a whole; so that the minority shall not be left in the naked and defenceless condition now proposed. Even at the cost of incurring the charge of reiteration, I cannot help repeating that the Rule, as it stands, is more stringent and more oppressive than the Rule of Urgency under which Amendments were ordered to be put at a certain hour without debate, and divided upon by the House.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I think we have some reason to complain, in reference to this matter, of the conduct of the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale. The noble Lord was Chairman of the Committee which considered the Rules of Procedure, and he, in conjunction with the Government, has proposed, for the first time in the history of the House, that Amendments put upon the Paper should be disposed of, not according to their merits, but with reference to previous Amendments, with which they have nothing whatever to do and with which they can have no possible connection. I think it rather too bad that a proposal so extraordinary in its nature as that should have been placed on the Paper by the Government, and that a strong Committee of 40 or 50 Members which sat on the question of Procedure—one of the largest Committees which ever sat—should have been befooled and had its time wasted, under the Presidency of the noble Lord, when the main Rule to which I and my hon. Friends take exception was never brought under its consideration at all. I think that to have asked four Irish Members to sit on that Committee and waste their time in attendance on it for months, under the delusion that they were co-operating with the noble Lord, who is really the Prime Minister of England at this moment, is not in accordance with that fair treatment which the Irish Party have a right to expect. I should like to call the attention of the House to the exact effect of the Amendment if it is adopted by the House. I hold in my hand the Amendments that were proposed to a single clause—the 7th, now 18th—of the Irish Land Act. It was the Fair Rent Clause, and I would ask the House if it can guess how many Amendments were put down to that clause. There were no less than 132; so that, if this Amendment is adopted, the Government, to use the happy phrase of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), will be able to "squash" 132 Amendments at one blow. These Amendments, be it remembered, were not the entire Amendments put down to a Bill, but to a single clause of a Bill, and they wound up with a proposal by the present Chief Secretary for Ireland to omit the clause altogether. The right hon. Gentleman will have an ample opportunity of explaining his action in the matter later on. I ask the House, would it have been decent when there was an important Bill of that character before the House—so important that hon. Members had considered it not only reasonable but necessary to put down 132 Amendments to a single clause—would it have been decent or proper to have swept away the whole of those Amendments by applying the clôture? I am afraid that there are very few Members outside the Government on the opposite of the House, except, perhaps, the right hon. Member for North Hants (Mr. Sclater-Booth), the right hon. Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), and one or two Gentlemen who have had experience in the Chair—with those exceptions, I do not believe there is a single Member opposite who understands the Rule. If there is, I challenge him to get up and explain what its effect will be. It seems to me that the Government do not really intend to make this Rule, except so far as a Coercion Act is concerned, part of the permanent legislation of the House, for, in spite of our taunts and entreaties, they have given no indication of their intention to make the proposal a Standing Order of the House. It is evidently framed with an eye to a Coercion Bill, and a Coercion Bill alone. We have repeatedly asked the First Lord of the Treasury if he intends the Rule as a serious proposal, and if he did, then to put it down as a Standing Order. We remember very well what Lord Salisbury said last year in regard to the government of Ireland—namely, that it must be governed for 20 years by a drastic system of coercion. As an illustration of the manner in which the Bill may work, let me cite what occurred some years ago in reference to a measure which had no immediate connection with Ireland. I see the Chairman of Committees in his place, and I should like to ask him, in reference to the illustration I am about to give, in what way the minority would have been protected on that occasion, if this Rule had been in existence? The Bill to which I refer was the Prison Discipline Bill of Mr. Forster, and my hon. Friend the Member for Cork moved numerous Amendments to the clauses of that Bill. The House at that time was impatient, and if the Irish Members had not possessed the right—which then existed—of debating the Amendments, there can be no doubt, having regard to the spirit which prevailed at that time, it would have been very difficult to have obtained the least consideration for prisoners. In a future Bill of a similar nature, it may be proposed to give the prisoners hard labour and solitary confinement, and the Irish Members, in order to mitigate the lot of these men, might submit various propositions, such as heating the prisoners' cells. If this Rule is passed, the Chairman would be able to step in and say that Amendments proposed with a view of alleviating the condition of the prisoners were frivolous, on the ground that they might be dealt with by the existing Prison Rules, and the Government would be able to weather the Cape of Good Hope by applying the clôture to some previous Amendment, thereby preventing all subsequent Amendments from being considered. We have heard a great deal from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire as to his horror of closure; but has any hon. Member ever discussed in the country the proposal of applying closure to the Amendments that have been proposed? The strangling of children in their birth is a well-known operation; but to strangle them in the womb is very different. The clôture, as proposed by the Government, was intended to kill the child while young; but now it is proposed to kill it off before it can make its appearance, by machinery that was never even dreamt of by the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill). May I ask what is the intention of Members of the Liberal Party in consenting to act as bonnets for the Government? Are they not able to realize that Amendments before they have been proposed are to be killed still-born by this newly-invented machine, which is not the closure, but something which has never hitherto been defined, even in the copious vocabulary of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire. Having taken the whole day on Wednesday to knock into the heads of the Government some idea of our views, and having been met by them with a *non possumus*, it is remarkable that the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale should have been so struck with the justice of the view taken by the Irish Members as to rise at the end of the Sitting and say that something ought to be done to meet our objections. And now we see that the something he proposes to meet our objections is the Amendment we now see on the Paper. As long as the clôture does not exist, in spite of the protests of the hon. Member for Peckham or Camberwell (Mr. Baumann)—or some classic region of that description—whose young and ingenuous mind desired to have the New Rule enforced on Tuesday without further discussion, I think there is something of value in what the Irish Members said after all. After four hours' discussion, we did contrive to penetrate the intelligence of the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale, and induce him to consider the reasonableness of our objections. Unfortunately, the proposal which the noble Lord makes is, in our opinion, more unreasonable and much more mischievous than the original proposal of the Government. What the noble Lord proposes is, "That certain words of the clause defined in the Motion stand part of the Clause." That, as it appears to me, would leave the matter in a worse position than before.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Member is not entitled to discuss the words of another Amendment.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I have no desire to discuss the words of the noble Lord's Amendment. It might be reasonable, in the case of a Coercion Bill, to discuss such an Amendment; but I maintain that to allow the Government to pick out particular Amendments, and apply the clôture to them, is a worse proposal than the original one of the Government. The least privilege which the smallest Member of the House should be allowed to enjoy is that he should have the power of placing Amendments on the Paper—practical Amendments—and to ask the judgment of the House upon them. Surely that is not too much for any hon. Member to ask. I say that, manage it as you like, whether by the intervention of the Chair, or by a Member rising in his place, you only allow particular Members to propose Amendments, such as the Prime Minister, or a Colonel of Volunteers—the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) need not suppose that I allude to him, for I am not aware whether he is a Colonel of Volunteers, or Yeomanry, or Militia—but if the House will only allow such Members as I have mentioned to propose Amendments, and refuse the same privilege to other Members, a most unfortunate result will, in my opinion, be produced. It may or may not have been reasonable, in a moment of emergency, to propose to kill off each Amendment by a

Division, and rather than have this Rule, I would prefer the liberty which existed under the Rules of Urgency. Let us have the power of taking the decision of the House upon Amendments, or otherwise there will be an end of the freedom of proposing Amendments. If you allow the Government to pick out particular Amendments, you will heavily handicap some hon. Members, and give a superabundance of favouritism to others. The proposal made by the noble Lord of putting power into the hands of the Chair to say such an Amendment is frivolous, while such other Amendments may be discussed, is one which is foreign, not only to the genius and traditions of this Assembly; but if you allow a proposal of that kind to exclude, by a side-wind, genuine Amendments submitted by other Members because you imagine it is desirable to bring a debate on some small matter to a close, you will do irreparable injury to the freedom of debate. As I have already said, I believe that the Government, having abstained from making this Rule a Standing Order, really intend that it should apply to the Coercion Bill for Ireland which they are about to introduce. They do not mean to embody it in the Rules as a general Rule, because they are fully aware that if they did so they would be cutting a rod with which to beat their own backs by-and-bye.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): The hon. Member has done Members sitting on this side of the House scant justice when he stated that none of us have studied the Rule.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I admitted that there are a few who have, who understand it.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL: It is not a few only who have taken the trouble to understand the Rule, or who agree with much that has fallen from the hon. Member. I have myself always been opposed to these Closure Rules. Such questions are not to be looked upon as Party questions; and when I have given way I have only done so in deference to the opinion of hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House who have considered that such Rules are necessary for the effective protection of orderly debate in this House. So far I have yielded; but here is a point at which I think I ought to stop. I do not see why, when the clôture has been applied to the Amendments to one part of a clause, we should be compelled to swallow the rest of the clause without amendment. As Bills are now drafted they contain clauses, each of which may have six, eight, ten, and sometimes a score of sub-sections. Let me take the Army Discipline Act. In that Act we have enormous clauses full of sub-sections; and the same remark is applicable to many other Acts of Parliament. In the Naval Discipline Act all the punishments are contained in sub-sections. Suppose that the first sub-section had been the one which involved the infliction of corporal punishment. We might have had the debate ruled to be obstructive, and the closure might have been applied to it after it had reached a certain stage. It would, then, have been possible for the Government to have passed all the remaining 19 sub-sections without discussion. To such a closure I will never consent; and I think, if we pass it, we shall be giving up a very large slice of our liberty. Many hon. Members on this side of the House have carefully considered this Closure Rule. We are prepared to accept it where it is possible; but I do hope that the Government will find a way of putting in stronger words than any I see at present to limit the actions of the Rule. If not, I hope that it will be resisted by the House.

Mr. SCLATER - BOOTH (Hants, Basingstoke): I have endeavoured to frame words to provide that all Amendments should be disposed of in their turn, but not necessarily debated; but I am told by you, Sir, that if the Amendment of the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton), which is now before the House, is negatived, I shall be unable to move my Amendment, which will be ruled out. I have, therefore, nothing to fall back upon but the Amendment of the noble Marquess. I would ask the Government whether something more than the Amendment of the noble Marquess is not required to meet my views, and also the case which has been mentioned by the hon. Member who has just spoken? The Amendment of the noble Marquess seems to imply that a private Member should be invested with the functions of the Chairman of Committees for the time being, for it would be in his power to say what Amendment should be put. He is to frame certain words to limit the extent to which the closure is to be applied; but that is essentially the function of the Chair, and by the Amendment we have already made the Speaker or the Chairman is to be limited, as regards his part in the matter, to a mere veto.

Mr. SEXTON (West Belfast): Upon a point of Order, Mr. Speaker, may I ask if the right hon. Gentleman is right in saying that, if my Amendment is negatived, he will not be in a position to move the Amendment which he has placed on the Paper? The Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman comes after the word "consideration," which I propose to omit.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is very true; but the Amendment of the hon. Member is to leave out the words—

> "And also if a Clause be then under consideration, a Motion may be made (with the consent of the Chair) as aforesaid, That the Question, 'That the Clause stand part of or be added to the Bill,' be now put."

If the House negatives that Amendment, they will have affirmed that these words shall remain in the Rule; and the next Amendment in order will be that of the noble Marquess, which proposes to provide a machinery for avoiding an evil which has been generally recognized by the House. The two Amendments which follow that of the hon. Member for Belfast will be clearly out of Order.

Mr. SEXTON: Then I understand that after the word "consideration" nothing more can be moved?

Mr. SPEAKER: The Amendment of the hon. Gentleman is directed to the same point as that which is dealt with in the two Amendments which follow.

Mr. PARNELL: The Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast seeks to provide that the closure shall not be applied to the consideration of an entire clause.

Mr. SPEAKER: The whole point is, whether the closure, on being applied, will prevent subsequent Amendments—what may be called "bogus Amendments"—coming in. The whole question is whether, upon the closure being applied, such Amendments will not be ruled out.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I am anxious to follow the appeal which has been made to the House by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill), not to adopt that part of the Rule in question as proposed by the Government. The view I take of the matter is that the power of closure should be made as large as possible; but the closure and the exclusion of debate are two very different things, and the words of the Rule go a great deal further than closure. It is an important point whether, under the terms of the Rule, as it at present exists, real, substantial, and important Amendments would not be involved in the disposal of frivolous Amendments by the application of the closure. While I would go as far as possible in urging the House to adopt the purest and simplest form of closure, I am not prepared to grant the power of exclusion; and the Rule, if adopted, would not only give the power to close debate, but to exclude it. Under the first part of the Rule it would be in the power of any Member to initiate a Motion that the closure should be applied with a power of vetoing given to the Speaker. But these words go a great deal further, because they empower not only the closure of debate, but its exclusion altogether. I am anxious to make that point quite clear to the House. I am prepared to say close a debate by all means if it is considered necessary to do so, and I would give extreme power to do that; but I must remind the House that to exclude even the possibility of putting the Question is not done by any Foreign or Colonial Assembly where the closure is now applied. The closure is never used to prevent a question being raised. It should be applied in order to prevent Amendments of an absurd and frivolous character which are only brought forward for the sake of obstructing debate from being discussed. No one who voted for the proposal that the Chair should interfere to prevent the abuse of the Rules of the House would agree to sanction Amendments which would also involve an abuse of the Forms of the House. It is quite clear what our course upon that matter ought to be. As was pointed out by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill), we have Bills drafted now-a-days in which there are clauses of two or three pages containing some 15 or 20 sub-sections, each of which, sometimes, has sub-divisions. The effect of the Rule, as it stands, would

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put it in the power of any Member to prevent Amendments in subsequent sub-sections from being discussed unless the Chair vetoed closure on an Amendment on the first sub-section.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH: No; the Chair must not veto.

Mr. CHILDERS: I accept the correction. Power would be given to the Chair to exclude a discussion upon every one of the sub-sections after the first Amendment. The hon. and learned Gentleman specially referred to a Bill which was under consideration some years ago—I think the Army Bill. That Bill contained a clause which dealt with the question of flogging in the Army. I recollect that there was a long and animated debate upon the clause which, and I think not unreasonably, was carried over one or two nights. Now, what would have been thought if it had been in the power of any hon. Member, if he were not stopped by the Chair, to have prevented any discussion from taking place on the subsequent sub-sections? Yet that is the power which is proposed to be given under this Rule. It is no answer to say that the power given will not be abused, or that the Chair will always take a reasonable view of the case put before it. I would give the Speaker and Chairman the fullest latitude that may be proposed to be given to them with respect of closure. This, however, is not the power of closure; but you propose, in the event of the first line of a clause being objected to and closured, to give them the power of excluding from debate a number of questions which may be of the greatest possible importance. I should object to give a power of closure, in regard to one Amendment, which would have the effect of excluding debate upon other Amendments not of an obstructive character. The power of excluding every Amendment would be an abuse of the Forms of the House. To that extent I go fully with the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Staffordshire, and I do not think that anyone on these Benches would desire such a power to be given, no matter to whom it is proposed to give it—whether an individual Member, or the Chair. I object to give to any individual the power of saying that "this or that proposal shall not go before the House," or to say "a Motion for Closure has been made, and by my authority under the Rules I will allow that Motion to exclude the consideration of other genuine Amendments altogether." Therefore, while consenting to carry out a stringent measure of closure, I appeal to the Government not to force the Rule, as it at present stands, or to compel the House to adopt the words as they are now proposed by my right hon. Friend opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith), or by my noble Friend on this Bench (the Marquess of Hartington); but to use their best endeavour to find some form of words which may prevent the closure from being applied to genuine and important Amendments, though a previous Amendment has been closured.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie, Tower Hamlets, St. George's): As my right hon. Friend the Leader of the House is not able to answer the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, I may, perhaps, be allowed to say a word. As far as I understand the argument of the right hon. Gentleman, it comes to this. He says—"Your proposal amounts to a proposal for the exclusion of debate." No doubt it does amount to the exclusion of debate upon frivolous and obstructive Amendments.

Mr. SEXTON: All Amendments.

Mr. RITCHIE: The right hon. Gentleman says that he would give power to the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees to rule frivolous Amendments out, so that he does not object, under certain circumstances, to a power being given for the exclusion of debate on frivolous Amendments. The right hon. Gentleman proposes that there should be a power vested in the Speaker and Chairman of Committees to say that certain Amendments are frivolous and obstructive, and that they will not be put. Now, what difference is there between that suggestion and the Rule as proposed by the Government—that the Chair shall have power to permit or not to permit a Motion for the clôture. The right hon. Gentleman seems to forget that the power given to the Speaker and Chairman of Committees to allow a Motion for closure is qualified by the words contained in the first paragraph of the Rule "unless it shall appear to the Chair that such Motion is an abuse of the Rules of the House, or an infringement of the rights of the minority."

My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill) put a case which has also been alluded to by the right hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Childers).

MR. T. M. HEALY: I put a case also. How would you deal with the 132 Amendments which were put down on Clause 7 of the Land Act?

MR. RITCHIE: I will come to that presently. My hon. Friend the Member for Staffordshire spoke of a clause with 20 sub-sections in it; and he considers that it would be monstrous if the closure were exercised upon a first sub-section in such a way as to shut out all discussion upon the remaining sub-sections. As far as the Government are concerned, they agree that it would be a monstrous thing if substantial Amendments on a clause or the sub-section of a clause were excluded from discussion because the closure had been applied to a previous Amendment; but I cannot conceive for a moment that substantial Amendments would be ruled out in that way, nor can I imagine that any Speaker or any Chairman could be got to fill the Chair who would allow substantial Amendments of that character to be ruled out.

MR. SEXTON: It might be done in order to cut out somebody else.

MR. RITCHIE: We do not believe that such a circumstance could possibly arise, or that any Speaker or Chairman of Committees could be got to fill the Chair who would allow a Motion to be made for cutting out such Amendments as those alluded to by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Staffordshire. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) spoke of a Bill which had 132 Amendments proposed to it.

MR. T. M. HEALY: One hundred and thirty-two Amendments to one clause.

MR. RITCHIE: That, to my mind, shows the imperative necessity of some such Rule as this. If it can be conceived possible that 132 Amendments could be put down to a particular section of a Bill; is it not evident to the House that unless some step is taken to rule out a great number of such Amendments, and unless we have some safeguard that similar obstruction shall not be practised in future, you may as well tear up the whole of this Rule? It is exactly to meet such cases as that referred to by the hon. and learned Gentleman that the Government think such a Rule is absolutely required. It would be altogether impossible for the Government to proceed with the Public Business if they allowed hon. Members to put down 132 Amendments to a particular clause, and were to detain the House for nights and weeks in the discussion of them. The long and the short of it is—that the Government feel that the real safeguard, in this matter, must rest with the Speaker or the Chairman. We have the utmost confidence that the Speaker or the Chairman will consider it his absolute duty, in carrying out the instructions of the House, to protect the rights of the minority and to see that the Rules shall not operate so as to shut out Amendments which the House ought to consider. On the other hand, we believe that the effect of the Rule we are asking the House to assent to will be that Amendments of a serious and proper character will have much more chance of being adequately discussed than they can possibly have at the present moment. For the Government to consent to the withdrawal of this proposal would be to give up the whole value of the Rule. I was struck by one observation made by the hon. and learned Member for North Longford in reference to the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale. My recollection of the circumstances under which the noble Lord gave notice of that Amendment was, that it had been pointed out by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on the other side of the House, that under the Rule, as it originally stood, the Chairman would not have any option, if the closure was moved on the first Amendment, but either to refuse to put the closure or to put the whole clause. The hon. and learned Member for Longford says that the noble Lord admitted the reasonableness of the proposals of the Irish Members. No doubt there might be a good deal of objection taken to the Rule as it originally stood, and it was generally admitted that the objections which were urged were of a reasonable character. Strange to say, it is now stated that the Amendment of the noble Lord makes the Rule worse. How could that be, seeing that the Amendment will distinctly limit the power conferred by the Rule? The noble Lord's Amendment will remove all reasonable objection, and it is believed that the Rule, as thus limited, will secure adequate freedom of debate for every Amendment the House desires to consider and decide upon. But, on the other hand, Amendments calculated to waste the time of the House will be ruled out; but the House will be able to discuss all other Amendments in a complete and adequate manner.

Mr. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I still hope that the Government will consider the representations which have been made to them, especially when those representations have proceeded from hon. Members of great experience on both sides of the House. The uncompromising speech, just made on the part of the Government increases the objection of hon. Members who sit on these Benches to oppose the Rule. The proposal now before the House is one of the most monstrous that has ever been submitted to a deliberative assembly. The importance of assenting to the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) is still greater after the ruling of the Speaker in reference to the Amendments which follow it on the Paper, because if this Amendment is rejected, the proposition of the Government in all its naked deformity will be obliged to be passed as part of the machinery of the Rules. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) how a Chairman, no matter how impartial he may be and how willing to uphold the rights of the minority, if a Member gets up to move a series of Amendments; how can he, in such a case as that which my hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Longford (Mr. Healy) referred to when 132 Amendments were proposed to a single clause of the Irish Land Bill—no matter how able and how impartial he may be disposed to be, and however anxious to maintain the rights of minorities—how can he separate the chaff from the wheat? I contend that it is a position in which the Speaker or Chairman of Committees of this House ought not to be placed. If this Rule is passed, a Member of the Government, with a large majority behind him, may be found getting up, when angry passions have been excited, to call upon the Chair to enforce the closure, and the Chair, although giving a decision which the occupant of the Chair believes to be perfectly right and just, may find that his decision is most unsatisfactory to a large minority in the House. As a Member of the Irish Party, I tell the Government that their conduct in making such a proposal as this, and their refraining from converting it into a Standing Order of the House, although persistently sticking to the proposition itself, is capable of but one interpretation, and that it points to but one purpose—namely, that it has been introduced in order to enable them to rush a Coercion Bill, directed against Ireland, through this House. I join in the challenge which has been given to Her Majesty's Government to make this Rule a Standing Order of the House; but I am afraid they will not dare to do so, for fear of the consequences to themselves when they may happen to be in Opposition. I trust that the Government will take into serious consideration the representations which have been made to them, and will make some effort to prevent a grievous wrong from being done.

Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.): I hope that the Government before this debate closes will give a clear and distinct intimation that substantial Amendments in the clause of a Bill will not be ruled out because the clôture has been applied to an Amendment which may be moved early in the same clause. I find that in the Army Act a whole Bill, perhaps of the greatest importance, may consist of one clause only, and one single clause extends to four quarto pages. If this Rule is passed as it stands, it would be possible on the first line of that clause to shut out every Amendment that might be proposed to the rest of the clause.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): I think, Sir, as there must be a power somewhere to prevent obstructive Amendments, that power must either reside in the Committee or in the Chair. That is the only alternative. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) admitted when challenged by my right hon. Friend, that he would allow the Chairman power to rule out obstructive Amendments. Well, that is giving to the Chairman alone the power which is proposed to be given to the Committee with the consent of the Chair; and the right hon. Gentleman who spoke just now has enlarged upon the possibility of the Chairman exercising his veto without all the Amendments being heard. That is in opposition to the proposal put forward by his own Party a few minutes ago. I think I have never heard a more unfortunate argument. From the general observations with which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh commenced his speech, I gathered that hon. Gentlemen opposite are in favour of giving a larger scope to the closure, but that they are not in favour of in any way enlarging or extending the authority of the Chair. But I wish to point out that if we are to have any system under which we are to exclude frivolous and obstructive Amendments, that power must be given either to the Committee or to the Chair alone, and the alternative I put to the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues is that if they are prepared to support words determining what Amendments are to be excluded or not, they will be enormously enlarging and extending the authority of the Chair, and at the same time excluding the action of the House altogether. Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to enlarge, in any such way, the powers of the Chair. This is a power which will only be exercised, after all, by a very considerable majority of the House after having obtained the consent of the Chair to put the closure. It is because of the practice which has grown up of covering the Paper with Amendments which render debate useless and nugatory, that it is necessary to adopt a strong and drastic remedy which I have sufficient confidence in the Committee and the Chair to believe will not be abused, but, on the contrary, afford protection to free debate.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I hoped when the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) rose that he would have been prepared to make some concession on the part of the Government. I understood that the First Lord of the Treasury on Wednesday admitted that the clause in its present form was not satisfactory. It would be contrary to the Rules of the House to discuss now the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington); but, on the other hand, it is difficult to do justice to this question without adverting in some way to that Amendment. I will say, however, that I prefer having no Amendment at all to having that of the noble Lord. I agree entirely with what has fallen from the hon. and learned Member for Stafford (Mr. Staveley Hill) to the extent that I am in favour of giving power to the Committee, but I am not prepared with him to exclude Amendments as proposed by the clause as it now stands. Allusion has been made to 130 Amendments being put on the Paper in respect to one clause, but I say that in practice those Amendments would very probably run themselves out; the decision on one would shut out many others, and it is very rare that anything like the number of Amendments on the Paper are the subjects of discussion. I put this question to the House;—supposing that there are 130 Amendments on the Paper, what Chairman of Committees could by any possibility determine which of them are obstructive, and which ought to be discussed? Neither the Chairman nor the Committee could determine that. I think, Sir, we must trust to the House applying the closure not in accordance with any prescribed form, but as the case may demand. I think the House will do well to strike out these words, and unless the Government are prepared to make some further concession in this matter, I shall feel myself bound to vote with the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton).

MR. HALDANE (Haddington): The Question before the House becomes a very serious one indeed, when we consider that, under the modern practice in Parliamentary drafting, a Bill is often moved in the form of a single clause with a number of sub-sections. This practice renders it necessary, for the effective debate of a clause, that not one, two, or 20, but it may be 200, proper and *bonâ fide* Amendments should sometimes be moved to it. I deny that any hon. Member, however skilled he may be in weaving Amendments, could put down any considerable number which would not, unless there was something substantial in them, be found to be out of Order; and in the second place, I say that there is effective machinery proposed to be provided in the latter part of these Rules to put an end to debate when that debate is obstructive.

It appears to me, therefore, that the mere fact of a large number of Amendments being put on the Paper is not one which ought to make us feel that we have any serious difficulty in assenting to the proposal of the hon. Member for West Belfast. The real alternative is to have no Rules at all—to leave everything to the discretion of the Chairman. The fact that we have Rules, and that we are taking care to amend them—that the principle is laid down on which the Speaker should act—shows the general principle on which we ought to proceed. If we were to accept the proposal of the noble Marquess, we should be at the mercy of anyone who chooses to make a Motion for the closure; but it seems to me that the proposal of the hon. Member for Belfast is the one which, of all that have been put before the House, is attended with the least amount of evil. For these reasons, I am not prepared to accept the proposal of the Government.

Mr. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Penryn and Falmouth): I have had a position in this House, by the favour of my constituents, for a considerable number of years, and I suppose there is no Member who has more strongly supported the rights of minorities than I have myself. I confess that I have felt some difficulty as to the way in which I should vote. I think the proposal of the Government is open to very serious objections; still I think those objections are in a great measure obviated by the Amendment lower down on the Paper, which is to be moved by my noble Friend the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), and which will, no doubt, be discussed in due order. I venture to state my conviction that if the Amendment of the noble Lord is adopted by the House, it will in a great measure relieve us from the difficulty which surrounds us in respect of this Question. If I am assured by my right hon. Friend on the Treasury Bench that this course will be followed, I shall feel it my duty, on this occasion, to support the Government, and to vote against the Amendment of the hon. Member who sits below the Gangway.

Mr FLYNN (Cork, N.): I do not think that much light has been thrown on this subject by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General. It is impossible for the Chair to decide what Amendments are fictitious and what are substantial, and I think a most instructive commentary on the entire proceedings, which ought to make all Members support this Amendment, is the bare fact that all day on Wednesday Members on these Benches spoke in favour of it, and it was not until the noble Lord (the Marquess of Hartington) awoke out of his sleep at 4 o'clock on that day, and discovered that there was something in the point that was being urged, that the Government themselves woke up to the idea that possibly there might be some value in the suggestions which came from this side of the House. Our contention is that it passes the power of the Speaker, or the Chairman, to decide on the genuineness of Amendments until the House has had an opportunity of hearing what can be said in favour of them. Take the case of a Bill dealing with Irish Fisheries, or, if you like, a Coercion Bill, and let hon. Members ask themselves whether the Chairman of Committees can form any idea of their nature until the Proposers of the Amendment, which would certainly depend upon an intimate knowledge of the facts, had explained them to the House? Take, again, the Labourers' (Ireland) Act of 1883. Amendments were proposed to the provisions of the Government by Irish Members, who knew the conditions under which the labourers lived, who knew exactly how far the Act ought to go, and in what direction it ought to tend; what kind of houses, how much land ought to be allotted to the labourers, and what were the best means by which the local authorities could carry out the intentions of the Act. Well, Sir, if the closure had been applied to the Amendments which stood to that Bill, it would have been impossible to carry any of the important alterations that we made in the Act. If that be true of the Act of 1883, it is true in a very much stronger degree of the Act of 1885, which was an enlargement of the former Act, and a considerable improvement upon it; but all the valuable work that was done with regard to that Act in this House and in Committee would have been lost to the labourers of Ireland if the closure had been applied to the Amendments and new Clauses that were moved to the Bill. If an Irish Coercion Bill is brought in by the Government, I contend that it ought to be in the power of

Irish Members to point out where it will fail in effecting its object, where it would inflict hardship, or subject localities to unfair and oppressive taxation, and also to move the necessary Amendments in its provisions; but, as has been over and over again pointed out, the proposed Rule will debar us from the opportunity of doing so. I think we have ample indication of the value which is attached to the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast on the Government side of the House. That Amendment ought, in my judgment, to be accepted by this House; and we shall do all in our power to press it on the attention of the Government.

MR. SALT (Stafford): The point before the House is one of considerable importance and interest; it is one, also, which illustrates the very great difficulty of introducing Rules of Procedure. These Rules are the embodiment in words of the power of the House to keep its own order. In the old days, the keeper of order and the rules of decency in debate was the House itself; but the introduction of these Rules shows that something more is wanted than the voice of the House. There must be a power somewhere to deal with the difficulty that has arisen; and if it is not to rest in the House itself, I see no alternative but to put very great power in the hands of the Chair. I confess that I see a difficulty in the words which we have been discussing, and my mind has been very much exercised as to whether I can support them. The whole House agrees in this—that, while they are anxious to retain for discussion any good and useful Amendments to a Bill, it desires, at the same time, summarily to exclude those which are frivolous and useless. That, Sir, is the problem which we have to solve. I do not think there is any real danger of the closure being abused. In the first place, a Member would have to move the closure; and I think we may safely assume that there are not many Members of the House who would move the closure to any clause or Amendment until there were good grounds for doing so. Such a Motion can only be put by the consent of the Speaker. If such a Motion is asked for, the Speaker has his veto, and in that we have the second safeguard to free discussion. The third safeguard is that, if the Motion be unwise, it is in the hands of the House to reject the Motion when it is put. I acknowledge that I have had considerable difficulty in this matter; but I have come to the conclusion that the plan proposed is proper to deal with frivolous and foolish Amendments; and, therefore, having given the matter fair consideration, I shall support Her Majesty's Government on the Division.

MR. SEXTON (West Belfast): Sir, after the discussion which has taken place, I think, perhaps, that it would be for the advantage of the further consideration of this question that I should ask leave to withdraw my Amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it your pleasure that the Amendment be withdrawn? ["No, no!"]

MR. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.): The right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General has said there may be 130 Amendments to a clause placed upon the Paper which may occupy several days in discussion; but if those Amendments are proper to propose, why should not their discussion occupy several days? Is the House, which is supposed to give a free amount of discussion to every question which it decides, to be reduced to the necessity of giving to the Leader of the House everything he may ask for at once? The whole argument of the Government throughout this discussion has been that the Rules must be accepted because it is their will that they should be accepted. It is put in the power of the majority to say whether it wants to have a certain Motion debated or not, and if the opposition to a Motion rises to a point at which the majority consider that it has gone far enough, they may put an end to it by the closure. It is all very well for the Postmaster General to say that the Chairman of Committees will decide what Amendments are frivolous and unnecessary; but that, Sir, is assuming omniscience for the Chair, which I do not think any Member of the House has a right to assume. Suppose the Bill in Committee is one which deals with technical matters of an exclusive character, the knowledge of which is confined to specialists—suppose, for instance, that the Chairman of Committees has to decide as to whether or not an Amendment relating to mining is frivolous or useless; I say that the Chairman of Ways and Means would, in all probability, not be able to say that any Amendment of the kind, although it might seem to him frivolous, was useless. You are assuming that the Chairman of Ways and Means is to take upon himself the collective knowledge of the whole House, and decide upon questions which are beyond his knowledge. It will, in fact, come to this: that he will assume that every Amendment is frivolous which he does not understand. That, I venture to say, is a most absurd position in which to put the Chairman, and it is giving him a power which will destroy the efficacy of debate and legislation; and I venture to think that from it the greatest amount of trouble will arise. I am sorry that the Government have not allowed my hon. Friend to withdraw his Amendment, and allow others to be proposed which would enable a modification of this clause to be arrived at. I think it is, therefore, our duty to carry this matter to an issue, and discuss it, as far as possible, with the view of convincing those Members of the House who are open to reason. I think we ought to offer every opposition to this particular clause, which strikes at the whole power of the House to amend Bills which are favoured by the majority. I point out that not one substantial Amendment has been adopted by the Government in regard to this Rule which has come from this side of the House. Over and over again has the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House begun his speech with the words—"The hon. Member knows very well that this Amendment cannot be carried." Well, Sir, that is exactly what the majority will always say; they will ask what use there can be in argument, when they have made up their mind? When you become habituated to this state of things, the Government of the day will more and more resort to this method of legislation, and you will have discussion in this House reduced to mere idleness, for everybody who speaks will be regarded as a waster of time. I certainly deprecate the action of the Government with regard to this Amendment. They have to-night broken faith as to what they stated on Wednesday afternoon; and now they will not allow us to withdraw our Amendment, so as not to prejudice the Amendment which stands on the Paper in the name of the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale. I protest, in every sense, against the action of the Government, and shall certainly support my hon. Friend (Mr. Sexton) if he goes to a Division.

MR. P. McDONALD (Sligo, N.): I am pleased to see, by the speeches that have been made by hon. Gentlemen above and below the Gangway opposite, that freedom of discussion has not yet entirely left this House. I have the utmost confidence in the judgment of the Chairman of Committees, and believe that he acts justly and judiciously on all occasions; but it is a very difficult thing to believe that he will be able to act in the same way when he is suddenly called upon to act with regard to Amendments which are of a technical nature. It is often the case that Amendments are put down by lawyers, and that the words on the Paper, which may appear very insignificant, may have a very great importance when explained by the Mover. Under those circumstances, it would not be possible for the Chairman to decide whether such an Amendment ought to be put from the Chair. Again, the essence of a Bill very often lies not in itself, but in the Amendments that have been made in it. We have had many Bills passed through the House relating to Ireland, and I particularly look back on the Land Bill and the last Coercion Bill, to the latter of which there were 130 Amendments put down, all of them being of importance. I am not prepared to see debate on similar Amendments shut out in future without a protest, and for that reason I am strongly in favour of the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton).

Question put, "That the words 'and also if a Clause be then under consideration' stand part of the Question."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 154; Noes 95: Majority 59.—(Div. List, No. 58.)

Amendment proposed,

In line 10, leave out "with the consent of the Chair, as aforesaid," and insert the words "the assent of the Chair, as aforesaid, not having been withheld."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): The consent of the Chair has now become a matter of very great importance, and I should like to know why the Government are continually recurring to the words proposed, against which I have many times protested? I think it is desirable that the consent of the Speaker should be retained. A man may signify his assent; but how is it possible for him to signify his dissent in the way proposed by the Government? For my part, I am opposed to the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman, because, instead of saving the time of the House, it will cause waste of time. Looking at the serious nature of the subject we are upon, I think that the least we can expect from the Chair is a declaration of assent, and I suggest that words should be put down to show that that is your decision. I think the consequences of putting down that the Chairman shall do this thing if he does not object will be most disastrous. Therefore I think that there ought to be a record of the action of the Chairman affirmatively, and not negatively. This House is largely guided by precedent and by the rulings of the Speaker and Chairman of Committees, and in the way I suggest there would always be a report of them in *Hansard*. The volumes of *Hansard* are always accessible, and we shall, for our guidance, be able to look to them for the rulings of the Speaker and Chairman on certain occasions. But that would not be the case if they remain silent, and so we should have nothing to guide us. It has already become difficult to contrive Amendments that shall be secure against what I may call the clôture of the Chair; but in future the difficulty would be met, to some extent, if we had an opportunity of knowing on what ground we were proceeding. It is much safer for the Government that we should have enshrined on the pages of *Hansard* the distinct grounds and reasons for every decision or ruling of the Chair, rather than that the clôture should be applied simply upon the Chair's non-expression of dissent. I certainly have come to the conclusion that this Rule is not intended to be a permanent Rule of the House, but is only proposed in view of the Irish Coercion Bill.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I did not rise to explain this Amendment, because it seemed to me to explain itself. The House has declared that when the Speaker is in the Chair "the assent of the Chair as aforesaid" shall be necessary to the Motion being put, and it would be very unreasonable to have another set of words relating to the putting of the Motion when the Chairman is in the Chair. I cannot think it is necessary to provide that the Chair's ruling should be accompanied by an explanation.

MR. MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr): Mr. Speaker, if it is to be "the assent of the Chair not being withheld," we shall have Member after Member rising and moving the application of the clôture. Such Motions will be made amidst the cheers and shouts of the dominant Party in the House, and all the dignity that attaches to so serious and drastic a Rule as this will be entirely lost. I protest against it being within the power of any Member to rise during periods of excitement and make this Motion, because I firmly believe dozens of such Motions will be made in the course of a night, especially when the Estimates are under consideration.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): Mr. Speaker, it is only your dissent or veto which can prevent any Member of the House making a Motion for the clôture; and, therefore, the words "with the consent of the Chair as aforesaid," and even the words now proposed to be substituted—namely, "the assent of the Chair as aforesaid not having been withheld," are inapplicable. Neither set of words are necessary.

MR. GEDGE (Stockport): It seems to me a waste of the time of the House to discuss words of this kind. In the first paragraph of this Rule the Chair is to withhold its assent or put the Motion; then, in the 7th line, we have adopted the words "the assent of the Chair as aforesaid not having been withheld;" and now, in the 10th line, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) proposes to put in just the same words, instead of "with the consent of the Chair as aforesaid." The two phrases cannot mean precisely the same thing, whereas we do mean the same thing. I think any sensible man of business would say that as we have, in the 7th line, "the assent of the Chair as aforesaid not having been withheld" we should be foolish if we adopted different words three lines lower down to express precisely the same thing.

Amendment *agreed to.*

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON (Lancashire, Rossendale): Mr. Speaker, I have to move the insertion of certain words which will make the Rule run as follows:—

> "If a Clause be then under consideration, a Motion may be made (the assent of the Chair as aforesaid not having been withheld), 'That the Question, That certain words of the Clause defined in the Motion stand part of the Clause, or that the Clause stand part of, or be added to the Bill, be now put.'"

I am perfectly aware that the words which I have to propose do not remove the objection of a large number of hon. Gentlemen who have spoken in the previous debate, and who object that any powers should be given to any majority of the House to exclude discussion of Amendments under any circumstances whatever. That was not my intention in suggesting, the other day, the insertion of these words. An hon. Gentleman who spoke a short time ago said that I had, in the observations I made on Wednesday, admitted the reasonableness of the contention which had been put forward. I did nothing of the sort. I stated that, in my opinion, any system of closure whatever would be totally inoperative and useless unless some power were given to the Committee, or to the House on the Report stage, of excluding discussion upon Amendments which it did not consider raised important issues. But what I did admit, the other day, was that there was a certain blot in the Rule as it stood—namely, that the House or the Committee might have been put into this difficulty—that it would either have had to decide to discuss all Amendments which might be on the Paper, or might be moved to a clause, or else that in refusing to discuss any of them, and in taking the whole clause as it stood, it would pass over one or more Amendments which it was of opinion raised substantial and important issues. That was a real blot, and it appeared to me, in concert with others, that that blot might be removed by the adoption of these words. These words will enable a Motion to be made to obtain a definite decision on the part of the House or Committee on the words of a clause down to a certain point. The adoption of these words may or may not exclude Amendments of which Notice has been given. The House will have to decide whether such Amendments are, or ought not, to be discussed. It will have the power of stopping short at that point where an Amendment stands which, by the general consent of the House, is admitted to raise an important question, and which it is the general desire and wish of the House should be discussed. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hants (Mr. Sclater-Booth) said my Amendment supposes an amount of technical knowledge on the part of Members which is not generally possessed, and which we are accustomed to look for from the Speaker or Chairman. I do not see the force of that criticism. I hope we may assume that any Member making use of the powers given to him under this Rule will satisfy himself that the Motion he makes is one which the House may reasonably entertain; but if this power is rashly used by any Member—if the Member who makes a Motion does not possess that technical knowledge of the Procedure of the House which he ought to possess before making such a Motion—I may point out that his action will be checked by the veto given by the Rule to the Speaker or Chairman. When a Motion is made to exclude a certain number of Amendments to a clause, it will be perfectly competent for the Chairman or Speaker to intervene and say—"This Motion will exclude such and such an Amendment. I shall not give my assent to the exclusion of that Amendment, and I cannot put a Motion so made to the House." Well, Sir, I believe that by the great majority of the Members of the House my Amendment, although not meeting all the objections that have been raised, is considered, as far as it goes, a distinct improvement of the Rule. I am quite aware the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) has stated that, in his opinion, my Amendment will make the matter worse. I cannot see how that can be the case. The hon. Member for Cork says it would give power to admit certain Amendments and to exclude others; but I may point out that it is not the Government alone, or even the majority alone, which will have this power. The power must be exercised by the Government, supported by the majority of the House, and it must also be exercised with the assent of the Speaker or Chairman of Committees. Certainly, it cannot be to the disadvantage of any minority in this House, however unfairly they may choose to assume the majority of the House desires to treat them, that there should be power to allow the discussion of substantial and real Amendments under these circumstances. As the original Resolution seems to me to unduly fetter the discretion of the House, and as my Amendment will restore to the House a considerable amount of liberty, I beg to move the Amendment of which I have given Notice.

Amendment proposed,

In line 11, after the first word "That," to insert the words "certain words of the Clause defined in the Motion stand part of the Clause, or That."—(*The Marquess of Hartington.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): Mr. Speaker, I find some difficulty in assenting to the Amendment of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) on account of the words "or That" at the end of the Amendment. As the Rule now stands, after the first Motion for the closure has been adopted, a Question "That the whole of a Clause be now put or added to the Bill," may be the Question which may at once, with your assent, be put to the House or Committee. That has been considered to be too great an infringement of the liberty of debate; but the noble Marquess has said that is guarded by the fact that no Member would be rash enough to make such a Motion unadvisedly; or that, if he was, you would restrain him; or that, failing these safeguards, there would be an appeal to the House. If that was the case, it would be entirely unnecessary for the noble Marquess to have moved this Amendment at all. I think we may take it as conceded, by the fact of the Amendment being moved, that something more than these three safeguards is necessary. There are rash people on both sides of the House; and there might be a person in the Chair who would not be able to see to what extent such a Motion might affect the liberty of debate, or the House might be full and impatient. The noble Marquess says his Amendment will be a distinct improvement, and I quite agree with him. It is a distinct improvement that the Mover of the clôture should stipulate in his Motion how much of the clause he wishes the closure to apply to; but, this being a distinct improvement, why should the Mover be allowed an alternative? Why should he be allowed, if he chooses, to move that the whole clause be put? I am quite willing to adopt the closure in so far as to allow a Member to move, with your consent or without your veto, that a certain portion of a clause shall be put to the House; but I am not willing to give to any Member the opportunity of doing that which, by the very fact of adopting the Amendment of the noble Marquess, the Government themselves say is the worse plan of the two. I beg to move that the words "or That" be omitted from the Amendment of the noble Marquess.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, to leave out the words "or That."—(*Mr. Staveley Hill.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'or That' stand part of the said proposed Amendment."

Mr. MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr): I am glad the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) admits now the validity of the arguments advanced from this quarter of the House against this portion of the Rule; but I am sorry I cannot agree with the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Staveley Hill) that this Amendment is a distinct improvement. The Rule was bad enough as before; but, if amended as the noble Marquess proposed, it will be infinitely worse in respect to the freedom of speech and the introduction of substantial Amendments. This Amendment will assist the Government to do wrong, if they are so disposed, rather than to prevent it; because, while the Government would not have the audacity to strike out by the clôture all the substantial Amendments, if you give them the power of selecting a portion of the Amendments, their audacity need not be so great, but they will be able to get rid of Amendments objectionable to them. They may say—"Let us apply the clôture as far as such and such a line of the clause; we shall get rid of two or three Amendments of an obstructive character, and we shall also get rid of one or two substantial Amendments which we do not care to consider, and which we do not care to have put to the House." The noble Marquess does not think that any Member, knowing the responsibility resting upon him, would make a Motion improperly, but that if a Member did make a Motion the effect of which would be to prevent the discussion of a substantial Amendment, the Speaker or the Chairman would not permit the clôture. Now, the Speaker or the Chairman is to decide which are substantial Amendments and which are not. I should like to know from you, Sir, whether it is possible for you or the Chairman of Committees, supposing the clôture has been proposed upon the first six Amendments on the Paper, to decide whether or not these Amendments are obstructive or substantial Amendments? I do not think it is possible for either you, Sir, or the Chairman to do anything of the kind, unless you are permitted to hear the arguments adduced in favour of the Amendments. It seems to me that, by these Rules, we are expecting the Speaker and Chairman to be possessed of the gifts of a clairvoyant. I admit that the intention of the noble Lord (the Marquess of Hartington) is good. He wishes to minimize the unnecessarily drastic powers of the Rule; but, unfortunately, his Amendment will not effect that object. It would have been all right if the Amendment had provided that each Member having an Amendment on the Paper was entitled to occupy two minutes—or, say, only one minute—in explaining the object of his Amendment, and that then the Speaker or Chairman should say whether the Amendment was obstructive or substantial. It cannot be said that such an arrangement would lead to an undue prolongation of the debate, because, if any Party in the House were so foolish as to put down 20 obstructive Amendments, only 20 minutes would be occupied in their explanation. You ask the Speaker or the Chairman to do what is absolutely impossible; he cannot tell the value of an Amendment until he knows what the Amendment is. The Amendment of the noble Marquess makes matters worse. It does not get over the main difficulty, but facilitates the application of the clôture to substantial Amendments by the application of the clôture to a certain number of Amendments, some of which may be obstructive.

Mr. WADDY (Lincolnshire, Brigg): As far as I can understand the arguments of the hon. Gentleman the Member for King's County (Mr. Molloy), they amount to this:—Assuming the House has determined on closure, the next thing we have to do is to make it so inconvenient in working as to render it practically nugatory. That does not appear to me to be a legitimate form of procedure. However we may object to the closure, it certainly is not legitimate for us to endeavour to graft upon the Resolution some other arrangement which will entirely stultify what we have already done. Although I object to certain arrangements which have been adopted, I cannot think it is dignified or loyal for us to endeavour to prevent the closure being carried out at all, after the principle has once been affirmed deliberately by the House.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): The hon. Member for King's County has put the difficulty very plainly. He has illustrated how the Amendment of the noble Marquess will leave the door open for the exclusion of Amendments, as distinct from closing a debate upon one that has been moved. Yet the rejection of the Amendment of the noble Marquess will leave the Rule as it is submitted by the Government, and will apply the closure to a clause as a whole. To obviate the difficulty, some Amendment must be looked for in the direction of the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Staveley Hill). I quite agree with the last speaker (Mr. Waddy) that it is quite impossible to argue the question from the point of view of making what the House generally has accepted utterly impracticable. The best solution of the problem seems to be to graft upon the Amendment the proposal of the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Staveley Hill). I take it he proposes to leave out not only the words "or That," but the words which follow—that is to say, to leave out "That the Clause stand part of, or be added to the Bill, be now put." The effect of that will be that when we are dealing with a clause it will be impossible to adopt a closure overriding at once all future Amendments in it. The Amendment is an improvement on the noble Marquess's. I prefer the arrangement of the noble Marquess to the impracticable proposal of the Government, and I prefer the hon. and learned Gentleman's (Mr. Staveley Hill's) to that of the noble Marquess. If, as I hope, the hon. and learned Gentleman's Amendment is grafted on the noble Lord's, I shall propose to add at the end some such words as these—

"Provided that whenever the Chairman does not withhold his assent to a Motion of closure, which, if carried, would withdraw from consideration any Amendment of which Notice has been given, he shall declare whether he deems such Amendment to be an abuse of the Rules of the House, or that it has been sufficiently discussed under some form or other."

It should be remembered that there is a great difference between closure and exclusion. Closure does not withdraw from the House the decision on any point; it only expresses the view of the majority that a question has been sufficiently discussed, and forces it to a decision. Exclusion, on the other hand, removes from the consideration of the House certain questions which, from their being put on the Paper, it is clear certain Members wish to be discussed. If, under certain circumstances, there is to be exclusion, it should only be on certain distinct and specified occasions. Although my objection to this form of closure in Committee will not be entirely removed, yet I think it possible, by the adoption of some such Proviso as I have indicated, to make it of a more practicable and reasonable character.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): We object altogether to the insertion in the Rule of the words proposed by the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale, because they do not give us the assurance for freedom of discussion which we think we are entitled to claim. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) has very properly pointed out the distinction between closure and exclusion. Of course we recognize that, under certain circumstances, closure may be fairly applied; but exclusion can never be fair. Exclusion simply means the application of the gag. I doubt very much if the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh will have the effect of securing liberty of speech and fair play; and even if the right hon. Gentleman's words are adopted, it will be necessary to obtain a better definition of the power of the Chairman than this Rule at the present time contains. Any proposal which gives unlimited power to the Chairman of Committees to declare whether an Amendment is an abuse of the Forms of the House is very dangerous. The Chairman of Committees has now the power to rule an Amendment unconsequential, and, I think, frivolous. We cannot argue with him; his ruling is final. To give unlimited power to the Chairman, who is merely a Party man, to rule any Amendment he chooses out of Order, is to put in his hands one of the most powerful and dangerous weapons, not only of closure, but of exclusion, you can desire. The Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Staveley Hill) will have a satisfactory effect as far as it goes; but if the words of the noble Marquess are adopted we can easily see that the Chairman of Committees will have the option either of clôturing the clause bit by bit or altogether. I am sorry the Government have been unable to frame a Rule more after what they seem to wish. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) has confessed he has certain ideas in his mind which he is unable to express on paper. I regret he has not been able to express in words his ideas, because if he hȧd I am sure, judging from his generous instincts and conciliatory disposition, he would have framed a Rule which would have secured absolutely free discussion, and not have left us, as this Rule, amended as the noble Marquess suggests or not, unquestionably will, at the mercy of the Chair.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): There are two Amendments before the House. The first Amendment, that of the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), provides that the Speaker or Chairman shall have the option of putting either the whole clause, or, in the case of a complicated clause, only a portion of the clause. We can perfectly well understand how, if the clause be a long one, involving many points of dispute, it may be necessary to put only certain portions at a time, and we can also conceive a case in which the clause —say a short and simple clause, which provides that the Act shall apply to Scotland or to England only, as the case may be—may be put as a whole. According to the Amendment of the noble Marquess, the Speaker or Chairman will have the option of putting the whole clause to the House, or of splitting it up into sections and taking the sense of the House on each section; but, according to the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Staveley Hill), the Chair would not have it in his power to put the clause as a whole to the House. He would have to put the clauses in sub-sections, whether the substance of the Amendments required it or not.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL: My Amendment gives power to put a clause in parts, or to allow the Chairman to put it at the very end.

Mr. CALDWELL: Nothing of the kind. The words of the Amendment are "That certain words of a clause defined in the Motion stand part of the Clause." How could it be put that the whole clause "stand part of the Clause?" It would be impossible. So that, according to the Amendment of the noble Marquess, the Chairman will have the option either of putting the whole clause or part of it, leaving other parts which may be contentious out; whilst, according to the proposal of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, there would be no power to put the whole clause to the House.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL: I am sure the hon. Member does not wish to misrepresent me. There will be a remaining part as well as a first part of a clause, and the clôture could not be applied to the remaining part unless the first part had been under consideration, and then all the remaining part of the clause be put.

Mr. CALDWELL: The meaning of the hon. and learned Member's Amendment to the Rule, as we have it here, is that it shall be impossible to put the whole clause at one time. It will be necessary to break it up into sections.

Mr. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.): This part of the Rule will apply principally to proceedings in Committee, and, as has been pointed out by the hon. Member for Mid Tyrone (Mr. M. J. Kenny), the Chairman of Committees already has ample power for dealing with frivolous Amendments, or Amendments that appear consequential. It seems to me that the Mover of an Amendment should have some opportunity allowed him of showing why he brings his Amendment forward. The House has already decided upon the principle of the clôture; but the Rule as now proposed goes beyond that principle, for it goes to the exclusion of matters which the Members who may bring them forward may not have an opportunity of explaining. It seems to me that the Amendment the noble Marquess proposes is a very dangerous one. We know that very frequently the whole substance of a clause hangs upon two or three words; and it would be quite possible, with this Rule in operation, for a Member on this or the other side of the House, in a moment of irritation, to get up and propose that the clôture apply to those particular words. I quite understand that the object of the Amendments is to prevent for a time the application of the clôture to all the sections and subsections of a Bill, and all the sub-divisions of a Vote; but it will be perfectly in the power of any Member of the House, in a moment of excitement, to propose to apply the clôture to certain words, and if he obtains the consent of the Chair, or the consent of the Chair is not refused to him, it is possible for him in that way to shut out half-a-dozen words on which the whole clause hinges. There is another danger which I see in the proposed alteration of the Rule. If the Rule were to be applied as originally intended it would require a large amount of brazenness on the part of any Government to move that a large number of sub-sections be clôtured; but as it is now proposed, taking a clause bit by bit, it will be possible for the Government to get individual Members to move that all the most important parts of a clause be clôtured, word by word, or half-a-dozen words at a time. In this way, without outraging public opinion, the clôture may be put upon all the Amendments to a clause. Under these circumstances, though I admit that the Amendment of the noble Marquess has a certain amount of plausibility in it, I believe that it amounts to a most insidious and dangerous proposal, and one which, if passed in its present form, will place us in no better position than we should occupy if it had never been brought forward.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I prefer the Amendment originally proposed to that of the noble Marquess. On Wednesday night I ventured to say that, as well as I could understand the Amendment as it was then read out to us, so far from improving matters, it would make them much worse. I am confirmed in that view, and I think that will be the opinion of everyone who is at all likely to be chronically a Member of the minority in this House. As the Rule stood originally, if there were 40 Amendments to an important clause, and if the Government desired to get rid of those standing in the names of

Members of a minority, they would have to sacrifice every one on the Paper, even those belonging to themselves or their followers. Though the original proposal would have placed in the hands of the Chairman power which I do not suppose is possessed in any other Legislative Assembly in the world, the interests of the Government and their own necessities would have obliged them to protect the minority; if they destroyed all the Amendments, some of their own, lower down on the Paper, would have had to go with the rest. According to the original proposal it would have been impossible to pick and choose between certain Amendments, and the carrying of a Motion "That the Question be now put" would have wiped off all the Amendments from the Paper. Of course, we know that there is no priority in the putting down of Amendments, and that there is always a chance that a Member of a minority may get his Amendment down before one appears in the name of a Member of the Government. Before a Government Amendment was reached a Member of a minority might, in that way, have obtained the right—in which the Government would protect him—of having his Amendment brought before the notice of the House. The noble Marquess, however, proposes to place a new power in the hands of the majority and the Chair, as if the Rule of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House was not sufficient; and I do not wonder in the least at the Leader of the House assenting most willingly to the Amendment. The result of the proposal will be that the Members of the two Front Benches will meet together and decide what Amendments shall be put to the House and what Amendments shall not be put, and no independent Member in the future will have any opportunity of moving an Amendment to a Bill at all. This is just such an Amendment as one would expect to come from an occupant of the Front Opposition Bench. It is not at all unusual to see the two Front Benches joining together in an endeavour to defeat those hon. Members leading forlorn hopes below the Gangway; and we remember how the noble Marquess who has made this proposal endeavoured on one occasion to put down the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) himself when the right hon. Gentleman was exhaustively treating the subject of prison rules or of the abolition of the lash. We know that if the Amendment of the noble Marquess is carried the result will be that when an important Bill is before the House the Leaders on both sides will put their heads together and decide what Amendment they will permit and what they will not permit. A process of selection will thus be established. Under this system the minority will have no chance at all; and I would, therefore, appeal to every independent Member of the House to vote against the Amendment as an additional attack on the rights of private Members in this House, and an attack which, if passed, will leave private Members no rights at all.

SIR UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe): I do not rise for the purpose of discussing the suggestion made by the right hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Childers). The Question before the House is the Amendment moved by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill). The hon. and learned Gentleman has pointed out that there are two points in the Amendment of my noble Friend the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), the first being that the question that certain words of the clause defined in the Motion be now put, or that the Question that the clause stand part of the Bill be now put. The hon. and learned Member for Staffordshire has pointed out the great importance of enabling a discussion to take place on the clause itself. But, before we go into that, let me point out that I think hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, whilst I can understand their strong objection to the Amendment of the noble Marquess, seeing that, in their opinion, it makes matters worse, yet should recognize the spirit in which the Motion was proposed —namely, that of minimizing the harm that the Rule in its original form would have done. But I do wish to press very much on the attention of the House and Her Majesty's Government the injustice that might be inflicted by enabling the Question, "That this Clause stand part of the Bill," to be put without any debate. It seems to me quite possible that totally new questions might be raised which could not have been foreseen by the House—questions that have never been debated on any Amendment, and which ought to be debated and put before the House—and a Member who has given Notice of his intention to move that a clause be not inserted in the Bill should not be excluded from putting his case before the House, and stating to the House his reasons for so moving. Take the simple case mentioned by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the St. Rollox Division of Glasgow (Mr. Caldwell). Even in the case of a single short clause, to the effect that the Bill apply only to Scotland, no opportunity might have been given on any Amendment for English and Irish Members to express their views, and argue that the Bill should apply to England or Ireland. And, further, I think it would be impossible for any Chairman, however able and efficient, to divine all the reasons which may be in the mind of an hon. Member who has put down a Notice on the Paper to move the omission of a clause. There is a great distinction between the question of clôture and the question of exclusion. We have never yet in this House contemplated excluding questions which are on the Notice Paper from the consideration of this House. No doubt it is in the competence of the Chair to exclude questions which it thinks have already been discussed, but that is a different thing from excluding questions which have not been discussed. When an hon. Member has given Notice of a Motion he may fairly expect that an opportunity will be allowed him of explaining the grounds of his proposal, and certainly the question of the omission of a clause is one upon which an hon. Member has a right to say that no Speaker or Chairman of Committees shall exclude him from the right of stating his reasons why he moves the omission of the clause. I speak as a Member of a Party in this House especially interested in passing an efficient Rule of Clôture. I think no Party is more interested in the adoption of such a Rule than the Liberal Party, for during the last 50 years that Party has done more for legislation than any other, and it may be hoped that after the next 50 years the same thing may have to be said. But we do not wish to pass a Rule of exclusion to prevent questions which have not been put before the House from being argued.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I should like to know what the Government mean to do by the proposal they wish to adopt? Do they wish to stop the discussion of frivolous Amendments? Do they want to stop the discussion of dilatory Amendments, or of Amendments which are out of Order? If they do, I contend that the Chair already possesses, under the existing Rule of the House, full power to stop these Amendments. Do they want, on the other hand, to stop a debate that may have been already sufficiently prolonged? They will have power to do so under the first paragraph of this Rule. What more can they want? Why, all they can want in the direction of shortening discussion is the power of exclusion, to which reference has been made. It seems to me that that is the only object the Government can now aim at, and, to my mind, it is a thing which should be resisted by every Member who takes an interest in fair discussion in this House. I am sure the House welcomes back to the scene of his labours the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Manchester (Mr. A. J. Balfour), who has just entered the House for the first time since he was charged with the government of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman must take a sympathetic interest in this discussion, because we know that in 1882 he proposed several Motions of an anti-closure character, and I would almost say distinguished himself as an Obstructive. By this Amendment we shall be putting an additional power in the hands of the Speaker and Chairman of Committees, without a limitation to prevent them from exercising their judgment in accordance with the opinions of the majority in the House. No matter how well intended they may be, they will be unconsciously influenced by the prevailing temper of the majority; and the prevailing temper when, for instance, a Coercion Bill is under discussion will be to cut short debate on the part of the Irish Members. In the case of a Bill dealing, we will say, with Scotch law—a subject that probably no 10 men in this House outside the Scotch Members understand—how will the Chairman of Committees be able to satisfactorily exercise the power of excluding Amendments unless he is a Scotchman, or is assisted by a Scotch assessor? In the case of an Irish Bill, in order that he might properly understand the nature of Amendments that might be moved, it would be necessary for him to have two assessors—one for the Conservatives, and one for the Nationalists. Then there are Bills which deal with questions of pure law, and with the law of real and personal property, passing through the House every year. Unless you have a lawyer acquainted with the law of real and personal property in the Chair, I defy you to say that he is not likely to shut out real and substantial Amendments. What we want is the power of proposing Amendments and of explaining them to the House; and I hold that under any modification of the Rule, except that proposed by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), which has been rejected, power will be given to the Chairman of Committees and to the Speaker to exclude substantial Amendments, which is a thing we shall always protest against and endeavour to resist to the last. We desire that the Proposer of an Amendment shall have power to state, at least, the substance of his Amendment. If that power be given, and if a Member abuses it, you have in the first part of the Rule ample power to cure that abuse—you can close the debate at any time you like. Any Government that is not satisfied with a power like that wants a thing that the House of Commons should never grant.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Sir Henry Holland) (Hampstead): The hon. Member who has just sat down, and other Members, have asked what is the object of the Government in pressing on this Rule. That object has been stated over and over again, but I will venture to repeat it. The object of the Government is to facilitate debate, and to stop needless discussion and waste of time on dilatory and frivolous Amendments. The Government do not contemplate, nor has it ever contemplated, the exclusion of sound and substantial Amendments, and the words proposed have been accepted in order to enable such Amendments to be put and fully discussed. At the same time, the Government do not think it desirable to take away from a Member of the House, if he can obtain the assent of the Speaker, the power of moving that the clause stand part of the Bill. This might still be necessary to put an end to frivolous and obstructive Amendments. It is not an easy matter for the Government to steer through the differences of opinion expressed in the House. We accept the words proposed by the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale, as we thought, after full discussion, that there was force in the arguments of hon. Members below the Gangway; but now it appears that those Members prefer the Rule as it stands to the Rule as proposed to be amended, and argue that the Amendment will defeat the very object for which it was proposed, and strike a blow at legitimate discussion by Irish Members. The Government dispute this view, and are satisfied that by enabling the Speaker to put part of the clause no substantial Amendments will be excluded. Many hon. Members who have been discussing the matter seem to forget that the Government and the House are committed to the principle of the closure, and that behind the private Member and the House there is the protection of the Speaker and the Chairman. Reference has been made to the temper of the House, and to the possibility of Motions for the application of the closure being carried in haste in an excited and hot-tempered House; but, again, I say that the Government rely on the Speaker and the Chairman, who will be unmoved by the temper of the House. ["Hear, hear!" *and laughter.*] Doubtless many hon. Members below the Gangway opposite will not believe that; but the majority of the House believe it, and are ready to rely upon it. The House is used to hearing hon. Members below the Gangway expressing a want of confidence in the Chair; but I must protest against this argument being extended, as it has been again this evening, to casual Chairmen. The First Lord of the Treasury has more than once stated that Her Majesty's Government do not intend that this closure Rule should apply to casual Chairmen; and if the hon. Member who repeated the argument this evening had looked at the Amendment Paper he would have seen an Amendment confining the Rule to the Speaker and Chairman of Ways and Means. The course which the Government intend to pursue is to accept and adhere to the words proposed by the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale, and to reject any other Amendment. I altogether disapprove the proposal or suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, that the Speaker should be called upon to give his reasons to the House for excluding Amendments under the operation of the closure. It would certainly lead, in the most objectionable manner, to controversy between hon. Members and the Speaker, and I think the House can well rely on the judgment of the Chair as to whether Amendments are frivolous or substantial.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR (Leeds, S.): The right hon. Baronet who has just spoken used words the meaning of which he, perhaps, did not fully realize, but which were very significant. He said the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees were "behind the House." The Speaker and the Chairman of Committees are before the House, and everything that they do must be done in the face of the House, before the House, and with the full cognizance of the House. There is a difference between right hon. Gentlemen opposite and those who sit on this side of the House. Some things we hold in common. One of them is that we all wish the admission of the Closure Rule in some efficient form; and another is that we are all agreed that the Speaker and the Chairman will, at all times, act to the best of their ability. But we differ on this important point in the matter under discussion—that while Gentlemen opposite desire to throw the responsibility of action on the Speaker, those on my side of the House wish to put that responsibility on the House itself. We think it most dangerous to call upon the Speaker or the Chairman to intervene between the House and its will, and we believe that it would bring the Chair into constant collision with different sections in the House. As to the Amendments proposed, they would put on the Chair, for the first time in its history, the delicate duty of saying what Amendments are frivolous or not. I have fulfilled the duties of the Chair myself, and I can understand the great difficulty—I will say almost the impossibility—of the Speaker judging whether particular Amendments, perhaps several in number, which he has had little or no time to consider, and has not heard discussed, are substantial, or frivolous and obstructive. I recollect being in the Chair when the Crimes Bill was before the House, and when I had to consider not only Amendments placed on the Notice Paper and printed beforehand, but sometimes 20 or 30 paper Amendments on the same clause which were handed to the Chair. How was it possible for me, in such circumstances, to say at once which of those Amendments were substantial and which frivolous? It is altogether out of the power of the Chair to do so, and the effect of placing such a duty upon it will be to bring it into conflict with the minority or the majority of the House. I, therefore, approve the Amendment which I understand the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh intends to move. I agree that it is easy for the Speaker to do one of two things—to say that an Amendment should not be put because it is an abuse of the Rules of the House, of which he can judge at once; or because the question involved has been already discussed in another form. The Government will act wisely in submitting to that limitation of the Amendment. The Amendment of the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale is, no doubt, a limitation; but it will not relieve the Chair of the danger of collision with different sections of the House. I hope, therefore, that the Government will be able to see their way to adopt the Amendment of the right hon. Member for Edinburgh when it is proposed.

MR. E. HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): I wish to re-echo what has already fallen from these Benches—namely, that, bad as the original words of the Resolution were, the Amendment of the noble Marquess is infinitely worse. We object most strenuously to that Amendment; because while we considered, in the first place, that the clôture was within the facile grasp of the Government, we considered that whilst they grasped the rose, there was also a certain risk of the thorn. Let us suppose that a clause be under discussion in Committee, and that it is desired by the Government that after a certain amount of irritation has been produced in discussing the earlier words of the clause, possibly on the second word of the clause a Member may rise and move that certain words, according to the formula suggested by the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale, be put. What will happen is that the whole of the clause will be put, and without anyone being heard in favour of the Amendments on the Paper. The proposal of the noble Marquess is that there should be what I may call a hop, skip, and a jump closure. I hope, when we go to a Division, it will be understood by hon. Members exactly what they are dividing on. They are dividing on a proposal which provides that the Chairman is to have in his mind, with regard to an Amendment, a presumption not only as to its frivolity, but as to its use. Suppose there are 40 or 50 Amendments to the clause of a Bill; supposing that a Member rises and proposes that the clause stand part of the Bill, I venture to say that what the Chairman of Committees has to do is not to address his mind to any particular Amendment of the clause, but to find out against which of the many Amendments the Motion for clôture is aimed, and then give his sanction or otherwise to the closure. I have, in a previous speech, suggested that the Chairman of Committees may be the strongest partizan in the House; but, whether he be the partizan of the Government or not, it is clear that in each case it is his interest to further Public Business, and the complaint of the majority has always been that it is the desire of the Government of the day to run its own special measures through the House. It is, therefore, necessary that the Chairman of Committees should be imbued with the same desire as the Government to show a good night's work; and, therefore, as a minority, we say that we have no protection from the wholesale adoption of the closure. The Amendment of the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale will reduce the risk of the Government, with regard to the closure, practically to *nil.* The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), it is true, has come to the House with a set of Rules to which he says the Government attach the greatest importance and value; but he has not told us that he would stand or fall by those Rules. He has come down and tinkered and pottered with his new Rules day after day, and we do not know that he is not at this moment preparing some new modifications that will change the whole face of them. Well, Sir, it is just when the House is beginning to have a glimmering of what it is that the Government mean by the wording of their first Rule that the noble Marquess comes down and sets them off in another direction. I object that, on this illusory process, we have been allured from one set of words to another, and always told that in the end we shall get introduced the words we want; but, so far as the words now proposed are concerned, I venture to say that the realization of our wishes are as far from it as we have been all along. I think the Government will do well to give us some time for consideration of the proposal made; and I venture to say that the Government might even now stop in their proceedings and put into proper shape the expression of their own ideas. The question involved here is one which I say ought not to be looked at through the light of Party considerations. If you are framing Rules for the conduct of proceedings in this House, I say that the Rules proposed ought to be worthy of the traditions of this House—worthy of the Government Bench, and of the genius which is supposed to adorn the Benches occupied by the Opposition, and not framed in the slip-shod and clumsy fashion in which the present Rules have been laid before the House.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Nothing can be more touching, Sir, than the manner in which the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury prostrates himself before the Chair, so to speak, when he is defending this Rule. But I would remind the right hon. Gentleman of the occasion in January, 1881, when he, with Lord Iddesleigh and Lord Cross, flounced out of the House in opposition to the ruling of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Leeds (Sir Lyon Playfair) when he was Chairman of Committees. It is impossible on all the various technical subjects which come before this House that the Speaker or Chairman should say beforehand whether an Amendment is or is not frivolous. You propose to make the Chairman of Committees assessor of the value of these Amendments and of their substantiality; but I say that a more absurd and impossible task was never put upon anyone. What will be the effect of the proposal before us, which is essentially to allow the Government proposal to stand? I will give the Government a lesson in drafting Bills. By closuring a clause you will clôture the whole of the Amendment to it, and so all that your draftsman has to do will be to put the Bill into one clause, and you can then carry your Bill by the process I have described. That, Sir, is reducing legislation to absurdity. If you had been asked whether the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) was frivolous or not, probably, if you had given expression to your real mind, you would have said, "I will rule this Amendment out;" but what has been the result of our discussing it? Why, we have succeeded in penetrating the mind even of the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale, and, after four or five hours' discussion, we induced him to get up and support our proposal. This is not a question of confidence in the Chair. I have a great respect for the Chair, and for all those who have filled it and will fill it—I respect them in advance—but I decline to allow the judgment of the Speaker or Chairman to be the substitute for the good old practice in this House. In my judgment, the proposal of the noble Marquess makes bad worse; he proposes that some Amendments are to be excluded from the clôture. I am inclined to accept the opinion of hon. Gentlemen opposite and upon the Opposition Benches upon English subjects—I know nothing of English matters, and I keep my mind pure and undefiled in that respect—but as to Irish Amendments I deny that they know anything more than I do about them. They have not lived in Ireland, and if I were to put them through a competitive examination of the clauses of the Land Act of 1881—why they would be spun in a very short time. I think that the discussion we have raised, although it will have no good effect so far as Irish Amendments are concerned, will be for the benefit of Englishmen. We have pointed out a blot on the Amendment of the noble Marquess, but, as I have said, it does not affect us. You had an hon. Member saying the other night that this discussion had continued long enough; and, when this Rule passes, you will have some equally uninformed Gentleman getting up and moving the closure on an Irish question. I prefer to be guided by my own experience rather than by the experience of the Speaker, or the Chairman, or of English Members. I shall never forget the time when the First Lord of the Treasury and his Colleagues marched out of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Gentleman is not speaking relevantly to the Question before the House.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I was endeavouring to show that the Chair has not been uniformly respected.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Question before the House is simply that the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause. The hon. and learned Member has been for some time very much beyond the Question.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I have endeavoured to point out, in the few words which I have addressed to the House, that we consider that the words of the noble Marquess do not afford us the protection which we consider we are entitled to in the peculiar circumstances in which we are placed. I think English and Scotch Members are adequately protected by the Amendment of the noble Marquess; but with regard to us that is not the case. As the Government declare that Ireland is to be mainly dealt with, and as the Rules are proposed for the present Session, surely we are entitled as being the Party, whose country will be affected, to press on the Government for some better assurance on this question than we have had up to the present.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): The only point in which I have already taken part in the closure debate has been to object to a portion of the proposal on the grounds of its relation to Irish Business, inasmuch as that the safeguards urged as generally existing in respect of English Business seemed to me absent in the case of Ireland; but I rise to support the Amendment before the House, not because of its relation to Irish Business, but because of its relation to the position of the House generally. My experience is that there are often upon the Paper Amendments to Bills which at first sight appear of little importance, but which, when we come to them and proceed to argue upon them, prove to be of far-reaching importance. I think it would be a great misfortune to the legislation of this House if it were in the power of the House, or any section of the House, to say at any period of the debate on a clause that all succeeding Amendments should be swept away without consideration. In supporting this Amendment I am supporting this position—that it should not be in the power of the House, or in the power of any Member of the House, to bar the House from considering any particular Amendment, or to make a proposal which would lead the House to sweep away, with reference to a clause, all the subsequent Amendments. This, Sir, is the first occasion on which the closure has been advocated as a prospective measure, and I altogether dissent from a Rule which establishes a form of closure which has never been advocated or considered by the country at large. I am, on account of the experience I have had in this House, and on the ground of this proposal being entirely new, opposed to any Resolution of this House which shall prospectively prohibit the discussion of Amendments. It is on that ground, and not because it is connected with Irish Business, that I support the Amendment before the House.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): I am of opinion that the effect of the Amendment of the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) will be entirely destroyed if Rule 5 is carried out; and it can only be prevented by some modification of that clause. I therefore would like to draw the attention of the noble Marquess to what will happen when we come to that part of the Rules—because it will be impossible to pass Rule 5 after we have admitted the noble Marquess's Amendment.

DR. TANNER (Cork, Co., Mid): The silence which the occupants of the Treasury Bench have observed during the greater part of this evening, and notably upon these Amendments, has struck me as most remarkable. The speeches which have been delivered upon the Amendment of the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) and the subsequent Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Kingswinford (Mr. Staveley Hill), clearly demonstrate that the Amendments are of the greatest importance. I cannot help drawing the attention of the House to the remarks which fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Leeds (Sir Lyon Playfair), who has great practical experience in connection with Procedure. He stated that the Chairman may have time to investigate the Amendments placed upon the Paper, and may be able to eliminate those which he deems to be frivolous or objectionable, but that many Amendments are brought to the Chairman when he is actually sitting in the Chair, and that in regard to these it is impossible for him to form a judgment off hand. The right hon. Gentleman knows a great deal about this matter, having acted as Chairman during very troublous times, and therefore I commend his remarks to the serious attention of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) drew attention to the fact that there is a great deal of difference between clôture and exclusion. We know that, as a rule, it will be late in the evening—when time is getting short—that the clôture will be applied. When time gets short, the temper of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen, as has unfortunately been the case latterly, gets short too. I cannot help objecting to this attempt to shift the responsibility from the hon. Member who may propose the clôture to the Chair. I again call upon the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), or the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), to pay some attention to the remarks which have fallen from right hon. Gentlemen who have had practical experience of the difficulties of Procedure.

MR. O'HANLON (Cavan, E.): Mr. Speaker, I have noticed throughout the whole of these discussions a disposition on the part of the Government to take no heed of the observations addressed from this side of the House. It is very clear that this Parliament is drifting into a most miserable condition. I hold that these Rules are a great abuse of the privileges of the people's Representatives. I have noticed that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, instead of explaining the Rules to the Members of the House, who are anxious to know what effects the Rules will have, has tried to say as little as possible. I have noticed the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) explaining the effects and showing the abuses of certain Rules——

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not speaking to the Amendment at all.

Mr. O'HANLON: I think, Mr. Speaker, that the adoption of the Amendment before the House will only make matters worse. I believe that the Amendment is neither understood by the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale, who proposed it, nor by any other Member of the House. I have heard it discussed from all sides of the House; but I do not know that any two opinions expressed with regard to it agree. If this Amendment is to stop all measures being discussed, we might as well bid adieu to the Business of the country. The noble Marquess and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Kingswinford (Mr. Staveley Hill) cannot agree with the other's Amendment; but they both seem to agree in trying, by every means, to muzzle the Irish Members. I must express my objection to these Amendments; and, in conclusion, add that it is my belief that if these Rules are put in force it will be impossible for any Government to carry out the Business of the country in a satisfactory manner.

Mr. DEASY (Mayo, W.): I have had some experience of the temper of the House on occasions when matters of considerable importance to Ireland were under discussion. We are told by hon. Gentlemen who support the Amendment of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) that we may trust to the Speaker or Chairman and the good sense of the House. I remember that, on many occasions, it would not have been safe to trust our lives to Gentlemen in this House at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, when the temper of the House has not been as cool as it is now. I recollect that night after night, when we had been discussing matters regarding our country, Gentlemen on the Government Benches have endeavoured to howl us down, and have appealed to you, Sir, over and over again, to prevent us expressing our opinion. I ask, how is it possible, under such circumstances, for us to trust any of the hon. Gentlemen opposite to allow us to continue a discussion which might be of considerable importance to us, but wearisome to them? I decline to trust my freedom of speech to any hon. Gentleman opposite, or to any Chairman who may be appointed by a political Party to preside over our debates. My belief is that we shall have, in the future, similar difficulties to contend against as we have had in the past. It is not far distant, I fear, when we shall have some very troublous times; and I do trust that, no matter whether this Rule passes or not, the House will preserve some kind of freedom of debate. Now, the silence observed on the Front Ministerial Bench——

Mr. SPEAKER: I must inform the hon. Gentleman that the Amendment immediately before us is to enable the Chair to put certain words of a clause for the purpose of preserving subsequent Amendments. The hon. Gentleman's remarks have no reference to that Amendment.

Mr. DEASY: I was proceeding to ask right hon. Gentlemen opposite to reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Leeds (Sir Lyon Playfair). I was expressing my surprise when you interrupted me——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must ask the hon. Gentleman to be more respectful, or I must take very serious notice of his remarks.

Mr. DEASY: I apologize, Sir, for my seeming disrespect. I had no intention to be disrespectful to you. I hope the Government will reply to the arguments advanced by the Members on the Front Opposition Bench and the Irish Members. I protest against the passing of this Amendment, on the ground that the Government might put the most stringent form of clôture into operation. We believe that all these Rules are aimed against the Irish Members; but I would remind hon. Gentlemen who have experience of the House that some of the most beneficial reforms relating to Ireland have been effected by our putting down Amendment after Amendment to the clauses of Bills. I must also point out that it would be impossible for us, on seeing a Bill for the first time, and without hearing the provisions explained, to say whether we should be justified in endeavouring to amend it. What would be the result? The Government of the day might get any friend of theirs to propose Amendments, and put them down on the Paper first. These Amendments might be discussed at considerable length. They might be of comparatively little importance as compared with Amendments lower down on the Paper; but if the discussion had occupied six or eight hours it might be said that it had lasted long enough, and that the clôture ought to be applied. We might have Governments proposing through their Party Amendments in order to prevent us bringing Amendments forward. I do not expect much from the present Government. I believe that, if they get these Rules passed, we shall get little fair play in regard to the proposing of Amendments. There is another important effect this Rule will have upon the House. At present, when a new Bill is introduced, hon. Members generally read it over, with the view of finding whether they can draft Amendments which would amend it. In future no one, except a few who are likely to be chosen by the Government, will go to the trouble of going over a Bill, because they will come to the conclusion at once that, if the Government are in any way hostile to the Amendments, they will simply get one of their Party to move the clôture, and thus prevent discussion. It would be better for the country that there should be no legislation at all than that there should be hasty and hurried legislation. I thought that, after what has taken place in connection with this debate during the last two or three days, the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) would, at least, have offered us his opinion on this matter. I shall not detain the House longer; but I do hope some alteration of a very important and material nature will be made in this Rule before it is allowed to pass, because I see great danger to the freedom of discussion, and great danger that hon. Members—at least we on these Benches—will not be permitted that opportunity of ventilating our opinion which the importance of the interests of our country demands.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, N.): Whatever difficulty I may feel myself placed in when questions of Procedure generally are being discussed, I feel compelled, by my duty as an Irish Representative, to say a few words upon the Amendment moved by the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington). If I have any objection to urge to this Amendment, it is that it does not go far enough. At the same time, I feel that, no matter what imperfections this Amendment may have, it is sure to pass, because the Government, who at the present time command a majority, with the aid of the noble Marquess, are sure to accept it. Sir, I feel confident, after listening to the speeches from both sides of the House, that this Amendment will leave it possible to throw out Amendments without their even being discussed, and I look upon such a condition of affairs as very serious. It is argued by Members of the Treasury Bench that every trust may be placed in the Chairman, and that no Amendments will be thrown out unless they are frivolous, or likely to waste the time of the House. But, even granting that the Chairman may be a man of the most complete impartiality, it must be borne in mind that this House legislates upon all manner of subjects—upon agriculture, mining, trade, commerce—and that it is impossible for the Chairman to possess the knowledge of an expert upon all these subjects. He cannot judge of the substantiality of all Amendments which are proposed to Bills, and he cannot know what is contemplated by hon. Gentlemen who move Amendments. This Amendment proposes to take away from the constituencies the power they are supposed to possess under the Constitution, and to vest it in some irresponsible Member of the House and the occupant of the Chair. Although I am not disposed to trespass upon the time of the House any further, I feel the effect of the adoption of this Amendment would be a serious innovation upon the rights of the constituencies.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.): I cannot help saying that I thought the Amendment of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) would have been drafted more generously to the Irish Members—that the Amendment would have been of a more liberal character. We are asked to repose our confidence in the Chair. Some hon. Members of the House have unlimited confidence in the Chair, and others have very little confidence in the Chair. I am, of course, one of the latter, and I am not willing that the matter should be left altogether to the Chair, because the very fact of the physical tedium of sitting in the Chair——

MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to abstain from that line of argument, and to keep to the Amendment before the House.

MR. BLANE: I regret I have deviated from the subject before the House.

I wish the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) had seen his way to draft an Amendment to this drastic proposition of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), an Amendment in consonance with the Liberal institutions which this age boasts. This is merely a halting Amendment, and is only made for the purpose of limiting debate. I suppose the noble Marquess expects some day to be in a position to go up to the Chair and whisper to the Speaker his desire to close the debate.

Mr. SPEAKER: This is the second time I have to request the hon. Gentleman to keep to the Amendment, with which his remarks have no connection whatever.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 257; Noes 134: Majority 123.—(Div. List, No. 59.)

Question proposed,

"That the words 'certain words of the Clause defined in the Motion stand part of the Clause, or That,' be there inserted."

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): Before this Amendment is passed I wish to ask the Government whether they will not take into consideration the very strong expression of opinion that has just been given in favour of some modification in the Amendment of the noble Marquess, and agree to insert some Proviso which will come at the end of the clause to protect the minority from oppressive action on the part of the majority? I would point out that the Rule, as it now stands, carries the House further in a restrictive direction against the moving of Amendments than the Rules of Urgency did of 1881, under which two Coercion Acts were passed. If the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) will carry his mind back to that year he will remember that under the Rule of Urgency it was provided that the clôture might come into force against all Amendments on the Paper at a certain hour named in the Resolution; but it was also provided that the House should have an opportunity of expressing its opinion on these Amendments by the Question being formally put from the Chair. It was not permitted to Members in charge of Amendments to move those Amendments; yet the House could express its opinion on them by Divisions. Under the present Rule, if it is left as it now stands, and if the Ministry of the day is in a majority—and we cannot suppose that the Ministry will always continue to be in a minority as at present—the Ministry will be able to carry a Bill through without allowing the House to express its opinion on the Amendments to the clauses. The right hon. Gentleman will be obliged to admit that the emergencies of the time and season do not necessitate a more stringent provision than was obtained in the year 1881, and I think he should concede a point to us, and agree to the insertion of words in the Rule providing that every Amendment on the Paper should, at all events, be put from the Chair. If he does not, it will be in the power of the Government or the majority, before we come to Amendments, before we have an opportunity of understanding what they are, and before we have the slightest sense of their gravity or importance, to shut us out from all discussion of them or power of decision. I submit that we ought not to pass this Rule in its present shape. I venture to say that there never was a more stringent and absolute Rule. Surely the Government will admit that some consideration is due to the very strong representation which has been made to them in this matter. It has been stated, over and over again, that this is not a Party question; and the right hon. Gentleman opposite must admit that, however much we may have opposed him in this Rule, he has not met with much opposition from the Liberal Party, but, on the contrary, considerable assistance. I think, therefore, something is due to the representations which have come from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers).

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I am unable to agree with the hon. Gentleman that the powers now sought to be conferred on the House and the Speaker are oppressive powers in any sense whatever. I am unable to agree with him that they are greater in extent than those given under the Rules of Urgency, for it must be remembered that the Speaker and the Chairman are themselves judges of the justness of the Motion which they are asked to put from the Chair, and I submit that it is inconceivable that the Chair will at any time put a Motion for clôture which will shut out legitimate debate or discussion of serious substantive Amendments. Sir, I have not through the whole of this very prolonged debate heard any suggestion from hon. Gentlemen opposite, or from any other part of the House, which will define frivolous and unmeaning Amendments from those that are substantive; and I take refuge, therefore, in the responsibility, discretion, and justice of the Chair to protect the minority against any abuse of the power now sought to be conferred on the majority. I cannot admit that the arguments which have been urged from the opposite side of the House—though I desire to pay all respect to them—have at all shaken the conclusion that I and my Colleagues have arrived at after the very fullest consideration. We do not propose these measures with any desire whatever to strain our powers or to assert our authority; but we are conscious of the impotence to which the House has been reduced through the prolongation of debate. We are conscious of the fact that if Amendments are pressed repeatedly on the consideration of the House, and if the discussion that is required by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway is permitted, and Divisions are to be taken on every Amendment, whether frivolous or substantive, it will be utterly impossible for the House to have any question seriously proposed or debated. It has been said, over and over again, that the majority, or any Member who may move the Motion for the clôture, will be responsible for that Motion, and it has been stated, over and over again, that if a Member misuses his power he will have to answer for it to the country. I believe those arguments to have great weight. Moreover, I believe it will be impossible for anyone who occupies the Chair, even in a period of excitement or anger, to permit a Motion to be made which will have the effect of allowing a measure to be passed without due and careful, and even prolonged, discussion. Holding these views, I cannot consent to any mitigation or diminution of the authority which is given to the Chair and to the House, under the conditions that are proposed in the Rule, as it is intended to alter it by the Amendment of the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury expressly alluded to myself, and I think I can claim from him the admission that I have done my best to assist him in passing this Rule. He has had no opposition to its principle from us. But what I contend is that there is a great difference between "closure" and "exclusion." We are anxious that the Rule of Clôture should be made as strong as possible, and we desire to give every assistance to the Government in framing it; but we do not think it should be in the power of any Member—the consent of the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees not being refused—to exclude from the consideration of the House genuine Amendments. The right hon. Gentleman says that it is impossible to distinguish between such Amendments as are genuine and such as are not; but I can only say that, in the words of the additional Proviso which I intend to move after the end of line 12, I should propose distinctly to declare that when permission is given to, or when refusal is withheld from, a Member to introduce such a Motion as will exclude genuine Amendments; it shall be the duty of the Chair to state to the House distinctly that he gives that permission because he considers the Amendment to be an abuse of the Rules of the House, or that he considers that the question has been sufficiently discussed in some other form. That, I think, after the last Division, is the best security we can obtain. I shall vote for the Motion of the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale, and I hope that after that is carried some such words as I suggest will be introduced.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I think the House should direct attention to the title of this Rule. It is called a Rule for "The Closure of Debate." I do not know, Sir, whether you would be inclined to extend to this Rule the principle that is applied to a Bill before the House. The principle of Parliament applied to a Bill is that nothing shall be introduced which is beyond the title. I maintain that the provision we are now discussing, with the Amendment of the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale, goes beyond the title of the Rule, because both the provision and the

Amendment are not for the closure of debate, but for the prevention of debate, and even for the extinction of the mere fundamental right of moving an Amendment. I shall be thankful to hear from you, Sir, as will many other hon. Members of the House, whether, in a Rule that professes to be for closure of debate, another right, separable and perfectly distinct from it, can be introduced. I can complain of a still more striking defect than that in the speeches we have heard from the Treasury Bench. We are discussing the right of moving Amendments, and one would have thought that, in order to justify their position, the Government would at least have brought forward from the Journals of the House some instance of vicious, frivolous, or worthless Amendments. [*Laughter.*] The hon. Gentleman opposite is disorderly in a double sense; because there is no point in his interruption, and he is interrupting from a part of the House in which he ought to be silent. I wish to challenge the Government. Since 1880 we have had before us many Bills in which Irish Members have taken an ardent interest; but I challenge the right hon. Gentleman to go to the Records of the House and show any Amendment that was frivolous, and which did not receive a large amount of support. We have always in Bills affecting Ireland put forward Amendments conceived in an earnest and serious spirit; and Amendments which we have been able to support by arguments. I would point out to the House that no reply has been given to the cogent arguments of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), and I am inclined to ask whether any circumstances are existing with regard to Public Business, or any circumstances are likely to exist, so extreme as those which existed when the Rules of Urgency were passed? Those Rules were passed at the time when a body of the Irish Members were excluded from this House, when temper was fierce and when Party spirit ran high; but those Rules gave us the right to have each of our Amendments put from the Chair, and to have for each of them not only formal, but substantial consideration. On a question of this magnitude it will not do for the Government either to sit in helpless dumbness or when they do rise, speak empty platitudes at the Table. They must apply themselves to the facts of the case, and endeavour, at least, to make some show of offering an intelligible answer to the arguments placed before them. The noble Marquess proposes to make it optional with the majority either to carry the whole of the remaining Amendments to a clause or to carry a clause by sections or instalments. That proposal distinctly makes the Rule worse, and more oppressive against minorities than ever. If the Rule stood as it was before the noble Marquess set his hand to it, the Government would be driven either to allow all the Amendments to be put, or to shut them all out, and that is a clear and intelligible issue; but the noble Marquess puts the thing in a new condition, because his proposal will enable the Government to pick out, say, five Amendments proposed by themselves or their Followers, and to shut out 50 that might be proposed by Members of the Opposition. The noble Marquess, while professing to come forward in the character of an advocate of the rights of minorities, has—I do not know whether by intention or inadvertence, but I should rather think by inadvertence—produced a result which practically extinguishes the right of Amendment in the hands of the Opposition, and leaves that right in the hands of the Government and the majority. Surely, that is an intolerable result. If the Rule is amended as suggested, it will be possible, with a sympathetic Chairman, to shut out all the Amendments of the Opposition, and to pass all those proposed by the Friends of the Government. It is easy to expose the hollow pretence that the Chairman will be a protection to a minority in the event of this Amendment being accepted. The Chairman will have to decide, on the spur of the moment, not whether one Amendment is substantial, but whether all of them are substantial or not. We have all heard of "Admirable Crichton;" but Admirable Crichton would only be an ignorant rustic compared with the Gentleman who could satisfactorily decide such a matter as that. We have Bills dealing with the condition of work in factories, Bills dealing with the conditions under which vessels should be allowed to go to sea, Bills dealing with mining matters, and Bills affecting all questions of industry, brought before us from time to time; and will anyone pretend to tell me that either the Speaker or the Chairman will take upon himself, in regard to such measures, without a committee of experts at his elbow, to say whether or not certain Amendments are substantial or are frivolous? Why, by exercising this Rule the House will make itself the laughing stock of the country, and will soon be rudely compelled to alter its regulations.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): So long as the opportunity is permitted to me I, for one, intend to offer the strongest protest against the proposed Rule. I do so now, it is true, for the last time; but I wish to say that I certainly hope to live to see the day when the Rule will be used against the Government opposite. I would point out to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers), who has just said that he intended to vote for the Amendment of the noble Marquess, that this Amendment is likely to interfere with the operation of the Rule, and I would invite him not to vote for it. He will find, in the future, that this provision moved by the noble Marquess will prevent the real stringency of this Rule, as it will prevent its being put in operation in an honest and fair sense. Under the circumstances, it will only be found to hit the Party sitting on these Benches. We have not had an opportunity of considering the Rule as a whole. The Government have refused to accept the request of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) to put the Rule and Amendments down as a whole, so that the House might consider it. It was only when this Amendment was proposed that we grew into the importance of this particular matter. We heard the purport of it suggested on Wednesday; but until hon. Gentlemen came down this morning they were not aware that they were to have submitted to them a Rule to prevent the putting of Amendments. I would especially beg the right hon. Gentleman and the Members of his Party not to vote for the Amendment of the noble Marquess on these grounds. They have no guarantee whatever that it is proposed to make this a Standing Order applicable to every state of facts; there is no guarantee that it is *bonâ fide*. I say it is not intended *bonâ fide* so far as the general Business of the House is concerned. We have pressed—and pressed in vain—for an answer to our demand, do you intend to make it a Standing Order? We have got no answer—no sufficient answer to that question.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I have said distinctly that it is the intention of the Government to make this a Standing Order. As soon as the Rule is passed we propose to ask the House to make it a Standing Order; but I said we could not undertake to have another debate upon it.

MR. T. M. HEALY: When they have got their closure, when they have got this Rule, all they have to do to make it a Standing Order is to apply the closure instanter. The right hon. Gentleman will not have another debate; he has the power in his own hands under his newly-forged machinery. I appeal to Liberal Members not to support in the Lobby the Amendment of the noble Marquess. I infinitely prefer the Rule as it stood. It will protect the Tory Party in any Bills they may bring in; it will strike at us alone. I beg the Liberal Party, unless they have a distinct pledge that it will be made a Standing Order, not to allow this Rule to be used against us—not to be used to push forward a Coercion Bill against our liberties, as dear to us as are their liberties to them.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 278; Noes 100: Majority 178.—(Div. List, No. 60.)

Mr. CHANCE: On a point of Order, Sir, may I ask if my Amendment, of which I have given you Notice, will not come in after line 11, before the Amendment next on the Paper?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman has been good enough to give me the words, but they would not be in Order; they deal with a point the House has already decided. The hon. Member for North Meath (Mr. Mahony) has given notice of an Amendment after line 11, but there are several objections to it; it is not consistent with previous parts of the clause; the first part has already been decided by the House, and the second portion deals with the point raised by the Amendment of the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), who has precedence, seeing that his Amendment has been on the Paper for some time, while the hon. Member for

North Meath has only given Notice just now.

Mr. PARNELL: Will it not be competent for one of us to move, previous to the end of the Rule, an Amendment providing that Amendments that are shut out from discussion by the adoption of the Rule in its application to a clause in Committee on a Bill, may be put from the Chair, but without debate, as was done under the Rules of Urgency in 1881? I would respectfully submit that is a point not yet decided—the question of putting Amendments which are on the Paper, and which may be shut out from debate by the application of the closure. It is a novel question not yet decided by the House. I venture to think it would be fair to afford us the opportunity of raising the question whether the Rule shall or shall not provide that such Amendments as I have described shall be put from the Chair.

Mr. SPEAKER: It would not be competent for an hon. Member to move that, inasmuch as the House has decided that the Question may be put, disposing, no doubt, of the following Amendments. The words of the Rule have been modified by the Amendment just agreed to, and do not preclude substantial Amendments, and it would be competent for the Chair to put the Question in such a shape, that "such words stand part of the Clause" as to preserve substantial Amendments. This will cover the exact point to which the hon. Gentleman refers.

Mr. PARNELL: My point, Sir, is this. The Rule, so far as we have proceeded, has reference to the stopping of debate; that point only has been decided. But the further question as to putting the Question in reference to Amendments after the debate has been stopped, has not yet been decided. That is my point, and I submit we ought to have some opportunity of asking the House to decide that this Rule should not be more stringent in its application than were the Rules of Urgency in 1881.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is precisely the question that I have just now decided. The Amendments standing next on the Paper in the name of the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) are out of Order. They are four in number. The hon. and learned Gentleman proposes, in line 12, after the word "Motions," to insert "if they have been discussed for one hour," which Motions, or Closure Motions, the House has decided are to be decided without debate. The first Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman proposes one hour's discussion of such Motions; but the House would stultify its previous decision by entering upon this Amendment. The second Amendment to the same line is to leave out "shall," and insert "may in the discretion of the Chair." To adopt this would seem to impose on the Chair a different liability to that proposed by the first stage of the Rule. The first stage reads "shall," and if in the second place it be in the discretion of the Chair to do or not, then these two directions seem to be inconsistent the one with the other. The whole question of the discretion of the Chair is settled by the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, and the House would stultify its action if it were to allow a discretion to the Chair in the latter case not allowed on the previous stage. Again, the hon. and learned Member proposes to insert after the word "decided," the words "by a Division but." At present two Members may call a Division; but the effect of the hon. and learned Member's Amendment would be that a Division must be taken whether there is a wish for it or not. The last of the four Amendments I rule out of Order for the same reason that the first one is out of Order. The House has decided that the leave of the Chair may be asked, or rather the veto of the Chair challenged, without any debate; therefore the Amendment would be contrary to what the House has already decided.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: With reference to the second Amendment, Sir, may I ask whether you have considered the fact that my words, "may in the discretion of the Chair," have reference to the putting of the clause, not to the putting of the clôture? The Question, "That this Clause stand part of the Bill" has no reference to the Previous Question of the clôture. My point is that in the putting the clause some discretion should be allowed to the Chair. You might have a Bill consisting of one long clause. A new system of draftsmanship may arise in which you have not the divisions of sections and sub-sections, and what I wish to draw attention to is that in a Bill of this character the Chairman should have a discretion. I submit to your ruling; but I ask your attention to this point, that the discretion of the Chair would be in regard to what I will call a new system of drafting; it is wholly detached from the putting of the clôture with which the first part of the Rule deals.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Gentleman will see that his Amendment affects "such Motions," not such Motion; it affects the whole of the Motions. I can assure the hon. and learned Gentleman I have considered the point, and for the reasons I have given rule the Amendment out of Order.

MR. T. M. HEALY: To obviate the difficulty I will make my Amendment in the singular, not the plural.

MR. SPEAKER: That would be inconsistent with the reference to the several Motions in the second paragraph.

MR. T. M. HEALY: That is quite right, Sir. I will ask you later as to the introduction of a Proviso to the second portion of the Rule. I think we are entitled to ask the judgment of the House on the question whether a Division should be allowed on putting the clause under the Clôture Motion.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): In the absence of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), I beg leave to move the Amendment standing in his name with reference to the application of the clause in Committee of Supply.

MR. SPEAKER: I am not quite sure—for I have not the words before me—but I think an Amendment the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) desires to move will come first.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): Mr. Speaker, it appears to me it is necessary to have some safeguard in this matter. What I am anxious to press upon the House is this—When, by the action of a Member, the assent of the Chairman not being withheld, the debate upon a clause to which there are Amendments is closed, and there are other substantial Amendments to the clause which are thereby shut out from discussion, then I submit that the Speaker or Chairman should state distinctly why he allows Amendments of that kind to be shut out. I mentioned this suggestion earlier, and I think that at the time it was received with some favour. It would be perfectly impossible now, after 1 o'clock, to discuss this fully; but, with the leave of the House, I will state exactly what the words are of the Proviso which I shall propose to insert at the end of the 12th line—

> "Provided that whenever the Chair does not withhold its assent to a Motion of Closure which, if carried, would withdraw from consideration any Amendment of which Notice has been given, the Chair shall declare whether such an Amendment is an abuse of the Rules of the House, or has been sufficiently discussed under some other form."

Now, Sir, that lays down distinctly that Amendments shall not be shut out except upon two grounds, either that they are an abuse of the Rules of the House or that they have been sufficiently discussed in some other form; and I believe that that is as great a safeguard as we can hope to get. I think the House will hardly wish me to repeat the arguments in support of it which I urged at an earlier hour. I ask you to put the Question to the House, and I trust it will receive the support of all who, while admitting to the full the value of the closure, are not anxious to see the exclusion from debate of important Amendments.

Amendment proposed,

In line 12, after the word "Debate," to insert the words "Provided that whenever the Chair does not withhold its assent to a Motion of Closure which, if carried, would withdraw from consideration any Amendment of which Notice has been given, the Chair shall declare whether such an Amendment is an abuse of the Rules of the House, or has been sufficiently discussed under some other form."—(*Mr. Childers.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I do not think we can accept the words of this Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman. He said the suggestion had been received with some favour, but I cannot assent to that. The right hon. Gentleman has now put on the Chair the duty of giving reasons for its decision, and the task of declaring with regard to every Amendment why it is shut out. One of the reasons to be given is that it has been sufficiently discussed, but if some of the Amendments to be excluded have not been discussed at all how could the Chairman say they had been adequately discussed?

Mr. CHILDERS: The right hon. Gentleman does not seem quite to understand. I want the Chair to give the reasons for excluding Amendments.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Yes; before many of them have been discussed. The right hon. Gentleman is inviting the Chair to say with regard to Amendments not yet discussed, whether or not they have been adequately discussed. Is not that so?

Mr. CHILDERS: Providing that the general principle has already been adequately discussed under some other form. I do not ask that there shall be any statement of reasons on the first application of the closure, but when Amendments are shut out from debate I think we ought to have a reason.

Mr. GOSCHEN: But it cannot be a reason with regard to adequate discussion, because the Amendments will not have been discussed at all. The Chair might say that the Amendments ought to be discussed; but these are not the words of the Amendment. Then the next point is whether the Amendments are an abuse of the Rules of the House. Now, frivolous and superfluous Amendments are not exactly a breach of the Rules of the House, although the discussion of them could only obstruct the progress of Business. A right hon. Member just now alluded to the case of 50 or 100 Amendments being suddenly given to the Chairman in Committee with regard to one clause; and it was asked how a Chairman could possibly discriminate between them. That is just one of the matters we have to deal with, for to allow unlimited Amendments means unlimited opportunities of preventing Business being done. The House has already practically decided in favour of limiting the number of Amendments. I would submit to the House that the Amendment increases the danger and responsibilities of the Chair by calling upon it to give reasons for excluding every Amendment. I venture to suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that he should withdraw his Amendment.

Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe): The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has just admitted that handing in a large number of Amendments to the Chair might be an abuse of the Rules of the House. It is precisely at that kind of abuse—the handing in of frivolous Amendments—that the Amendment of my right hon. Friend is aimed. He asks the House to restrict the power of excluding Amendments from discussion to two classes of cases—the first when there is an abuse of the Rules of the House, and the second where the subject of the Amendment has not been adequately discussed.

Mr. GOSCHEN: The Amendment sets forth either that it is an abuse of the Rules of the House, or that it has been sufficiently discussed. It says nothing about the subject.

Sir UGHTRED KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: The meaning is obvious; that the subject has been already sufficiently discussed. A great distinction exists between closure after adequate debate and the power of exclusion from debate.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I am not uninclined to move the Adjournment of the House, not merely because of the lateness of the hour, but also because of the difficulty of dealing with an Amendment of such great importance without having had time to consider it. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer a few moments ago spoke of the handing in of a number of Amendments to the Chairman of Committee as an abuse of the Rules; and one reason he gave was that as they were not on the Paper hon. Members would not have an opportunity of considering them properly. I am afraid that if that Rule had been applied with rigidity the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury would have been found guilty of an abuse of the Rules of the House on more than one occasion in the course of these important and complicated discussions; for we have been called upon to discuss several important Amendments without having them in print before us. Why, even the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with his fertile imagination, has failed to grasp the purport of the Amendment before the House. He asks how can the Speaker declare an Amendment to have been adequately discussed when it has not been discussed at all? Surely that is an entire misapprehension; all the Speaker is to be called upon to say is whether the subject raised by the

Amendment has already been adequately discussed. The words of the Amendment are—"Sufficiently discussed in some other form." Surely that is a reasonable proposition. What would be the operation of the Rule as at present framed? Suppose the House is discussing a clause with three sub-sections. There is a long debate on the first sub-section, which deals with one matter. To the two next sub-sections which each of them deal with different matters, there are Amendments. Does the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer mean to contend that because the first sub-section has been sufficiently discussed we are not to have the right to discuss the different subjects raised by the second and third subsections? Yet that is the logical and inevitable issue of the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) whether my interpretation of the Amendment—that the point is that the subject has been discussed in some other form—is not correct.

MR. CHILDERS: The words are, "Under some other form."

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite will see I was justified in saying there was a difference of opinion as to the meaning of the Amendment, which I say is a perfect safeguard against two evils. It is, on the one hand, a safeguard against frivolous Amendments which raise the same question over and again; while, on the other hand, it prevents the exclusion of Amendments raising wholly distinct and substantial issues to those which have been already discussed. I say we require these safeguards for the protection of the liberties of the House and the liberties of discussion, unless indeed we are to understand that the Rules are to be made as tyrannical and as oppressive as possible, and in the calm and comforting assurance that they will be used only against the Irish Members.

MR. GEDGE (Stockport): It seems to me that this is a clever attempt to induce the House to reverse what it has already done, and to go back upon itself. We have already decided that the clôture is only to be applied if the Chair does not withhold its assent—that is if it is silent; and now to ask the Chair to state its reasons for not allowing certain Amendments to be discussed is, to my mind, to ask the House to give a decision contrary to the one it has already arrived at.

MR. CHILDERS: The Amendment I have proposed is not one to the part of the Rule the hon. Member is dealing with. It only affects the discussion of a clause in Committee.

MR. GEDGE: But the second part of the Rule takes its power from the first. The words are, "The assent of the Chair as aforesaid not having been withheld." The words "as aforesaid" clearly refer to the first part.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): This is evidently a very important Amendment, and every word has its importance, and although we have been discussing it some time, very few of the hon. Members seem to agree as to what it means. I hardly think that persons of average ability, like myself and many others in this House, can grasp the Amendment unless we see it on paper. It is now half-past 1, and it seems to me to be desirable that the debate should be adjourned. I therefore move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed "That the Debate be now adjourned.'—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I hope that the House will not adjourn this debate. The right hon. Gentleman opposite stated his Amendment two or three times in the course of the evening, and therefore it does appear to me that the House is in a position to give a decision on the subject. I do not wish to undervalue its importance, but it has been stated to the House, the House thoroughly comprehends it, and I think that in justice to the House itself it ought now to be decided.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I think the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury ought to consent to the adjournment. He should remember that we sat up till 2 o'clock last night and voted away £500,000, and that we gave £100,000 for an invention. We do not wish to obstruct the Government, and we think the Government should reciprocate our kindness and not keep us out of our beds after half-past

1. I put it to the House, if one-third of the Members on the Government Benches do not look as if they would be much better in their beds? I took an active part in Committee last night, and I find myself quite incapable of properly weighing the merits of this Amendment, particularly as it is not on paper. I think the request of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) is a reasonable one, and I would remind the First Lord of the Treasury that a little courtesy is due to the Front Bench opposite. This is an Amendment brought forward by a leading Statesman on the Opposition side of the House, and it ought not to be decided at an hour when hon. Members are worn out with fatigue. I hope the First Lord of the Treasury will consent to the Motion.

Colonel SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.): I am quite sure that we on this side of the House are completely willing that the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Galway (Colonel Nolan) and his Party should go home to bed. However, I hope that the House will not adjourn because an Amendment has been proposed which nobody can understand. If the House consents to adjourn on such grounds, I do not see how any progress can possibly be made with the Business, for every hon. Gentleman who takes it into his head can propose impossible Amendments. If hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House retired to bed, we should make considerable progress. But I think that this side of the House is determined, if possible, that the Business of the country shall be advanced; and, therefore, I urgently appeal to the Government that they will not consent to the adjournment of the House, but will proceed with the Business which the country expects them to do.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): I would urge upon the Government that in regard to the question whether the House should now rise, there is some consideration due to the Front Opposition Bench, recollecting the late hour of night at which we have now arrived. It is not at all likely that an Amendment of this character should be disposed of to-night; but even if it could, I must say before I could consent to go on with the Business the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) would make me hesitate. In his speech, instead of going into the merits of this matter, he intimated that whereas the Amendment had been received with some favour now, he ventured to predict that it would not be received in a Division with such favour. If it were not for the secret treaties between certain right hon. Gentlemen on this side and on the other side, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have no means of stating beforehand how an Amendment not discussed would be likely to fare in a Division. I trust that the Government will consent to an adjournment, in order that we may have the whole merits of this case discussed. Those who, as a matter of right, have Amendments on the Paper should receive some little consideration, instead of having their Amendments extinguished wholesale.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): It was absolutely out of my power to put the Amendment on the Paper till this afternoon; for it was only suggested in an early part of the debate to-day, and I lost no time in bringing the Amendment up. I did my duty in that respect, and I can do no more. I am now entirely in the hands of the House. Everyone knows the inconveniences of adjournment, but that is for the House to decide. I, personally, am quite prepared to go on.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Everyone knows the great importance of this Amendment, and everyone will admit the great difficulty there is in understanding it. I submit, as one further reason why the debate should be adjourned, in order that the Amendment should be adequately discussed, that the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) may come, if time is given, to see that this Amendment is desirable, just as he came to see a few days ago that a certain other Amendment was desirable. It is of the highest importance that these Rules should not be considered merely on the spur of the moment or hurriedly. Every time the Rules are under discussion new light is thrown upon them, and it is right that we should have the fullest acquaintance possible with their effects when they become law. As to this case, a man of large official experience proposes an Amendment, which we have not had an opportunity of studying; and are we to be told that the

Amendment is unworthy of having a reasonable adjournment, when we know very well that the Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) had more consideration shown to it? Are we to be told that though the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) is willing to support some change in the Rules proposed by the hon. Member for Cork, he would not support some modification of this Rule, which everybody admits to be of an extremely novel and, perhaps, of an extremely dangerous character? Hon. Members below the Gangway opposite confessed that they could not understand the Amendment; and that is because they have not had an opportunity of studying it. I appeal to them not to exhibit impatience, but to accept the adjournment, in order that they may have time to clearly understand these matters; and I ask the Government to remember that we are entitled to have a full and fair discussion of this important Amendment. I appeal to the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), who, after all, Sir, is willing, so far as he is able, to approach in a candid spirit the conduct of the affairs of this House, to say whether it is an unfair thing that we should have the opportunity we seek?

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): It is difficult to see how there can be any misunderstanding of this Amendment. I consider, indeed, that hon. Gentlemen opposite under-rate their own intelligence in thinking that they do not understand the Amendment. I propose that the adjournment of the debate be withdrawn, and that we should be allowed to continue the discussion—at all events—for a short time, in order to see whether we can discover any meaning in the Amendment. I think myself that the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Childers) is totally unnecessary, and as simple to be understood as it is unnecessary.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I do not, Sir, deny to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chaplin) any satisfaction he may derive from being the heavy father of Her Majesty's Government; but I would suggest to him that we on this side are the best judges of our own intelligence. At the same time I am inclined to think that the right hon. Gentleman over-rates his own intelligence, if he makes it a little superior to that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen). I am not one of the personal or political admirers of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but I regard him as a man whose intelligence bears no comparison in this House. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chaplin) declares that the Amendment is extremely simple; but I would call attention to the fact that the Chancellor of the Exchequer entirely misunderstood the whole bearing and purpose of the Amendment. I would not accuse the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goschen) of misrepresenting the Amendment, for he is a candid and relentless debater; but he either misrepresented or misunderstood it. In regard to the speech of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson), I must say that I would have expected a more sober and more impartial tone from him with the mantle of paulo-post future Office hanging over him. The hon. and gallant Gentleman—the future official—considers that the Business of the country should be conducted in the absence of one of the Parties of the State. As to the arguments of the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), when he complains that we have made very slow progress, besides being disposed to deny that, I would point out that we are now discussing questions more grave and momentous than any raised about any previous part of the Rule. If the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) had been able to say that the debate to-night had been confined to one section of the House, and especially to this section, I could understand some reason for the complaint; but, as a matter of fact, the debate has been either initiated or participated in by every, and some of the most important sections of the House.

Sir RICHARD PAGET (Somersetshire, Wells): I rise to Order. I want to know whether the hon. Gentleman (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) is justified, on a Motion for the adjournment of the debate, to discuss the whole question and subjects already discussed?

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think that if the hon. Gentleman (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) reviews the debate on this Motion he would be in Order.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: Certainly, Sir; I thought I had not been making any references of that sort.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is my opinion that is what the hon. Member has been doing.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: I will not then, Sir, proceed any further in that way. I was arguing that the progress in the House was not slow in comparison with the gravity of the questions raised. It seems to me that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) thinks it his duty to make an appeal not to the reason of the House, but to Party passion. I do not think that that way of meeting his political opponents adds to the dignity of the House or the good feeling and temper of debate.

Mr. A. R. D. ELLIOT (Roxburgh, N.): I do not think that the Business to-night has been one bit slower in progress than the Business during the last three weeks. We have got through 14 lines after sitting three weeks. This sort of thing is becoming very serious, and I think it is absurd that the Business of the House should be conducted in this manner. I hope that the Government will to-night, and on future nights, press forward these Rules of Procedure. I protest against the slowness of progress, and I think that the Government should be determined to see that the Business in this House is done well and quickly.

Mr. PARNELL: The hon. Member (Mr. H. Elliot) has thought proper to treat the House to a lecture as to the way the Business of the House should be conducted; but I submit, inasmuch as the hon. Member has not been remarkable for his attendance during this evening, that he is not a particularly good judge as to the way in which the Business of the House has been carried on this evening, or as to the grounds upon which an adjournment of the debate is sought. What is all this clamour and outcry raised about by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and by hon. Gentlemen who have deserted their Party sitting above the Gangway on this side? It is raised for a purpose not connected with the subject under discussion. It is raised for a political purpose outside the question. It is raised to prejudice the position of the Irish Members in this House. It is raised for the purpose of making an attempt to close our mouths before there is power to do it. And what is the Party that raises this outcry—an outcry which is premeditated? It is a Party which in 1882——

Mr. SPEAKER: I must say that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Parnell) is wandering from the immediate point. I must ask the hon. Gentleman to be more relevant.

Mr. PARNELL: I submit that if the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Ayrshire (Mr. H. Elliot) is entitled to get up and make the speech of the character he has made, that I am entitled to reply.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for North Ayrshire has merely referred to the length of time which the debate has taken, and urged that as a reason why it should be brought to a close.

Mr. PARNELL: I am merely desirous, Mr. Speaker, of showing, as a reason in support of the adjournment of this debate, that a debate in a previous year, on a similar question, occupied a very much longer time. In the debate during 1882, on the Rules of Procedure, a Rule, not nearly so stringent as the one now under consideration, occupied 19 nights to discuss.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman knows that the sole question is whether the debate should be adjourned.

Mr. PARNELL: Yes, Sir; and the length of the discussions which have already taken place has been brought forward as an argument by the hon. Member for North Ayrshire as a reason why we should not be allowed the adjournment in question.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must call the hon. Gentleman to Order. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "Name!"] Order, order, order! I must ask the hon. Member not to be wandering from the subject under consideration. I must beg him to confine himself to the subject immediately before the House.

Mr. PARNELL: I shall do my best to do so. I submit, Sir, that neither the time which we have taken this evening, nor on any other evening, is an argument why we should not be allowed further time to discuss the Amendment brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers). I earnestly submit that we are entitled to further time for the discussion of this question. So far, we have occupied 11 nights only over this Rule; and I submit to the House that 11 nights is not an excessive time for a discussion on a question of such great, grave, and urgent importance, giving, as it does, to the Government stringent powers in regard to the government of Ireland. We ought to be very careful how we allow our mouths to be shut, before we have put before the House our reasons for asking hon. Members to accede to the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers). I believe that proposal, Sir, to be a most valuable and important one. I believe that if we have further time for its discussion——

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London): I rise to Order, Sir. I wish to ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether the hon. Member is in Order in discussing the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh on a Motion for Adjournment.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member was not, at the time, discussing the Amendment.

MR. PARNELL: I thank you, Sir, for protecting me from interruptions which are not now made for the first time. I was saying, when the hon. Baronet interposed, that if we were afforded more time for the discussion of the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh, it would be made apparent to the sense and judgment of the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith), and of the Government generally, that the Amendment is one on which some concession ought to be granted to us. It is not reasonable to ask us to take an Amendment of this character at this hour of the night. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury has himself put down a proposal, in a subsequent Rule, to close all Business in this House at 12 o'clock at night. Is it consistent, then, on his part, to ask us to carry on Business at 2 o'clock in the morning—two hours after the time fixed by himself for the stoppage of all opposed Business? I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman, as a man of business, and as a man of common sense, to be consistent in this matter. I would ask him what he expects to gain by the course he is now pursuing? Does he think that scenes of turbulence—I will not say scenes of disorder—are going to benefit his Government? I do not believe that he can think so. Surely, in the discussion of a Closure Rule, more than in the discussion of anything else, he should do what he can to facilitate that freedom of debate which he is going, by this Rule, to put an end to. It is not at a time when the House of Commons is turning its back on all its ancient traditions that the right hon. Gentleman should make an attempt to fetter and infringe upon the liberty of debate, as he is doing to-night, by attempting prematurely to conclude the discussion upon the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh. Even culprits under the lash are allowed to say what they please when the punishment is being inflicted. Surely, the Members of this House, during the process of shutting, and padlocking, and double-locking their mouths, should be allowed to say what they think ought to be said on such an Amendment as this. Then, Sir, we have now reached that portion of the Rule where the Provisoes come in. Everybody knows that the beginning of the end has been reached, and that the Minister in charge of the Rule is able to look forward to the near conclusion of his labours and responsibilities. The right hon. Gentleman is certainly putting on an unnecessary spur when he adopts the attitude he has taken up to-night, in asking the House, when we are within sight of the conclusion of these debates, to go on at such an unreasonable hour, and in exciting the two sides of the House to irritation, anger, and frenzy against each other.

SIR RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells): I hope, Sir, we may be able to settle this question without anger or frenzy, or any serious difficulty. I would submit to hon. Members opposite that it is a sufficient reason for going forward that we have arrived at such a point that we have only to dispose of this single Amendment to get to the end of an important paragraph in the Rule. This Amendment disposed of, we shall all be able to go to bed at our ease. I think, Sir, that the difficulty which has been raised is entirely owing to the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Childers) who is responsible for the Amendment. Though it is quite true that it may have been difficult for him to have given Notice of it earlier, it must be remembered that it comes at the conclusion of the discussion on the

Amendment of the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), which is on the Paper, and that there is no question of surprise, except that to which we have been treated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers). But, Sir, surely we know this question by heart. We have studied it day after day. And it does not require a high degree of intelligence to appreciate the effect of the Amendment. I hope that hon. Members opposite will allow us, in a friendly way, to go forward; that this Motion will be withdrawn, and that we shall get to Business, and show the country that we are in earnest, and do not intend to be turned into a laughing-stock.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): Mr. Speaker, before you put the Question, I wish to raise a point of Order. I wish to ask you, whether the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Ecclesall Division of Sheffield (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) and the Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) are in Order in shouting "Question!" from below the Bar?

Mr. Speaker took no notice of the Question.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 94; Noes 223: Majority 129.—(Div. List, No. 61.)

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I wish, Sir, to make an appeal to the House again. ["No, no!"] Some hon. Gentlemen sitting below the Gangway at once say "No;" but I hope that they will be convinced, by what I am about to say, that it is, on the whole, desirable that some decision should be taken on the Amendment moved by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Childers), and that then we should conclude our labours for to-night. I think, Sir, the House will feel that, the right hon. Gentleman having had an opportunity of repeatedly stating his views during the course of the evening, we are really in a better position to arrive at a decision on the question he has raised than we should be if we were to adjourn before doing so. I therefore hope that the House will accept the suggestion I make, that we should divide at once, or, if necessary, discuss the Amendment further, and avoid further delays by way of Motions for Adjournment, which certainly do not conduce to the credit of this House, and which only result in wasting the time that might more properly be used in discussing the Amendment.

Mr. CHILDERS: There is no Question strictly before the House; but I hope I may be allowed, by the courtesy of the House, to follow the right hon. Gentleman. I said before, that, speaking for myself, I was quite prepared to go on; but that it was for the House to decide whether we should go on or not. Now, the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith) has made a proposal that the present Amendment should be discussed and disposed of, and that the other Amendments should be postponed till Monday. I am given to understand, Sir, through the usual channels, that it is very likely that our Sittings may be greatly prolonged to-morrow. If that be the case, I can only appeal to the House and to my hon. Friends, after the last Division, which has shown such a large majority in favour of concluding this Business now, not to persist further, or to keep us up till a very late hour to-night.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester): Mr. Speaker, I, for one, cannot follow the advice of the right hon. Gentleman who has just addressed us. I think, Sir, that the present issue is so exceedingly grave that I must protest against carrying on this debate at so utterly unusual and unreasonable an hour. I beg, Sir, to move the adjournment of the House. I will make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith). The right hon. Gentleman ought not to be surprised if, in endeavouring to carry Rules of this kind, he should meet with a considerable amount of difficulty. I do not think he should be surprised, because we have not succeeded, after 11 nights' debate, in disposing of this matter. What does he expect when our nervous systems are so utterly exhausted? ["No, no!"] I speak for myself; but the conduct of hon. Gentlemen opposite looks as if their nervous systems were exhausted. I would beg the right hon. Gentleman to think better of the matter, and to allow us a little more time to consider the issue before us, and to recollect our somewhat scattered senses.

Mr. McLAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): Mr, Speaker, I beg to second the Motion.

I also am not able to follow the advice of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh, who is taking the lead on the Front Opposition Bench at the present moment. If it were possible to dispose of the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman in a short debate, it would be another matter. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) has asked us to go on with the debate. I should like to know how long it would last? If the Amendment could be disposed of in half-an-hour's debate, I should say we had better go on. If, however, it is to be debated at the same length as have been other proposals of similar importance, it is obvious that it will require a discussion of a couple of hours, and, that being so, I think we ought to adjourn. There are many hon. Gentlemen who would not stay until the debate had concluded, and, therefore, when we took a Division, we should have only a very small House. I think we shall really gain time by adjourning now, and coming fresh to this subject on Monday or Tuesday. I may say that I think it would facilitate debates very greatly if the Government were willing, as a rule, to adjourn at about 1 o'clock; because the only effect of resisting Motions for adjournment after that hour is to waste time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Picton.*)

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I join in the appeal which has been made to the Government to allow us to go home. Half-past 2 o'clock in the morning is far too late, or rather far too early, an hour at which to discuss any subject whatever. I know, Sir, from communications I have received, that my constituents are of opinion that 11 o'clock is the hour at which the proceedings of this House ought to close, and I am perfectly certain that they would entertain a very poor opinion of my character if they knew I was here at half-past 2 in the morning. It is a well-known physiological fact that, after 12 o'clock at night, the emotional centres of the brain are unduly excited. That is a sound reason why we should not fly into the face of nature, and attempt to carry on discussions at these preposterous hours. There is also an especial reason, applicable to the present occasion, why we should not go on any longer. We have arrived at a very interesting and a very important point in a very important Rule. We have discussed the closure under this Rule, and we have now come to the treatment of Amendments. Hon. Members on both sides must recognize that the mode of dealing with a multiplicity of Amendments must be a very different one to that required to deal with an undue prolongation of debate in the House; it is a question of very great difficulty and delicacy. The Amendment proposed by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Childers) is of a very important character. It is attended with some difficulty, and it requires to be studied in relation not only to its own terms, but to every word of the Rule into which it is proposed to be introduced; and, not having the words of the Amendment in print, it is impossible for us to form a judgment of the whole effect. These are abundant and adequate reasons why we should not attempt to continue the discussion now.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I hope I am correct in thinking I detect some gleams of a compromise in the manner of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith). I am quite sure he will consider a suggestion I can offer in a reasonable spirit. It is wholly impossible for us to continue the debate to-night on this particular point. I think hon. Gentlemen will take that as conceded. On the other hand, if we go to a Division immediately, and the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Childers) is negatived, we shall have lost all chance of impressing the minds of the Government and of the noble Marquess, who has shown himself open to the consideration of this point. We shall lose a valuable opportunity, for it is rather a hard case to go on with the discussion now. Will then the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) consider with his Friends—I put it to him tentatively—Suppose the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh withdrawn, instead of being negatived, will the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord consider the point raised between now and the next occasion when this Rule is under discussion, and in a responsible spirit? The noble Marquess has shown himself reasonable so far as his views go, though we do not agree with them. I have no right to make the suggestion to the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment (Mr. Childers); but if he does agree to it, will the Government undertake to consider in a reasonable spirit before the next occasion what is at the bottom of this contention for which we have been struggling? I do not know whether the idea finds favour with those around me; I hope it may, and it will show we have no desire to prolong this discussion, while we desire, as everybody must who has had experience of these things, the evils of a prolonged Sitting. We desire to spare ourselves and the officers of the House as much as possible; do not let us stay here over a profitless wrangle. I know there has been some interchange of views in the Lobby between Members of the Government, the right hon. Gentleman and the noble Marquess, and I hope they have seen their way to indicate some release from our disagreeable position. I appeal to the Government, under the circumstances, seeing that this proposal has come from a distinguished and authoritative source, seeing the great amount of feeling that is manifested by a great many of us, and seeing that we have arrived at this late hour, I am not unreasonable in making the suggestion in which I hope the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Childers) will participate, that the Amendment, instead of being negatived, should be withdrawn, allowing the matter to germinate in the minds of the Government for the next day or two. I offer the suggestion in no factious spirit, but in a spirit of conciliation and a desire for a reasonable release from the *impasse* in which we find ourselves.

Mr. CHILDERS: I have had no communication with the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. T. M. Healy), and his proposal comes before us without any suggestion from myself. I can only say I desire to be entirely in the hands of the House. I regret sincerely the sort of *impasse* we have reached, and I will do anything in my power to release the House from this position. I am quite prepared, if the House desires it, to withdraw my Motion, trusting to the Government to consider, between this

and Tuesday, in what way they can deal with the very important question to which I have endeavoured to draw attention. I fully admit that the Amendment is of a character that requires Notice; but I have explained it was out of my power to put a Notice on the Paper. I would propose then not to postpone, but to withdraw my Motion, and it would, I think, be unusual to refuse to allow me to do so. I beg leave to ask to withdraw my Amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is a Motion for Adjournment before the House.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I am not quite sure if I am in Order in referring to another Motion the right hon. Gentleman has intimated his intention to make. The right hon. Gentleman seeks to withdraw his Amendment; I offer no opposition; but it must not be understood that we enter into any engagement with regard to that Amendment, simply because I do not see my way to meet the object the right hon. Gentleman desires, and it is not my way to hold out expectations that I do not see my way to fulfil. I offer no opposition to the withdrawal of the Amendment.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: I would suggest after what the right hon. Gentleman has said, my hon. Friend (Mr. Picton) may withdraw his Motion for the Adjournment.

Mr. PICTON: I beg leave to withdraw my Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. CHILDERS: I ask leave to withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question, as amended again proposed.

Debate arising.

Debate *further adjourned* till *Tuesday* next.

## *MOTIONS.*

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### CORONERS' ELECTIONS.

On Motion of Mr. Wootton Isaacson, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Election of Coroner, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Wootton Isaacson.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 193.]

### MERCHANDISE MARKS LAW CONSOLIDATION AND AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr Attorney General, Bill to consolidate and amend the Law relating to Fraudulent Marks on Merchandise, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Attorney General, Baron De Worms, and Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 194.]

House adjourned at a quarter before Three o'clock till Monday next.

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## HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Monday*, 14*th March*, 1887.

MINUTES.]—SAT FIRST IN PARLIAMENT—The Earl of Chesterfield, after the death of his father.

PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Smoke Nuisance Abatement (Metropolis) * (43).

*Second Reading*—Railway and Canal Traffic * (32); Incumbents of Benefices Loans Extension Act (1886) Amendment * (39); Church Sites (Compulsory Powers Repeal) * (22).

*Committee*—Justices' Jurisdiction * (24).

*Third Reading*—Truro Bishopric and Chapter Acts Amendment * (33), and *passed*.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL—*First Reading*—Local Government (Ireland) (Limerick Water) * (42).

### RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.

(*The Lord Stanley of Preston.*)

(NO. 32.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Lord STANLEY of PRESTON), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said: My Lords, the subject has more than once been brought before Parliament in "another place;" but, owing to certain circumstances this year, it was thought that it would perhaps be an advantage to introduce the Bill this time in your Lordships' House, and to have a certain amount of discussion upon the proposals made, in order to see what is necessary to be done, and what modification may become advisable, and whether any further application may be made for the safety and welfare of the community. As this is the first time the subject has been introduced into this House, I will ask your Lordships' permission to refer to the legislation that has taken place with regard to it in past times. I think, in connection with this subject, it is important to remember that the starting point of Railway legislation was somewhat different from the point of view in which we regard it now. Railway legislation started upon the assumption that the Railway was a common highway for the public, and that it replaced and represented the ordinary high road; and Railway Companies were therefore regarded rather as owners than carriers, and they were dealt with in that respect. But they gradually acquired the whole of the carrying way, as well as the ownership; and, therefore, legislation has to deal with them in the double capacity—first, as owners of the road; and, secondly, as carriers on their own lines. I believe that, by Common Law, it was the duty of a carrier to accept and carry all goods offered, according to a particular agreement and for reasonable compensation; but he might carry for payment passengers at a low rate, or even gratis. In fact, there was nothing whatever to prevent him from adopting a preferential tariff. Therefore, when Railways superseded other modes of transit, we had to consider how far restrictions should be made beyond those imposed by Common Law on persons who had come to be regarded as common carriers. Consequently, it was first done by the insertion of special clauses in any new Act. Next, the Chairman of Committees in this House required clauses to be inserted in every Bill, giving the names of the carriers, and in 1845, the Railway Clauses Consolidation Act embodied in a general Act the clauses it was thought expedient to retain in all Railway Acts passed by Parliament. In order to show the spirit in which these Acts deal with the Companies, I may refer to the 86th clause of the Act of 1845, which shows clearly the double capacity in which the Railway Companies at that time acted, and which after empowering the Companies to use locomotive engines, and to acquire carriages and waggons to be propelled thereby, and so forth, further empowered them to make such reasonable charges as they might determine in respect of them, not exceeding the toll authorized by their special Act. Railway legislation may be broadly divided into two parts—first, that of construction; and, secondly, that of combination; and the dividing line may be drawn between the years 1845 and 1848. Between those years various Committees sat, and one of them led to the Bill which was introduced in 1854, and which really forms, to all intents and purposes, the starting point of Railway legislation. That dealt with two matters—namely, it endeavoured to prevent undue preference, and to facilitate the forwarding of traffic. That Act continued in operation from 1854 to 1867, during which there was no general legislation, and, so far as I understand, no inquiry. Various charges and complaints having been made, the Railway Commission was appointed in 1865, under the Presidency of the Duke of Devonshire. That Commission went in great detail into the various matters that came before it, and it specially addressed itself to the inequality of the rates and fares, and the inequality of treatment under similar circumstances; and, especially, it considered the question of the restrictions which might be necessary or advisable to impose on the Railway Companies in respect of fares. The Commission found themselves face to face with a problem that was one of great difficulty, as to how far the inequality of rates and fares established under the Railway Act affected the Railway Companies on the one hand, and the rights of the public on the other. There was no doubt that the carrying trade brought the Railway Companies into competition with carriers by water and on the high roads, and frequently Companies had to reduce their rates below what they were obliged by their Acts to do, in order to bring the traffic on their own lines. The Commission reported, and the effect of their Report was that they did not consider it would be expedient, even if practicable, to adopt any legislation that would abolish the freedom Railway Companies enjoyed, to charge what rates and fares seemed expedient to them. In 1872, a strong Joint Committee was appointed of the Members of both Houses. They made a voluminous and interesting Report, and one of the chief results of that Committee was the Bill introduced, under which the present Railway Commission was appointed. That Commission, it is right to say, has, under great difficulties, discharged its duties thoroughly well; and, so far as I am aware, in all the proposals that were made in regard to Railway legislation, no proposal has ever been made to abolish the Commissioners in the sense of doing away with their duties. So far, up to the present time, the Act of 1872 is amply justified. The next time when the question of Railway legislation was brought before Parliament was in "another place," before the Committee presided over by Mr. Evelyn Ashley. That Committee sat in 1881 and 1882, and made numerous recommendations, many of which your Lordships will find embodied in the present Bill. I perhaps ought not, in this short review of Railway legislation, to pass by a Bill, introduced also in "another place" by Mr. Chamberlain, founded on somewhat more ambitious lines than those which preceded it, and which was withdrawn for reasons which it is not necessary here to specify; but I am bound to say of that Bill that it was carefully considered, that it was a bold attempt to arrive at a solution of the subject, and perhaps it was the fact of the dimensions of the Bill that somewhat prejudiced its passing in "another place." That Bill dropped, and the following year the Railway Companies introduced Bills of their own regulating the charges and rates, and dealing with the general question of traffic again; but there was a general feeling on the part of the House of Commons that that was not work which should be done by Private Bills, but that it should rather be done by a general and comprehensive Bill introduced on the authority of the Government in power. I come, then, to the Bill which was introduced in "another place" by my immediate Predecessor in my present Office (Mr. Mundella). Though that Bill met, on the whole, with a favourable reception, and was read a second time, events of which we are all aware prevented its further progress, and the subject up to the present time has remained undetermined. In presenting this Bill I cannot but acknowledge the assistance which I have received in the discussions that have taken place, and the negotiations between the various parties concerned. Whatever may be difficult or unsatisfactory, in connection with the subject, it is at least satisfactory to feel that there practically have been no difficulties of Party and no other consideration, save an earnest desire to arrive at an honest opinion in regard to the various provisions of the Bill; and that the same general policy appears to have been underlying the proposed action in all the Bills proposed, though it may have differed in detail, and to a certain extent in degree. I have said that the Commission of 1873 has worked well. I believe that is the general opinion. On the whole, it has done good service, and has been productive of good. It has checked a good many evils, and it has also, I believe, in some respect acted as a deterrent to extreme measures. The decisions have, in the main, given satisfaction to the trading community; and if it has not done all that was expected, that was because, in the first place, its jurisdiction has been limited by the Courts of Law acting by *certiorari*, or by prohibition, and it has been extremely difficult for the Commissioners to follow any fixed line of construction upon which the various Courts have acted. In the Bill which I ask your Lordships now to read a second time, though the constitution of the Commission will be somewhat altered, we propose to renew it, and we hope to strengthen it. The Bill differs in many essential details from the Bill introduced in "another place" last year; but it follows the same subject, and, together with that Bill, it follows the principle of excluding questions connected with safety, or with passenger traffic. We think, on the whole, if the Bill is to pass through Parliament at present, it is perhaps wise to limit its provisions to the establishment of a Commission, and to the question of rates and other similar matters, and to postpone, or at all events to put aside at the present time, any idea of the larger questions relating to passenger traffic, which I am afraid are thorny enough in themselves. As I have said, we renew the Commission, though we slightly alter its constitution. The Bill introduced by my Predecessor established a Commission, consisting of one Judge of the High Court in each country—that is, in England, Scotland, and Ireland—who was to act as the President of the Commission, and who was to be assisted by two permanent Commissioners. It had been suggested that the Commission should be established with two Commissioners, and with the Chief Commissioner having legal experience. There was much said for that proposal; but the arguments on the other hand were not without weight. There were those who held that the Chief Commissioner, even though technically of legal experience, might not have sufficient weight to define questions of law which might be far-reaching in their effect, and which might vitally affect the Railway legislation and the general legislation of the country. We thought there was weight in these objections. On the other hand, I did not feel that the greater portion of the work of the Railway Commission would be such as would justify and render it desirable for us to use the power of one of the Judges of the High Court on matters which, in some cases, might be almost administrative. We thought we should best meet, on the one hand, the desire that there should be the power of dealing with matters on the spot, and regulating any small detail; and, on the other hand, we thought we should best meet the arguments of those who urged, as we felt very truly, the necessity of bringing in the power of a Judge in the larger cases, by constituting the Commission as we have constituted it in the present Bill, and thus to a certain extent getting the advantage of both views. Your Lordships will therefore observe that the Bill abolishes the existing Railway Commission, and establishes in its place a new Commission, to sit in England, or, if the case require it, in Scotland or Ireland. There will be three permanently-appointed Commissioners and three *ex officio* Commissioners. The three appointed Commissioners will consist of a Chief Commissioner, to be appointed on the recommendation of the Lord Chancellor, who is to be a lawyer of experience, and two lay Members, to be appointed on the recommendation of the President of the Board of Trade, one of whom, at least, is to be experienced in Railway business and management. Of the *ex officio* Members, one is to be for England, one for Scotland, and one for Ireland, and these are to be Judges of the Superior Courts of the respective countries. Whenever a case of importance is to be heard, one of the *ex officio* Commissioners for the country in which the case is being heard is to attend and preside. I hope it will not be out of place if, in passing, I express my regret that the qualifications that will be required of the new Head of the Commission are unfortunately not possessed by the present Chief Commissioner. During all the troublous times that the Railway Commission has had to deal with, I think it cannot be said too strongly that Sir Frederick Peel, the Chief Commissioner under the Act of 1873, has exhibited a great amount of painstaking care, a desire to acquaint himself thoroughly with the duties he has to perform, and an earnest wish to do justice between the parties which, valuable as these may be in any public servant, have been of double value in the position which Sir Frederick Peel occupied. Though, naturally, his decisions, like decisions of other Judges, have not passed unchallenged, it has, I believe, been felt, even by those who differed from him, that his decisions have been characterized by a spirit of fairness and impartiality. With regard to the Commission itself, I need say very little in addition to directing attention to the provisions of the Bill; but I wish to point out this, and to emphasize it, that it is the duty of the Commissioners to request that the *ex officio* Member—that is the Judge—shall attend the hearing of any case in which his attendance is expedient for the better performance of their duty, and that that shall be necessary at the hearing of any case where it appears that the determination of it shall involve points of law. I have been asked whether it might not be found expedient to allow the *ex officio* Commissioner to attend at the wish of any of the parties who are concerned. That matter was carefully considered, and, on the whole, we came to the conclusion that it was better to leave the question in the hands of the Commissioners, and we feel certain that, acting on their responsibility, if an appeal was made to them by the parties to whom they thought they ought in justice to have regard, they would act in a way that would give satisfaction; and we considered it was better to leave the matter in the hands of the Commissioners than with the parties. We have also given power to the Commissioners to award to the complaining party who is aggrieved, such damages as they think just. I believe that, up to the present time, a curious anomaly has existed—that a complaint may be brought before the Commissioners, that it may be shown that it was perfectly well established, that the practice complained of might have to be discontinued, and an order given by the Commissioners that it would be discontinued; but, notwithstanding all that, in respect to any damage which accrued there was no remedy before the Commissioners, and the party aggrieved had to go and seek a remedy elsewhere. That we have now remedied. With respect to the question of appeals, we have thought, on the whole, that it was best that no appeal should lie from the Commissioners on questions of fact or questions of *locus standi;* but, subject to that qualification, there is to be an appeal direct to the Court of Appeal of the county in which the case is heard, with the further right of appeal by leave to the House of Lords. I know there are some who are against allowing frequency of appeal. It is thought that victory may rest with those who have the longest purse, rather than with those who may have right upon their side. But I believe that a great change of opinion in that respect has taken place in the minds of many of the trading community, formerly most opposed to those frequent appeals. Whether there is not an advantage on one side as well as the other, I am not prepared to say; but I believe that this provision is freely accepted by the public at large. I now pass to another part of the Bill, which more directly affects our Parliamentary procedure. Clause 24 deals with revised classification of traffic and preferential rates. It provides that every Railway Company, 12 months after the commencement of this Act, shall submit to the Board of Trade a revised classification of traffic and Schedule of proposed maximum rates and charges. When the scheme has been submitted to the Board of Trade, and made public in such a way as may be directed, the Board of Trade will then consider that classification and the maximum rates of charge, and any objections thereto which they may receive. If, after hearing all the parties, the Board of Trade come to a satisfactory agreement with the Railway Company as to the classification and Schedule, they are to embody the classification and Schedule in a Provisional Order, and make a Report thereon to Parliament; and as soon as possible after making the Provisional Order, they are to take care that a Bill is introduced into either House of Parliament, and this Provisional Order will, if approved by Parliament, pass into law without any further opposition. Up to this point my Predecessor and myself are agreed; but as I found matters as they were left in the draft of the Bill and in the amended Bill, if the Railway Companies and the Board of Trade did not come to an agreement as to the Company's classification and Schedules, the Board of Trade will determine what, in their opinion, should be the classification and Schedule, and will make a Report to be submitted to Parliament on the subject. I submit to your Lordships that that is a position of affairs which does not appear to be very satisfactory. It was thought that public opinion would have sufficient weight to make the Railway Companies come to an agreement with the Board of Trade; but I am bound to say that it seems a procedure derogatory to the dignity of Parliament that a dilatory or recalcitrant Railway Company should have power to bring matters to a deadlock by avoiding a duty which Parliament has put upon them. I am by no means anxious, if it can be avoided, that the Board of Trade should take the initiative in this matter; and as far as possible it has been our object that the initiative should be taken by the Railway Company; but as some one must act, it is better that the initiative should be taken by that Department than that it shall be a matter of uncertainty. The Bill provides that after the lapse of one Session, during which the Board of Trade Report will have been before the public, it will be open to the Railway Company to apply to the Board of Trade to embody the scheme proposed by the Board of Trade in a Provisional Order; or if the Railway Company did not take action in the matter, the Board of Trade may embody the scheme prepared by them in a Provisional Order, which, when introduced into Parliament, will be referred to a Select Committee, before whom the Railway Company or any objectors will be able to appear in order to oppose, as in the case of a Private Bill. In any case, the classification and Schedule ultimately approved by Parliament will become the classification and Schedule of the Railway Company in place of its existing rates and charges. One word to remove a misinterpretation which has come to my knowledge, and that is, that it has been supposed that from time to time the Railway Company would be subjected to a re-classification of rates. This is not the way in which we view this Bill. We think, and it is provided in the Bill, that the rates and Schedules might be proposed on the assumption that it is a fixed classification and a fixed maximum, until, at all events, Parliamentary powers are given to supersede them. Now comes a clause —25—on which I am afraid a great deal of discussion will necessarily take place, and that is with regard to the question of what constitutes undue preference. We have provided in that clause, that inequalities of charges to different traders and districts, and difference in treatment of goods forwarded on the goods being British or foreign, are to constitute *primâ facie* an undue preference and to be prohibited; but the tribunal which deals with any such case is to have power, in addition to other circumstances which are now held to justify inequality, to take into consideration whether the preferential rates and charges, or the difference in treatment, are necessary to secure traffic. I am aware that we are introducing a vexed question when we admit the words—"preferential rates in order to secure traffic." I am aware that, from the one side, it will be pressed upon us that this should be omitted from the Bill; and, on the other hand, that it will be held that Railway Companies should have the greatest possible freedom in carrying on preferential rates. I may, however, point out that there are not only the producers and the Railway Companies to be considered, but that there is a third and more vital interest than either —namely, the interest of the consumers, and we have, at all events, endeavoured to provide that, as far as possible, there shall be similar rates in similar circumstances. Practically, however, it is satisfactory to observe that on the representations made on this subject on the part of the trading community, a great deal has been dropped, and there seems on all sides to be a spirit of conciliation which I think augurs well for the success of this Bill. Equality of mileage is no longer pressed. It also seems to be tacitly admitted that there must be different terms for wholesale and retail goods. In other words, a person forwarding, or agreeing to forward, 1,000 tons, or 500 tons, for a lengthened period, or under particular circumstances, or on a particular line, has a fair claim to be placed on a preferential footing to those who, though they might send their traffic on the same line, do so in small quantities and at irregular intervals. This is in the interest of the consumers, which must not necessarily be left on one side; and I therefore think it is only right to allow the Commissioners to take such matters into their consideration. We also think that preferential rates, in order to secure traffic, is a matter which, in the interests of the consumer, cannot be left out of sight. It must not be forgotten that in this country there is hardly a Railway which is not, in one form or another, subject to the severest competition by sea. If we are not to allow this competitional sea-rate to be taken into consideration, two things would follow. In the first place, the Railways in many cases would not allow such through traffic; they would not, in fact, be enabled to carry the traffic; and, therefore, that important channel of communication between the producer and the consumer would be blocked up; while, on the other hand, the sea traffic, in the absence of competing lines, would be left to increase its charges. Practically, the consumer would, in either case, be placed in a worse position for receiving his goods than at the present time. Similarly, the producer, at a great distance, would find himself utterly excluded from a market where he now, at all events, competes on fair terms of equality, to the general advantage. It must be granted that in some of these instances there is a great appearance of hardship. When people see through traffic carried at a special rate, which is not granted to them, naturally there is a feeling of hardship produced in reference to the granting of special rates, and the Government have thought it right to give the Commissioners under the Bill a discretionary power. There can be no doubt that the first consideration in this matter is to be given to the interests of the general public; and if the words I am here dealing with are thought, when the Bill is in Committee, not to be sufficiently clear or strong to define this object or interest, I shall be ready to adopt any suggestion to make them clearer. The next clause to which I wish to refer is the Arbitration Clause, the effect of which will be that any officer, or number of officers, of a Railway Company, if they feel aggrieved, may complain to the Board of Trade; that the Board of Trade will make a representation to the Company, and the Company will give a public explanation, and in that way an effort will be made to bring about an amicable settlement of the grievance. This system has been found to work satisfactorily in America and elsewhere, and I believe it will be beneficial in this country. I must, however, point out that the Bill differs in one respect from that which was introduced in "another place" last year. In dealing with the traffic of the country, the Government feel that they cannot leave out the question of Canal traffic; and, therefore, clauses have been introduced into the Bill dealing with various questions affecting that traffic and Canal Companies. In some places in the country Canal traffic has fallen off through special circumstances, and cannot be revived; but there are many other places were it may be revived and encouraged, and where, with proper facilities, Canals may be made to serve the public interests much more than at present, especially in parts of the country which are not now adequately served by the Railway Companies. That was also the view of the strong Joint Committee which sat in 1873, and the object of this part of the Bill is to give facilities for the development of Canal traffic where it can be revived in the public interest. Many of the Canals are held by Railway Companies, and it is an evil which must be guarded against. The Railway Companies have not felt themselves prohibited by the existing law from acquiring such a predominating interest in the Canal Companies as practically to place the Canals under the control of the Railways. Therefore, we have introduced a clause on the subject providing that no Director or officer of a Railway Company shall, without authority, use, or permit the use, of any part of the Company's funds for the purpose of acquiring any Canal interest, &c. As regards the provisions of the Bill, I cannot think that much objection will be made to them as to matters of principle. One argument which, however, may be used against the Bill is that the introduction of such a measure is an act of confiscation—that it is dealing with property which ought to be held entirely sacred. It is argued that Railways derive their rates and Schedules as concessions, on the faith of which they have invested their money, and that, therefore, it will amount to confiscation in altering them adversely. On the same grounds, it may be said that any Bill affecting the interests of a Railway Company is one of confiscation; but your Lordships will hardly think it necessary that I should, either on behalf of myself, or those who sit near me, disclaim and repudiate any intention of that kind, or deny that the Bill before us has been introduced with any such object. It is simply based upon an earnest desire to remedy a state of affairs which has grown up, and which the Government does not think should be continued. It can hardly be supposed, for a moment, that the Government, in the infancy of the Railways, before traffic was developed in the slightest degree—before it was known or thought to what this great interest should grow—that, under those circumstances, the Government could hand over the whole traffic of the country to private persons, blind to the general interests, without any power of alteration whatever hereafter. Further than that, there has been taken, in almost every Private Bill that comes before Parliament, powers that nothing contained in that Bill shall affect the provisions of any general Act. If I want further evidence, I might cite the Standing Order of this House, which provides that no Company shall alter its maximum rates until a Report of the Board of Trade thereupon has been laid on the Table of this House. Assuming that that Report is not meant to be entirely valueless, it is clear that there is intended to preserve to Parliament that general controlling power which I contend Parliament has never in any way given up. But there is another argument. It may be said that these powers having once been granted ought to be regarded as unalterable. But how can Railway Companies make use of that argument if they come to Parliament and ask that their maximum rates should be increased? Several Railway Companies—for instance, the London and North Western, the Midland, and two smaller ones—have come to Parliament with that request. Surely, those who have made such claims upon Parliament cannot, in any way, conscientiously object to corresponding claims being put forward by traders upon equitable grounds to a judicial tribunal. The Bill, therefore, is not founded upon the principle of confiscation; but it has been framed with an earnest desire to remedy, and a belief that it will remedy, an unsatisfactory state of affairs that has grown up, and that it will terminate a controversy between the trading and agricultural classes on the one hand, and the Railway Companies on the other. We hope that by passing this Bill, or passing a measure in this direction, that Parliament will put an end to a state of affairs that cannot continue longer with advantage. One word of caution, by way of conclusion, I would give to the great Companies concerned. These are not days in which any direct powers — any great monopoly can go unquestioned; and certainly the changes that have taken place of late years have been such that Representatives in "another place" are brought more distinctly and clearly into contact with the wishes and desires of those they represent. In such a state of affairs it does not seem wise that this controversy should be prolonged. I believe, at the present time, there are many favourable causes which contribute to render the passage of this Bill more probable, more sure, than would be the case at any other time; and I cannot but feel that I am speaking in the interests of the great Companies who believe they are affected by this Bill, when I say they would be wisely persuaded to use the opportunity offered them at the present moment for a fair settlement founded on justice, and calculated to conduce to the prosperity of the country. The Bill is not the measure of one Party or the other; it raises no question of political controversy. Its general principles have been adopted by both sides of the House, and in "another place" it has been accepted with little more than perfunctory opposition from the Railway Companies. It is true that it is the first measure of the kind that has been initiated in your Lordships' House; but circumstances seem to render it desirable that it should be so introduced, there being an earnest desire at present to legislate on this matter on the principle of equity and justice; and, therefore, I hope this Bill may receive a second reading, and, after full and careful consideration, that it may emerge as a measure which will be at once sound in principle, and one that may be worked so as to promote the benefit and prosperity of the country.

*Moved*, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Stanley of Preston.*)

Lord BRABOURNE said, he had been asked by gentlemen who represented a large proportion of the Railway capital invested in this country to state their views upon this Bill. He accepted with gratitude, on behalf of the Railway Companies, the word of caution which had just been addressed to them; and he could assure their Lordships that there was no desire on the part of any one in the Railway world to discuss this question in anything but a conciliatory tone, with a view to arriving at a friendly settlement of the disputed points. He was happy to think that after what had just been said it would not be his duty to disabuse their Lordships' minds of an idea, which seemed to prevail in some quarters out of doors, that the Railway Companies were the natural enemies of the public. He imagined that few would disagree with him when he said that Railway Companies might be fairly considered as bodies which had supplied a great public want, and that by means of private expenditure they had relieved this country of a large amount of public taxation. If we had applied public funds to the construction of railways, it could hardly be doubted that during the last half-century a great weight of additional taxation must have been laid upon the people. In that case no one could have questioned the legal and moral right of Parliament to regulate and control all matters of Railway traffic and regulation. But when Parliament deliberately determined to trust to private subscription and to private enterprise for the creation of a Railway system; it followed that legal rights were acquired by those who subscribed the capital and promoted the enterprise; and Parliament became bound to uphold and support the rights it had itself created, and upon the faith of which capital had been subscribed and works of great public utility constructed. He did not deny the power of Parliament to legislate upon the lines of this Bill; but he would urge that in considering the details of legislation they were bound to keep three things specially in view. The first was that, however much we might cry down Railway investors as people who would not have obtained the privileges they had if things had been originally as they were now, we were dealing with men who held capital which had been subscribed on the faith of Acts of Parliament, and who had acquired definite legal rights. The second was that the average of Railway dividends had scarcely reached 4 per cent, and therefore it could not be contended that railway investors had made enormous profits, or that they had obtained under their Private Acts anything which had savoured of unfair advantage to themselves or which had been unduly burdensome to the public. The third thing to keep in view was that it was the direct interest of every Railway Company to carry the largest possible amount of remunerative traffic, and that any Company which by a prohibitory tariff excluded traffic or offended customers must be acting contrary to its own interests. The remarks he desired to make upon the Bill might be classified under three heads. These were—the constitution of the Court it was proposed to establish; the parties who were to have the right to appear before the Court; and the manner in which Railway Companies were to be dealt with by the Court. The Bill professed to abolish the present Commission, but so far as he could see there was nothing to prevent the re-appointment of the same Commissioners the day after the Bill passed. One of them was a gentleman "experienced in the Law;" another had at one period of his life "experience in Railway matters;" and the third was not qualified by any clause in the Bill. Moreover, the *ex officio* Commissioners, who were to be judges, were only to be summoned when required by the appointed Commissioners, so that Railway cases would still be left to the discretion of hon. Gentlemen, of whom only one need be learned in the Law. Why, he would ask, were Railway Companies to be the only bodies in this country who were to have a special tribunal appointed to see that they obeyed the law? If the cases in which they were concerned were of special importance, why not appoint two Judges to try them as was done in the case of election petitions? The Railway Companies were desirous of having nothing better, and were entitled to have nothing less, than the highest legal tribunals to decide whether they were acting legally; and as to the limitation of appeal to questions of law, the fact was that in these cases questions of law and of fact were so inextricably mixed up that it was almost impossible to separate them. There was no reason why the disputes in which Railway Companies were concerned should be settled by any inferior tribunal or with more limited appeal than were the disputes of the rest of the community. As to the parties who were to have a right to appear before the Court, it was an old maxim of English law that a man must have a personal grievance before he could summon another into a Court of Law. But this clause directly controverted that maxim and expressly declared that the complaining authority need not have been aggrieved. The only protection which the Bill gave to a Company was that of a certificate of the Board of Trade that the body making a complaint was a proper body to make such complaint. This was quite an illusory protection. Under the present law the Board of Trade had to give a certificate that the case was a proper case to be brought before the Commissioners; but under this clause they would discover some objection to the constitution or character of the body which brought the complaint; and this, of course, they would never do. Then these authorities would sometimes have rates to expend to which the Railway Companies had largely contributed, so that they would be fought with their own money. In other cases the authorities had no funds. The only fair way in which to put this clause was to provide: first, that the complaining authority should be bound to prove that it, or those whom it represented, had been aggrieved by the action of the Railway Company; and, secondly, that it should give security for its share of the costs of the hearing and determination of the complaint. There was much more to be said on this point, but he would leave others to deal with the legal aspects of the case. Now, he came to the manner in which the Companies were to be dealt with before the Court and otherwise under the Bill, and he wished first to call their Lordships' attention to the Report of the Committee which sat in 1882—a Committee which made a very exhaustive inquiry. That Committee was composed of 27 members, of whom, he believed, only seven were Railway Directors. It could not, therefore, be said that the Railway interest was over-represented, and especially since two draft reports were presented; and that which the Railway representatives supported was rejected. But when the other and more hostile report had been considered and thoroughly thrashed out, let their Lordships mark what happened. On the general issue, the Committee returned a verdict acquitting the Companies of "any grave dereliction of duty towards the public." Then, as regarded the particular contentions urged against the Companies, the most important of them broke down and came to nothing. One great contention had been in favour of equal mileage rates. The Committee pointed out that, as regards the interests of the public no less than in that of the Companies, equal mileage was impracticable, and its very principle was destroyed by the exceptions which its supporters allowed to be necessary. As regards terminal charges, which were stated to be unjust and illegal, the Committee reported that, subject to publication by the Companies, terminal charges ought to be recognized. As to preferential rates, the Committee reported that they were sometimes to the advantage and not the disadvantage of the public; that they were only illegal when unjust, and when unjust the law already provided a remedy. He (Lord Brabourne) could go at much greater length into all these points, but he mentioned them now only to show that as the complaints upon which legislation was demanded before the appointment of the Committee of 1882 were proved before that Committee to have been greatly exaggerated or altogether unfounded; so the defects which were sought to be remedied by the present Bill might turn out, on investigation, to be either no defects at all or such as might be remedied under the existing law. Therefore he submitted that the proper course to pursue would be to refer the Bill to a Select Committee. As to the clauses, he would mention the 9th, which, taken with the 17th Clause, constituted the Commission sole judge on all points contained in the special Acts of the Companies. The Commission would sit as judge and jury, just as the Judges sat in the Courts of Equity. Why was the Commission not to be subject to appeal similar to the appeals against the decisions of the Judges? No doubt the Commission was one of an extraordinary character. It cost the country about £10,000 a-year in salaries, and the average was 18 cases a-year. If it were to be a really strong Court, and composed of Judges of the High Court, he should not object to the limitation of the right of appeal; but two out of the three Commissioners were to be laymen; and, therefore, he held that it would be a monstrous thing to limit the right of appeal. The amount of property placed under the control of this Commission was enormous, and he thought the Commission ought to be a really strong Court in legal knowledge and ability, or else the widest right of appeal should be given. He came next to the 24th clause, which was the most important in the Bill. This clause proposed calmly to set aside all the Companies' special Acts under which they had heretofore classified their traffic and settled their rates. As far as he could read the clause, the Board of Trade had the power to reduce the maximum rates just as it pleased. The special Acts were the charters of the Railway Companies, on the strength of which their capital had been subscribed. He did not wish to say one word against the Board of Trade. In the debate in the House of Commons last year there was a speaker who had said that the Board of Trade was a most incompetent tribunal to deal with these questions. That speaker was Sir R. Assheton Cross. He (Lord Brabourne) did not agree with that estimate of the Board of Trade. In his official experience he had known much excellent work done by permanent officials, and he had no reason to doubt that those of the Board of Trade were as good as any others. Nor did he believe that any President of the Board of Trade would seek popularity by urging his subordinates to a reduction of Railway rates. He was ready to believe both the political and permanent element in the Board of Trade to be perfectly immaculate and entirely capable. But had their Lordships any idea of the work which this clause would impose upon the Board of Trade? Many of the Companies had some millions of rates, and the work of classification and arrangement of rates was one of enormous labour. He did not seek to appeal to anything so obsolete as the observance of Parliamentary faith, but to the practical difficulties before them. The rates were settled and determined by skilled men, the whole of whose time was given to their classification. They had no possible motive for injuring the public, and competition had shown them that they must cut their rates as low as they could in order to carry the traffic consistently with the traffic being remunerative. Interference with those men was very dangerous, and could not be successful. He did not say there was not room for improvement, both in the classification and the rates; but if by an arbitrary interference with managers of Railways their Lordships altered rates sanctioned by Acts of Parliament so as to make traffic unremunerative, they would go very near to the ugly word confiscation. It was absolutely impossible that the officers of the Board of Trade, in addition to all their other work, could do this work in the same efficient way in which it was now done by specially trained men, who devoted their whole time to its performance. But even if they could do so, there was an enormous difficulty behind. Upon what principle were they to proceed? Was it upon that of equal mileage rates? That had been condemned by the Committee of 1882. Was it with regard to the cost of service? Was it with reference to the value of the articles carried? Was the existence or non-existence of competition to be taken into account? No principle was indicated in the clause, because, in truth, there was no one principle of universal application in the matter. One principle alone could be applied, and that was the principle of elasticity, the application of which was absolutely necessary to the successful administration of Railway traffic, and which could only be applied by leaving a wide margin of discretion to those most capable men who now acted as Railway managers. He would point out, moreover, that not only did Railway Companies very rarely charge their maximum rates, but the whole tendency of recent years had been towards reduction—competition with other Companies and with water traffic having secured to the public the advantage of low rates. Any action of the Board of Trade which would make traffic unremunerative would recoil upon the public. In Section 7 of Clause 24 it was provided that when the Railway Companies and the Board of Trade had failed to come to an agreement, a report should be made to Parliament, and the Board of Trade might bring forward a Provisional Order to force their views upon the Railway Company. The Railway Companies would very much prefer that matters should not be brought to that pitch, because, in the case of a Provisional Order brought forward by a Government Department, there would be very little chance of resistance. He (Lord Brabourne) believed that if the Railway Companies were given time and opportunity, very few of those questions would remain unsettled. He did not wish to deprecate the friendly interference of the Board of Trade, but arbitrary interference would only lead to misfortune and confusion. By Clause 27, any person who fancied himself oppressed or treated unreasonably, might complain to the Board of Trade. There were a great many unreasonable persons who fancied themselves oppressed, and who now came to the Railway Companies and had their grievances settled in a quiet way. But now it was proposed that the Board of Trade should hear their complaints, and, what was worse, might appoint and pay any other person to receive communications upon the matter. The Board of Trade was but human after all, and there would always be plenty of people anxious for such a job, whom they would be urged to appoint. He thought that nothing but mischief would result from such a provision, and the trouble which would be given to the Railway Companies by this clause could hardly be conceived by those who were unacquainted with the practical working of those Companies. All that the Railway Companies desired was to be allowed to settle their own differences with their own customers; and, if they acted illegally, those customers had their remedy at law. As to the complaint that individuals could not contend against the long purse of a corporation such as a Railway Company, that would apply to all other corporate bodies, and there could be no reason why Railway Companies should be subjected to a special law more than any other bodies of the same nature. Clause 28 provided for what was practically an unlimited power to order returns from the Railway Companies. The returns now asked for by the Board of Trade imposed a great deal of labour on the staff of the Companies, and this further demand would be attended with great inconvenience. Clause 29 contained Provisions of a most extraordinary character; it provided that at every station of every Company there should be placed certain lists of their rates. There was one Company, whose terminus was in London, which required no less than 1,500 books to keep its various rates. The effect of this clause would be that at each of the 670 stations on this Railway there would have to be a copy of its books, and upwards of 1,000,000 books would be required to comply with this clause, the information contained in which would never be of the slightest use to anyone. The Railway Companies were at present compelled to supply all persons desiring to use the railway with the information they required, and, on proper notice, to show how their rates were divided, and what was the proportion which was a "terminal charge." With regard to the general objects and nature of the Bill, it appeared to him that the principle underlying it was the interference by the State with one of the greatest industrial undertakings of the country. No such interference could take place without running grave and serious risks. If their Lordships impeded commerce, fettered trade, and imposed shackles upon industrial enterprise, they struck at the root of that freedom of action which was the life and soul of industrial success. As regarded success in an industrial enterprize, whether it was the maintenance and management of a Railway, the business of a shipowner, or that of a merchant, success was more likely to be achieved by the free action of those men who were trained to the business, and whose interest lay in its development, than by the hard-and-fast rule of Government regulations or the restrictive supervision of a Government Department. But here there was something more in question than mere commercial success. The power of State interference was one which their Lordships would always regard with jealousy; but their jealousy would be increased when that interference took the form of encroachment upon legal rights. That was a dangerous principle, which might lead to grave and serious results. Up to the present time, whenever any sound commercial undertaking had been projected in this country, there had been no want of capital to carry it out. This had been the case because the public had confidence—they believed that Parliamentary faith would be kept; they had had some rude lessons in recent years as to Parliamentary faith and the reliance to be placed upon Parliamentary enactments. But if these lessons were to be carried further: if people were taught that the conditions on which they were to subscribe, and those upon which they had subscribed their capital, were to be set aside at the first convenient opportunity, for the sake of gaining popularity, the supply of capital might be considerably diminished. Moreover, if they impeded trade enterprise by restrictive legislation, it would not be long before those classes who lived by manual labour would rise up against that class of legislation which restricted the supply of one great class of employment, they would have to reckon with other classes also. If by that legislation the railway interest was going to be attacked, he wanted to know whether their Lordships were going to give any consideration to the claims of the Railway shareholders. It always seemed to be forgotten that it was not the well-paid chairman, or the holders of debenture and guaranteed stock, but the holders of ordinary stock, who suffered from any diminution in the earnings of the Railway—and they had a right to complain if their legal security was diminished, and if they were robbed by legislation of the dividends which they would otherwise have received. It should be remembered that out of £800,000,000 of money invested in Railways, something less than £300,000,000 was in the hands of ordinary shareholders, upon whom the diminution in profits would exclusively fall. There remained yet another and still more important class with whom they would have to reckon. If any noble Lord would look into the complaints made against Railway Companies, he would find that they were not of overcharges upon the persons complaining, but they were made, for the most part, by traders, because they alleged the charge upon the goods of somebody else was too low, and that this somebody else was thus enabled to compete with them on equal terms in the market. There was another aspect to this question. If they were going to tamper with Railway rates in the interest, or supposed interest, of traders, they would limit competition and restrict the area from which supplies were brought into the market, and it would not be long before consumers lifted up their voices against the rise of prices which would ensue. A great deal was said about the Railway Companies enjoying a monopoly. They were monopolists only in the sense that they had provided a better, more convenient, and a cheaper method of transit than others, and had thus driven other carriers out of the field as far as long routes were concerned. Their very excellence was now used as a weapon against them. Moreover, there was scarcely a line anywhere at the present moment to which there was not some competition either by another line or by water. Railway Companies frequently incurred a large expenditure, and then in a few years Parliament let in a competing company which rendered all their expenditure unproductive. Therefore Railway Companies had no real monopoly—only a restricted monopoly, regulated by Act of Parliament, and used in the interest and for the advantage of the public. It might be said that because he had criticized some of the details of this measure he ought to move its rejection. That by no means followed. Railway Companies had no quarrel with traders, and as sensible men only desired to see this subject dealt with in a sensible manner. Still less had they any quarrel with the public, whose servants they were and whom they desired to please. They knew that there had been a demand from the public for Railway legislation, and they could not shut their eyes to the fact that three Governments had proposed legislation. Railway Companies were perfectly ready to remedy any complaints that might be well founded and to use their best endeavours to satisfy the public. There were remedies for certain defects which the Companies were anxious for. That they readily admitted. The classification of goods was, in a great measure, obscure and obsolete, and Railway Companies were as desirous as anyone else for its revision. The uniformity of rates was, no doubt, a delicate and difficult subject, but, wherever possible, Companies had no objection, in all cases where it could be done without sacrifice of their shareholders' rights, to rates being dealt with. The consolidation of statutes was also desirable, and the Companies were most willing to promote it. Moreover, as to terminal charges, they were ready to simplify the matter and make it as clear as possible to the public. There were many points in the Bill which would be much better discussed before a Select Committee than in the Whole House. He believed it would be found that those who represented Railway Companies were most anxious and desirous to give every possible assistance in the promotion of the legislative settlement of all disputed points. What the Railway Companies did object to was that they should be continually harassed by unfounded complaints and prejudiced by extravagant statements which had been again and again refuted. They asked, within the limits given them by the Acts of Parliament controlling them, to be allowed the freedom to act as they chose and not to be interfered with in the management of their own business; above all, they asked not to be continually exposed to harassing legislation and vexatious enactments, which would have no other effect in the long run than that of retarding the development of the industry and resources and of restricting the prosperity of the country; while at the same time they inflicted undeserved injury on men who had subscribed their money to carry out these great undertakings in full reliance on the good faith, honour and justice of the British Parliament.

LORD HENNIKER said, he had taken a great interest in this question, and for some time had been Chairman of a Committee which represented all sides of politics. This was no Party question. The Committee consisted of Members of their Lordships' House, Members of the House of Commons, and agriculturists and traders from all parts of the country. He believed that all the important Corporations, the Chambers of Agriculture and Commerce, and Trade Societies were represented upon it. He, therefore, thought he might claim to speak with more authority than his own individual opinion could possibly command. The policy of the Committee had been throughout in no way to be vindictive against the Railway Companies, as they were fully aware of all the country owed them, and not to ask for anything which they did not consider reasonable and right. He was glad to find his noble Friend (Lord Brabourne) had spoken in a way which showed he was quite ready to deal with the question in a conciliatory spirit. He could assure him that his Committee fully reciprocated this feeling. It was the policy of some people to ask for a great deal more than they wanted. This practice his Committee had thrown aside. They thought the question one of great importance, and they were prepared to stick to their proposals as far as they were able. First of all, he (Lord Henniker) must thank the Government for their attempt to deal with this question, and particularly his noble Friend the President of the Board of Trade (Lord Stanley of Preston). A measure brought in by a responsible Government was what was wanted; and he personally hoped his noble Friend might be successful in passing a measure which was much needed, and would, in these distressed times, be welcomed by agriculturists and traders, and, he hoped, would be for the benefit of the Railway Companies. He (Lord Henniker) would not attempt to go into the details of the Bill, but he would touch merely on some of the main points. He hoped the Bill would pass a second reading, and details could then be gone into in Committee. The first point he wished to call attention to was the composition of the Railway Commission. The great point here was that its composition should be strong, and easily available to suitors. As to the strength of the proposed Commission, he hoped it would be strong, as it stood in the Bill. Last year the traders thought—and he agreed with them—that the appointment of a Judge as Chief Commissioner would not be desirable, but that the present Court, with more power, would be best. However, the proposal made in this year's Bill was not at all the same, and he had no objection to make to the composition of the Court. The Railway Companies, no doubt, wished for a Judge as First Commissioner. In the proposal made in the Bill, the Railway Companies had all they wished for in every important case, and the Committee had no objection to make to this. As to the Commission being easily available, he had been always anxious that, whatever the law was, it should be as little as possible Judge-made law, with proper latitude —not tying down the Commission too much—that certain rules should be laid down, as far as they could be, for the guidance of the Commission and the Court of Appeal. When in Committee on the Bill, this could be considered. His noble Friend (Lord Brabourne) asked why the Railway Companies should have a special Court at all, and not be dealt with like other litigants. He might remind him that the Act of 1873 was brought in because the ordinary Courts were unable to deal with these Railway questions satisfactorily. The Railway Companies prided themselves on the fact that very few cases came before the Commissioners; but was not this often from the fact that the Court, as at present constituted, was not easily available? The Railway Companies held the purse strings, here as well as in appeals, and traders were too much handicapped to be able to hold their own. For this reason he hoped Sub-sections 3, 4, and 5 of Clause 17 would be altered. This Clause gave an appeal from the Commissioners to a higher Court, and, by leave, from the higher Court to the House of Lords. Surely if the Commission Court was a strong one, one appeal—of course, on questions of law only, and that by leave of the Commission—would be quite sufficient. There was already a Judge on important occasions, and to multiply appeals was only to cause unnecessary expense, and, he thought, unnecessary pressure on traders. Again, he hoped there would be only one Court of Appeal for the whole country. If they had one decision in England, one in Scotland, and one in Ireland, there would be no uniformity in railway policy. What he had said as to the traders being handicapped by the superior power of the Railway Companies would apply to sub-Section 8 of Clause 24, where there was a reference to a Select Committee. This proposal was popular even in a more extended form in some quarters. His noble Friend who had spoken last had suggested the reference of this Bill itself to a Select Committee; but the traders were often greatly handicapped on Select Committees. Railway experts were the witnesses, and many of their Lordships knew what this meant. He would pass on to Clause 24, which was the point of controversy last year. The Railway Companies talked of confiscation of their property then, and they did the same now, saying they relied on their old Acts. At all events, the Committee over which he presided were not in favour of anything of the kind. They were many of them shareholders in railways, and they would hardly wish to confiscate their own property. However, he would pass this rather unfair contention by. Clause 24—it was Clause 24 of the Bill of last year too—was improved as far as the Railway Companies were concerned, and for the traders as well. Uncertainty must ruin every trade. In last year's Bill the question of classification could have been reopened at any time. This point he held to be one of great importance, both for the Railways and the traders. They wanted as much certainty as possible in any arrangement made, but if Clause 24 was looked at this year, what prospect was there of any immediate settlement? A year was to be first given to the Railway Companies to send in their proposals as to classification; then a clear Session if there was no agreement. The Railway Companies looked on the clause as confiscatory. Surely this position would hardly lead to a satisfactory or a speedy solution of the question. The Railway Companies prepared a schedule of rates in 1885; there was all the help to be given by Government experts, traders, by the guide of the Clearing House rates, and so on, at once available. In fact, there was no insurmountable difficulty in coming to an immediate settlement of the classification of rates. He held strongly to the opinion which he had often expressed, that a small Commission would deal far more satisfactorily with this question than it could be dealt with in any other way. The Committee over which he presided were of this opinion, and he pressed this upon Mr. Mundella last year. The Commission could be formed more or less of experts; and he thought if Clause 24 were taken out and a Commission appointed, with a provision that a Bill should be brought in within a year to carry out their Report, that the question would be settled without much difficulty, or delay, or half the trouble which the 24th Clause as it stood would cause. Last year his hon. Friend (Mr. Barclay) proposed that the

Commissioners should deal with classification, with assessors. He confessed he objected to this now, as he should like to see a general Bill passed, and the Commission get to work at once to make the Act really effective. To give them the work of classification of rates as well as their own duties would delay them in carrying out the general Act. Should the small Commission he suggested be appointed, it could set to work at once, and they would have some prospect of a speedy solution of the question, as well as a prospect of the general Act being put into working order without delay. There was no reason to delay the Bill for classification. This could be done afterwards as well as now, if there was a guarantee in the Bill that classification would follow. Should he (Lord Henniker) find his views supported, he should be prepared to move the omission of Clause 24, and to bring up an Amendment to carry out the proposal he made for the consideration of the House. It would perhaps be convenient to touch here on the question of terminals, although the definition to which he wished to refer was in Clause 43. This definition was the same as in the Bill of last year, and the Committee strongly objected to this. The Committee thought it too wide. This point—that of terminal charges not being included in maximum rates—was one of the greatest grievances they had; and the position on this part of the question was far more strained than it was two years ago when he brought the question before the Hous . There were then nine Bills brought in by the Railway Companies, which gave a new classification of rates; there was strong opposition to them, and they were withdrawn. The Railways then went to a Court of Law, and in June, 1885, obtained a decision in their favour—that was, to charge terminals over and above the maximum rates. The Railway Companies talked of their old Acts, which to alter was confiscation; but they did not doubt about going to a Court of Law to upset the whole of the railway legislation which had hitherto prevailed, and against every decision which had been given by the Railway Commission and every other Court of Law, that terminals should be included in the maximum rates with very few exceptions. The position was therefore far more unsatisfactory than it was, particularly as the last decision made it impossible to appeal, reversing all former decisions—as the Judicature Act of 1873 was passed on August 5 of that year, and came into force at once. Whereas the Railway Regulation Act of the same year was passed on July 21, and did not come into force till September. To make the matter clear, the operation of the Judicature Act was postponed till November 1, 1875, but became an Act of Parliament on August 5, 1873. The 45th clause allowed an appeal from the inferior Courts then existing. The Railway Commission was not in legal existence till September, 1873, so although one Court was at work before the other, the result was that an appeal—which the Judges of the Divisional Court said they would gladly grant if they could—was impossible, and this was about the only instance in which an appeal could not be given. This might be thought inconsistent after what he had said about appeals; but their Lordships must recollect that he was dealing with the existing law, and what was fair for one side was fair for the other. The Railways had the advantage here. Under these circumstances, he should have been glad of some more distinct dealing with the question, and a better definition of terminals in a Government measure. A Railway could not work its line without stations, and so on; and again, the present maximum rates were fixed, as a rule, on the understanding that they should include terminals. If this was correct, as he thought it was; if terminals were to be charged extra for the first time in Railway legislation, the whole question of maximum rates should be reconsidered, and probably reduced rather than increased, as was proposed in nearly every instance in the nine Bills of 1885. The Railways said they did not ever charge their maximum rates. Why, then, raise them? They thought this question one of great importance, and it was one which he hoped his noble Friend would again consider most carefully. As to preference rates, he was aware this was a difficult and delicate matter. It was quite unnecessary to quote instances of this; how to deal with it was the question. His Committee strongly objected to Subsection 2 of Clause 25, which laid down that Railways might be allowed to plead that they could only secure traffic by giving preference rates. This was the only way in which Railways could justify preference rates, and this sub-section would tell most strongly to prevent a satisfactory settlement if it remained in the Bill. Although a settlement was much desired, he felt sure that those interested would rather have no Bill passed than one with this provision in it. Why should a rule be laid down in favour of the Railway Companies and no rules in favour of the trader? The traders had many points on which they could complain; but at the outset the one point most clearly laid down was the only one on which the Railways could rely. It might be said that the traders had their protection in Sub-section 1; but the traders were the weaker party, and such a provision must tell against them. He hoped this part of the question would be reconsidered by his noble Friend, and that, at all events, Sub-section 2 of Clause 25 would be omitted. Clause 26 his Committee thought unnecessary, and likely to mislead. He had touched on some of the important points in the Bill; but although his remarks were in the nature of strong criticisms, he trusted his noble Friend would understand that he was anxious to give him any support he could personally in the difficult task he had undertaken; that there was a great deal in the Bill for which he had nothing but praise, and that he was sure the Committee over which he presided had but one wish, and that was to bring this question, if possible, to a satisfactory conclusion, and to give any assistance they could in that direction.

Lord BRAMWELL said, he did not intend to oppose the second reading —in the first place, because it would be perfectly useless, as their Lordships would no doubt read it a second time; and in the next place, because it was a Bill with many miscellaneous provisions, some of which might be good; and it was brought in under auspices and introduced in such a way as to disarm opposition. There was one matter on which, though they would have an opportunity of referring to it in Committee, he should like to say a few words, especially after the argument which had been used in relation to it. The shareholders of this country had subscribed £800,000,000 for making Railways, and they had done so upon the faith of a bargain made with the State, made with the public, made, at least, with Parliament, that they should have the right to make certain charges. It was now proposed to take this right from them, not in so many words, because they were at liberty to diminish their own rates. But if the rates they proposed were not sanctioned by the Board of Trade, the Board of Trade might suggest other rates which certainly would not be larger—and which might be considerably smaller—and then the Board of Trade would bring their proposition to Parliament, and if sanctioned by Parliament the rates which the Companies had at present would be taken from them. He did not deny the power of Parliament to do this. Parliament was omnipotent; it might take an acre from every ten their Lordships held, and reduce 3 per cents to 2½. But he entirely denied that Parliament had reserved to itself as part of the bargain the right to do so. He wholly denied the validity of the argument presented in support of such alleged right. That argument was that in modern Railway Acts there was a clause that nothing therein contained should be deemed to exempt railways from the provisions of any general Railway Act now in force, or which might hereafter be passed, or from any revision of rates and charges authorized by such Acts. But what the Railway Companies relied on was nothing in the particular Act which contained that clause, but upon the Act which gave them the right originally to make those charges. That clause, in modern Acts, came into existence by virtue of their Lordships' Standing Order, and the first time this Standing Order appeared was in 1844. From that time down to the present this clause had always been introduced into Acts of Parliament which gave power to Companies to make branches. By an Act of 1844 it was provided that when any future Company—not one of the old Companies—was earning more than 10 per cent there might be a reduced rate of tolls, but that that reduction should be accompanied with a guarantee that if that reduced rate did not produce 10 per cent the Treasury should make up the difference. It was further provided that such reduced scale should not be again revised otherwise than with the consent of the Railway Company for 21 years. That was thought to be the fair and legitimate way of dealing with Railway Companies at that time. He had no doubt that it was to prevent new Companies saying they were not within this Act of Parliament because they came into existence after it was passed, and therefore their new Act being subsequent to the general Act, repealed it. It was to preclude such an argument as this, doubtless, that the Standing Order was made which provided that every Railway Bill passed after that date should contain the clause that nothing in the Act should exclude a revision of the maximum tolls. But the clause did not bear the interpretation which the noble Lord (Lord Stanley of Preston) had put upon it; he said so confidently, speaking as a lawyer. The Bill introduced by the noble Lord was a proposal to interfere with rights for which the Railway Companies had bargained, and for which the shareholders had subscribed their money. Was it conceivable that those people would have been foolish enough to subscribe the amount they did if they had known that the tolls which they bargained for could be reduced? The matter was one of great importance not only to the Railway Companies and the shareholders, but generally. He was not going to talk of plunder or confiscation, for he was sure there was no such idea in the mind of the noble Lord who introduced the Bill. An expression was very often used in the present day that "there was plunder in the air;" and he would ask their Lordships not to set an example of lightly taking away from people rights to which they were clearly entitled. Land was to be nationalized; leaseholds were to be enfranchised; copyholds were to be enfranchised; or the landlord was to forfeit his interest. The Tithe Question was to be settled again, and other rights were to be interfered with; and he (Lord Bramwell) would ask their Lordships carefully to consider whether they would not by this Bill be taking away from the Railway shareholders that which they had purchased, which unquestionably belonged to them. He had been told by one, than whom there was no higher authority, that the difficulty in raising capital was on account of the general distrust that existed. There was scarcely a thing or an interest which was not now assailed with the object of taking from it rights that the law had given. Their Lordships might suppose that he had some interest in the matter. Yes, he was a Railway shareholder, though only a small one. His personal interest in the question was small; he was provided for as long as he lived; and before this scheme was brought into operation he should po bably be provided for in another way He was chiefly interested in the matter in the way that thousands of other persons were; he and they wished to make safe provision for those who came after them; but this Bill made railway property unsafe. He believed the Bill to be an unjustifiable attack on the rights of Railway shareholders. There were many other observations he might make on the Bill. For instance, why should the Railway Companies be referred by the Bill to a tribunal inferior to those which existed for other matters. The magnitude of the questions which arose was an argument in favour of having the best possible tribunal. Why, if there was a mistaken decision on matter of fact, should it be as it is in the ordinary Courts of Law the subject of any appeal. He believed, however, it was impossible that a Committee of the Whole House could properly deal with all the questions that were raised by the Bill, and, therefore, that it must be considered by a Select Committee.

LORD HERSCHELL said, it was not convenient to discuss the details of the Bill at the present stage; but he desired to criticize one or two alterations which had been made in the Bill since last year, and which it was desirable should be more fully explained than they had been. As to the argument of his noble and learned Friend (Lord Bramwell) that the Railways did not possess a monopoly, it appeared to him that they did possess a considerable monopoly, because the Railways had been constructed under special facilities which were given to the Companies, and which were not given to any other of Her Majesty's subjects. In the compulsory taking of land for the making of lines, no one could compete with the Companies. Parliament had therefore given them a monopoly, and that monopoly could be destroyed only by allowing anyone else to do what they had done, which was not a practicable remedy. In these circumstances there might be interferences with the Railway Companies in the carrying on of their business which would be justifiable, while they would not be justifiable in the case of those upon whom Parliament had conferred no special rights. On the other hand, it would be unjust that money had been subscribed for the construction of railways on the faith that Companies had power to take certain tolls. These could not be revised simply in the interest of the traders without involving that confiscation which the traders themselves did not desire. He objected to the change in the constitution of the Court, and though that change had been supported by the noble Lord opposite who represented the traders (Lord Henniker), he did not regard it as in any sense a change for the better. He could understand a desire on the part of traders to have a tribunal which should disregard law altogether and determine questions on abstract principles of justice, and against whose decisions there should be no appeal. That would be an intelligible proceeding. But if questions of law were to be determined upon legal principles, he should have supposed that a tribunal presided over by the best lawyer available, would be even better for the traders than it would be for the Railway Companies. The better the tribunal from which you started the less likely was it that there would be appeals. He was at a loss to understand why a Court should be preferred that was presided over by a presumably inferior lawyer. As the Railway Commissioners had sat only from 20 to 30 days a year, there was apparently no room for the separation of the more important from the less important cases. If the opinion of the legal Commissioner was to be set aside by the opinions of two laymen, nothing could be more likely to provoke a number of appeals against the decisions of the Commissioners. On the whole, he thought a better tribunal would be obtained by reverting to the proposals of the Bill of last year, for they would only by the present proposal be multiplying appeals and giving general dissatisfaction. As to Clause 24, he thought there was something in the drafting of it that rendered it unintelligible; certainly it was obscure. It had been suggested that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee; but he hoped it would be a Joint Committee of both Houses, so that there might be only one Inquiry. There was, he noticed, a considerable change in the Bill as to undue preference, and he wished to have an explanation as to the omission of the word "mileage." The Bill gave the Commission considerable powers, which the Commission, he had no doubt, would use with advantage to the parties concerned, and that was the spirit in which the matter ought to be dealt with.

Lord GRIMTHORPE said, he wished to supplement the argument of his noble and learned Friend (Lord Bramwell) about this Act and the Standing Order of 1844. The Act provided that the State might buy future railways for 25 times the average profits of three years, and might reduce rates when those profits had reached 10 per cent, but must guarantee the Companies against any loss thereby. The Standing Order guarded against future Railway Companies thereafter slipping any words into their special Acts to interfere with that revision. And now we are asked to believe that Parliament was so absurd as to pass an Act for revision with a guarantee on reaching 10 per cent, and, at the same time, to provide for revision without a guarantee while the average dividend is not half of 10 per cent; and also to believe that shareholders have been such fools as to go on finding money all these years with an unlimited power of reducing rates hanging over their heads. He had read in some newspaper last year that some Board of Trade official said that he had always intended the revising words to have the effect the noble Lord (Lord Stanley of Preston) now said they had. If he did he had played a trick not unknown to lawyers—namely, trying to get an advantage by putting in vague words not calculated to excite alarm; which trick almost always failed, because Judges held that rights and property are not to be taken away by obscure words. There had been complaints against the Railway Companies as long as he could remember—certainly since 1846. There was a Committee in 1853 which produced the Cardwell Act, and then there was a Committee in 1865-6-7, and there was a Joint Committee of both Houses in 1872. After that was the Committee to which his noble Friend (Lord Brabourne) referred, which produced a great volume of evidence. The grievances of 69 witnesses against the Railway Companies were heard, and six witnesses on the part of the Railway Companies gave evidence. If anybody in the world might be expected to suggest a Bill of this nature, giving the Board of Trade power to reduce rates, surely it would be a Committee who had been so engaged. But that Committee said not a word to that effect. The Duke of Devonshire's Commission of 1865-6-7 was specially appointed to consider the question of the purchase of Railways. If they could have found the means of purchasing the Railways cheaper than on the terms prescribed in 1844, they were the Commission to do it; but if anybody would take the trouble to read their Report he would find that they said it was impossible to do so, because of the terms of the Act of 1844; in other words, it said that the Railway shareholders who found the money knew that it could not be taken away except by mere confiscation, contrary to the Act and Standing Order of 1844. The fact was that from 1844 down to last year no one ever dreamt that Parliament had a right to revise rates. Not even Mr. Chamberlain's Bill did that. The noble Lord therefore had to make out that it was good faith to reverse the understanding of 42 years and the Report of Mr. Gladstone, who introduced the Act of 1844, and used the most solemn words about the importance of doing nothing that would even have the appearance of a breach of Parliamentary faith. The noble Lord might be a clever man, but he was not clever enough to do that. The Joint Committee of 1872 had the same thing to deal with; but the Act of 1844 stood in the way again, and this happened over and over again. By Clause 11 of the Bill, the Board of Trade, through the Railway Commissioners, or the Board of Trade without the Railway Commissioners, might order any Company to spend any sum of money which they like to pronounce necessary for the public convenience and interests. This extraordinary power was now proposed to be given for the first time, and he asked their Lordships to consider to what this might lead. They might order Companies to spend hundreds of thousands of pounds without a penny of profit for it. And that is not even a question of law, on which alone the Bill allows an appeal. Anything more ruinous to shareholders could not be imagined. Parliament had but to revise Railway rates with the object of reducing them to such a point that the State might acquire the Railways at an almost nominal price. Were their Lordships aware of the amount of money that some of the Railway Companies had spent on their stations? He had a station in his mind where there was considerable inconvenience owing to a level crossing. It was a station used by eight Railway Companies. The problem of getting rid of the level crossing had never been solved yet, because of the enormous cost which would be required. It could not be done without the waste of an unknown sum of money, and yet the Railway Commissioners might order this expense, saying it was extremely convenient for the public to make the alteration. A Commission of three gentlemen—containing a gentleman of legal experience, another of railway experience, and another of no experience—might order a Railway Company to spend that money. The net profits of Railway Companies, taking off working expenses, were only 47 per cent of the gross earnings. The ordinary shareholders held 37 per cent of the whole capital, and the net income was 0·47 of the gross. If they multiplied the 0·37 by the 0·47 they would find that every penny they took off the gross income of the Company, to give it to their customers, as the Duke of Devonshire's Commission said, as near as possible sixpence was taken off the ordinary shareholders. As to the Commission, the common pickpockets and burglars have a right to be tried by the best Judge in England, and a woman with an action for breach of promise could appeal through all the Courts on points of law. By the Bill the Railway Companies were treated throughout as *hostes humani generis*. It had been said that a strong Court was wanted. Yes; one strong enough to override law and justice, and do whatever they think will be popular, or which the customers of Railways are pleased to think fair, as the noble Lord (Lord Henniker) said. In this Bill every possible presumption was made against the Railway Companies. His noble Friend (Lord Brabourne) had spoken on behalf of the Directors; he (Lord Grimthorpe) was afraid that the brevity of his remarks might not be altogether satisfactory to the Railway Defence Association, of which he was made President some years ago. That Association was called into existence because the shareholders generally found that they could not trust the Directors to act for them collectively. Each Chairman and each Manager—who generally managed the Chairman, and had a fixed salary for it—looked after his own interest. If they could so go to the Board of Trade and get some nice little thing for their own Company they would sacrifice everybody else. This was not his opinion only, because the Committee of 1872 said just the same thing. They said that Railway shareholders were practically sheep, without any real control over their managers, to whose speculations, ambition, and passions the Committee attributed a great deal of the past misfortunes of shareholders. At that late hour he would say no more, but hoped that the remarks of his two noble Friends (Lords Brabourne and Bramwell), if not his own, would make a due impression on the Government, and show them the real nature of this Bill.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said, he could not agree that the Railway Companies ought to be regarded as ordinary traders, because they undoubtedly possessed monopolies, and it was therefore necessary from time to time to inquire into their proceedings. With regard to the jurisdiction of the Commission, when he first read Clause 27 of the Bill, he was a little in doubt as to whether it would not be desirable to transfer the arbitration which was rendered possible under that Clause to the Commissioners, rather than to the Board of Trade. He felt that it was desirable to make that Commission as strong as possible, and he thought also that, dealing as they did with matters of litigation, they would be the best persons to deal also with arbitration. On further consideration, however, he thought it would be better to leave it to the Board of Trade, because the Commissioners would have to sit as Judges, and it would therefore be very difficult for them, having acted as arbiters in the first instance, to be called in as Judges to settle matters which they had failed to settle as arbiters. The Board of Trade also had in Parliament a responsible Member of the Government, and, therefore the Railway Companies had a better means of sifting any alleged injustice on the part of the Board of Trade, and of obtaining an appeal against their decisions, than they would have if this matter were committed to the Commissioners. With regard to revision of the rates, it was by no means certain that a revision of the maximum rates would necessarily mean a diminution of the ordinary rates charged by Railway Companies. Respecting short distances—a very important part of their traffic—it should be borne in mind that revision might lead to an increase in the charges. With respect to terminals, express recognition was for the first time given to them by this Bill. So far, it was a concession to the Railway Companies. As to Clause 25, he should postpone his remarks. One matter to be considered in Committee would be, the objection taken by producers that Railways—which annihilated distance—had artificially cheapened goods brought from certain portions of the United Kingdom and from abroad, at the expense of goods produced in the localities less favourably placed. That was the strangest argument that could be put forward for a charge of that character, as if the consumer were the only person interested. Moreover, the consumer, if benefitted by goods being carried cheaply for long distances, would also be benefitted by lower charges for goods carried a short distance.

The Earl of JERSEY said, he hoped that there would be no objection to the Chairman of the new Commission being a Judge. It could not be for the interests of anyone connected with trade or agriculture that any injustice should be done to the Railway Companies. As to the revision of the classification of goods, that was desired both by the Companies and the traders. In his opinion, if the Companies were to take advantage of the Clearing House classification, they would be able to review their rates much more quickly than in any other way. He did not believe, however, that the terminals definition in the Bill would meet with the assent of either the agricultural or the commercial classes. He was sure that what had fallen from the noble Lord the President of the Board of Trade (Lord Stanley of Preston) on one point, would be received with great regret by all traders; for the noble Lord indicated that he had given up the home producer in favour of the foreigner. In his opinion, it was impossible to suppose that any settlement of the question of preferential rates would be satisfactory to the home producer as long as the foreign producer received a bounty in the shape of lower Railway rates than had to be paid by the producer at home. As to the Appellate Court, he thought that there ought to be no objection to only one appeal, and he hoped that the measure would become law this Session, and that it would be of advantage to the country.

The Marquess of TWEEDDALE said, that what the Railway Companies desired, as regarded the constitution of the Court for dealing with preferential rates, was that it should be a strong Court. According to the proposal of the Bill, the Court would sometimes be strong and at other times weak; sometimes an inferior Court, and at other times a superior Court. It was most undesirable that Parliament should leave it an open question whether a Judge was to be called in or not. The Commission itself would be unwilling to show their inferiority in dealing with matters of law and fact by sending for a Judge. The proper thing was to constitute a Court under the presidency of a Judge. He thought that the Conciliation Clauses of the Bill would, in certain cases, develop a most mischievous kind of litigation, inasmuch as they provided no protection for the Railway Companies against harassing claims of all descriptions. He should prefer a strong fixed Commission to an oscillating one, which would be sometimes strong and sometimes weak, so that it might give a promise of consistency and continuity in its decisions. The clauses relating to the revision of rates appeared to give the Board of Trade unlimited powers of revising rates in such a manner that they might practically extinguish the property of the Railway shareholders. He thought that the Bill ought to contain some instruction to the Board of Trade that in revising rates they should have due regard to the legal and equitable rights of all parties interested. With regard to the clauses dealing with undue preference it should be remembered that three-fifths of the whole rates of Railway Companies were practically ruled by the keen competition of shipping interest and the Steamship Companies, and that the greater part of the remaining two-fifths were determined by Railway competition. It was said that this Bill legalized terminals for the first time, but he pointed out that this was not so. He hoped that their Lordships, if they read this Bill a second time, would not ignore the fact that whatever injured the Railway interest would injure the country at large, and that it was much more probable that they would get low rates and efficient service from rich and prosperous Railway Companies than from poor and struggling ones hampered by unwise legislation.

Lord STALBRIDGE said, one part of the community that had not been represented in the debate was the consumer. In fixing their rates the Railway Companies had been doing their best in the interests of the consumer as of any others, their object having been to bring food within the reach of the consumer as cheaply as possible. Taken as a whole, Railway arrangements had been very fairly carried out. It must be remembered that it had been intended originally that Railway rates should be revised only when the shareholders were receiving a 10 per cent dividend, whereas the average dividend now paid was only 4½ per cent. If the noble Lord (Lord Stanley of Preston) and the Board of Trade should pass this Bill they would have taken a great responsibility off the shoulders of the Railway Companies and put it upon their own, which would not be able to bear it, and deal with the work properly.

Lord STANLEY of PRESTON, in reply, said, he would postpone to another time much that he had to say. With regard to the argument of the noble and learned Lord (Lord Bramwell), he must observe that, however honourable the intentions of the Railway Companies, their claims, on grounds of public policy, could not be admitted to the full extent. As to the constitution of the Court, the noble and learned Lord (Lord Herschell) asked a good many questions about points which were rather matters for Committee, than for dealing with at that stage of the Bill.

He quite admitted that the stronger the Court the less likelihood there was of appeals. He had been asked what the position would be if the legal Commissioner and the Judge took one view, and the two lay Commissioners another? He believed the usual course was, if the Court was equally divided, that the junior withdrew his judgment, and that, in point of fact, no difficulty was found in adjusting a matter which at first sight might seem to present some. He believed that after some questions were decided, the right of appeal would be rarely exercised. Parliament had, in many cases, recognized the necessity for classification; and he did not believe that the great difficulties which some noble Lords anticipated would be likely to arise. He fully acknowledged that Railways in this country were well managed, and that we had not much to learn from foreigners on that subject; and he believed that in dealing with the question of classification, the Board of Trade, with the assistance of the Railway Companies, and something like the Clearing House classification to guide them, would not find the task so difficult as the noble Lord seemed to suppose. A noble Lord had spoken of the second part of the 25th clause as offering a bounty in favour of the foreigner. But the foreigner had really nothing to do with the matter. With reference to the Conciliation or Arbitration Clause of the Bill, a noble Lord opposite had spoken of it in sarcastic tones; but he (Lord Stanley of Preston) was quite ready to discuss the clause on its merits, believing that if grievances could be adjusted without recourse to litigation, it would be an advantage to all parties interested. He thanked their Lordships for the spirit in which they had received the measure, and earnestly trusted the Bill would lead to useful legislation. There were some points of difference between them which were merely nominal; but he recognized that there were others of principle for which he feared there was no half-way house, and in regard to which they must agree to differ. Still, speaking of the Bill as a whole, and not of particular provisions, he was glad to find that there were important points in it on which they were all agreed; and, bearing in mind the spirit in which the Bill was framed and introduced, he strongly hoped that it would lead to the passing of a useful and satisfactory measure.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Tuesday* the 29*th instant.*

## INCUMBENTS OF BENEFICES LOANS EXTENSION ACT (1886) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 39.)

(*The Duke of Buckingham and Chandos.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Duke of BUCKINGHAM and CHANDOS), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that its purpose was, in consequence of the agricultural depression that had prevailed, to enable the Queen Anne's Bounty Board to extend, with the consent of the patron, the time for the repayment of mortgages and to provide that extension might be made, notwithstanding extensions made under the Act of 44 & 45 *Vict.*, introduced by the Bishop of Peterborough, and fixed under a previous Act to a period not exceeding 20 years in all from the latest date fixed at present.

*Moved,* "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Duke of Buckingham and Chandos.*)

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Thursday* next.

## CHURCH SITES (COMPULSORY POWERS REPEAL) BILL.—(No. 22.)

(*The Lord Bishop of Lichfield.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE BISHOP OF LICHFIELD, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it explained itself; and seeing the lateness of the hour and the paucity of attendance, he would reserve the observations he had to make to a later stage.

*Moved,* "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Bishop of Lichfield.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY) said, that in his opinion, the measure was very objectionable, and, if not considerably amended in Committee, he should feel bound to move its rejection altogether. Its effect would be to repeal previous Acts of Parliament to a considerable extent, and he should have some remarks to make upon it. The right rev. Prelate, however, had agreed to introduce a section in Committee, stating what Acts he proposed to repeal, and he should reserve what he had to say until he saw the section. Subject to that, he made no objection to the second reading of the Bill.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (LIMERICK WATER) BILL.

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to waterworks in the City of Limerick—Was *presented* by The Lord Privy Seal; read 1ª. (No. 42.)

### SMOKE NUISANCE ABATEMENT (METROPOLIS) BILL.

A Bill to amend the Acts for abating the nuisance arising from the smoke of furnaces and fireplaces within the Metropolis—Was *presented* by The Lord Stratheden and Campbell; read 1ª. (No. 43.)

House adjourned at Nine o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter
past Ten o'clock.

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## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Monday*, 14*th March*, 1887.

MINUTES.]—New Writ Issued—*For* Derby (Ilkeston Division), *v.* Thomas Watson, esquire, deceased.

Select Committee—Commons, *appointed* and *nominated.*

Supply—*considered in Committee*—Army Estimates, 1887-8, Votes A and I.

Public Bills — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Copyright (Musical Compositions) * [195]; Criminal Law (Scotland) Procedure (No. 2) * [196].

*Second Reading*—Merchant Shipping (Fishing Boats) Acts Amendment * [168].

*Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee* — Merchandise Marks Act (1862) Amendment * [142]; Merchandise (Fraudulent Marks) * [179], *referred to Select Committee on* Merchandise Marks Act (1862) Amendment Bill.

*Select Committee*—Rating of Machinery * [148], *nominated.*

*Committee* — Metropolitan Open Spaces Act (1881) Extension * [171]—r.p.

*Committee—Report*—County Courts (Expenses) * [177].

*Withdrawn* — Foynes Harbour (Transfer) * [159].

## QUESTIONS.

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### THE COPPER CURRENCY—FRENCH BRONZE COINS.

Mr. ATKINSON (Boston) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he can arrange in any way to obviate the inconvenience resulting to some tradesmen in the Provinces, who are obliged in the way of business to receive French bronze coins as equivalents for English pennies, and find themselves unable to pay them away at the Public Offices such as the Post Office?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The Government is doing all that can be done to prevent the circulation of foreign bronze coins in this country by issuing a Proclamation under the Act of last year forbidding their importation. The hon. Member will, I am sure, recognize that it would be impossible for Government Departments to receive payment except in coins of the realm.

### POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—OMAGH POST OFFICE.

Mr. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether two of the female clerks attached to the Omagh Post Office have hours of duty assigned to them which do not necessitate their attendance at either an early or late hour; whether the duty of the third clerk is so arranged as to compel her to attend both at early and late duty; whether the Inspecting Telegraphist of the Northern Postal Division is aware of the existing arrangements in the Omagh Post Office; and, whether independent inquiries will be instituted as to the mode in which business generally has been conducted in the post office referred to?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): From inquiry which I have made, it appears that the duties at the Omagh Post Office are, on the whole, fairly distributed between the hours of 7 in the morning and 8 at night amongst the three female clerks there with due intervals of rest for each. If any one of the female clerks wishes to make a representation with a view to the alteration of her present hours of duty, her proper course is to submit it in the usual manner, when I should look into the case. The Inspecting Telegraphist exercises no control over the office hours. The duties at the Omagh Office are performed satisfactorily, and there are very few complaints against that office.

## NAVY—THE CHANNEL SQUADRON AT LISBON AND GIBRALTAR.

Mr. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether, in face of recent accidents to some of the ships comprising the Channel Squadron at Lisbon Harbour and Gibraltar, he considers the ground-tackle of the Navy sufficiently satisfactory for the safety of the ships; and, whether he has received a Report, and, if so, what, from Admiral Hewett regarding the accidents to some of the vessels under his command?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): Although there have been some accidents recently in connection with ships of the Channel Squadron, it is considered that the ground-tackle of the Navy is sufficient for the safety of the ships. The Reports received from Sir William Hewett do not suggest that the ground-tackle is too light for the ships, it being of the same size and weight as that which has been established for our largest iron-clad ships, and is in general use by them.

## SEED SUPPLY (IRELAND) ACT—REPAYMENT OF LOANS.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What percentage of the money advanced for seed in Ireland has been repaid; if the balance is due by unions situated in the poorer districts, and with a large population; if he would institute an inquiry to ascertain if such balances were chiefly uncollectable, from causes arising from hurry in issuing the seed; and, if an inquiry would also be made as to the possibility of remitting a portion of said balances?

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If Government will consider, with respect to the trifling balance of the Seed Rate now unpaid, that it is due from the poorest and most distressed districts, upon which enforcing the collection would entail distress entirely out of proportion to any good to be gained by the Treasury by the receipt of the sum in question; and, if, seeing how punctually the vast bulk of the Seed Rate has been repaid, he will recommend that Government shall forego its claim for the small balance still due by the very poor districts?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour (Manchester, E.): In reply to these questions, I may state that something over 7 per cent of the Seed Loan, chiefly due from the poorer districts, is still outstanding. The question of the possibility of remitting a portion of the balance is one rather for the Treasury than for me. We are in communication on the subject; but, in saying this, I must not be understood to make any promise of remission.

## THE MAGISTRACY (SCOTLAND)—MR. STIPENDIARY GEMMEL.

Mr. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the acceptance by Mr. Stipendiary Gemmel, Glasgow, of the appointment of Assessor to the Dean of Guild Court, Glasgow; and, whether this latter appointment interferes with the due fulfilment of his duties as stipendiary magistrate; and, if so, whether the Government intend taking any steps in the matter?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed that the appointment of Assessor does not interfere with the proper fulfilment of Mr. Gemmel's duties as stipendiary magistrate. Mr. Gemmel informed the Lord Provost and magistrates before taking the appointment; and intimated that if at any time they should be of opinion that it did interfere with his other duties he was prepared to resign it.

## COURT OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND)—REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE.

Mr. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) (for Mr. Mahony (Meath, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Copy of the Report which was presented on 1st May, 1886, to the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, on the subject of the Bankruptcy Court, by a Committee consisting of the Vice Chancellor, Judge Flanagan, and Mr. Richard Mills; also a Copy of the Letter which the Treasury Remembrancer in Ireland wrote with reference to this Report?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I must ask the hon. Member to be good enough to postpone this Question for a few days, to enable me to make some inquiry I have not hitherto had opportunity for.

### LAND PURCHASE (IRELAND) ACT—APPLICATIONS FOR ADVANCES.

Mr. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) (for Mr. Mahony (Meath, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, The number of applications for advances of purchase money under Lord Ashbourne's Act, which the Land Commissioners have refused to sanction, and the amount of money applied for under these applications; and, the number of applications subsequently sanctioned, in which the Land Commissioners have recommended a modification of the terms of purchase and the amount of the said modifications?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Land Commissioners report that up to the 10th of this month they had refused 434 applications for loans, amounting to about £317,000. Of these, 67 were subsequently sanctioned, the amounts of loans being reduced from about £61,000 to a little over £50,000.

Mr. MAC NEILL asked the number of cases in which the Land Commissioners had recommended a modification of the terms of purchase?

Mr A. J. BALFOUR: I must have Notice of that Question.

Mr. MAC NEILL: It is on the Paper.

### PROCLAIMED MEETINGS (IRELAND)—NATIONAL LEAGUE MEETING AT ASHGROVE, CO. CORK.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in consequence of the proclamation of a National League meeting which was to have been held at Ashgrove, Kilnamartyra, County Cork, on Sunday, the 6th March, Mr. Stokes, a Resident Magistrate, prevented the local band in Macroom from playing in the Square as usual;—whether the report in *The Cork Daily Herald* of Monday, 7th March, is correct, namely—

> "That on the band making its appearance in the square, Mr. Stokes issued out of the police barrack attended by about fifty constables, principally from Cork, some of whom had removed the numbers from the collars of their jackets to prevent discovery;"

and, if this report is true, whether he will call the attention of the Lord Chancellor to the matter? And I should further like to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether it is a fact that he has applied to the police authorities and the people who are incriminated by this Question for information on the subject?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): Yes; I have applied for information to the police. In reply to the hon. Gentleman's Question, I have to state that in view of anticipated disturbances, Captain Stokes, the Resident Magistrate, had on the morning of the day referred to, warned the band that he could not permit them to proceed or play through the town, and on their subsequently attempting to do so, he very properly prevented them by means of the police. It is not the case that any of the police removed their numbers from their collars. Six of the party employed upon the duty are members of the County Force, and as such, do not wear numbers.

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): Arising out of that Question, I should like to know by what authority magistrates, resident or otherwise, are entitled to prevent bands playing in the streets?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: On this occasion the Resident Magistrate had reason to believe the band was proceeding to a proclaimed meeting at Kilnamartyra, and he was strictly within his duty in preventing them doing so.

Dr. TANNER: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he is aware that Macroom is three miles from the place of the prohibited meeting; and, whether he is also aware that the band plays every Sunday in the Square at Macroom; and whether Captain Stokes is not also aware of this fact?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: From the information I have I have reason to believe the band does not play in Macroom every Sunday; and there is reason to believe that on this day the band was going to march three miles to the proclaimed meeting.

Dr. TANNER intimated that he would repeat the Question on a subsequent day.

### WAR OFFICE (SMALL ARMS)—MARTINI-HENRY RIFLES.

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) asked the Secretary of State for War, What was the cost incurred by the production of the Enfield-Martini rifles lately issued and condemned or abandoned; and, whether the Lee-Burton and Lee magazine rifles will be submitted to independent criticism before being manufactured?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Although the accounts have not yet been made up in detail, it is estimated that the Enfield-Martini rifles cost 45*s*. each. They have neither been condemned nor abandoned. The Lee-Burton and Lee magazine rifles are about to be issued for thorough trial by the Army and Navy before either pattern is adopted.

### LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—PROSECUTION OF DISTRICT INSPECTOR MILLING—ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Upon what grounds he vetoed the prosecution of District Inspector Milling, Royal Irish Constabulary, for an assault for which he had been committed for trial; and, whether there is any statute entitling Mr. Attorney General thus to veto prosecutions?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Holmes) (Dublin University): Before a bill of indictment is found, the Attorney General neither exercises nor claims the right to veto a prosecution. As Public Prosecutor he is entitled to direct that a prosecution be conducted by the Crown officials; and I have declined, in the exercise of the discretion which I thus possess, to give such a direction in the case of District Inspector Milling. After a bill of indictment is found, the Attorney General, as representing the Queen, has had, as the hon. Member must be aware, from the earliest times, the power to enter a *nolle prosequi*.

Mr. CHANCE: May I point out to the right hon. and learned Gentleman he has not answered the last paragraph of the Question—whether there is any statute entitling the Attorney General to veto prosecutions?

Mr. HOLMES: The Attorney General never does veto a prosecution; the only thing he does is to enter a *nolle prosequi* —a power he has possessed from the earliest period of our law.

### THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881, AND THE PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACT, 1885—SHORTHAND WRITERS' NOTES.

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will take steps to enable Members of this House to inspect the original notes and transcript of the shorthand writers employed to record the proceedings of the Cowper Commission; and, whether contradictory reports of the evidence of one of the witnesses examined before that Commission have already appeared in the newspapers?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The hon. Member suggests a most unusual course, and one which could not, in my opinion, be properly complied with. In any event, it does not lie within my power to comply with it, as the documents referred to are not in the possession of the Irish Government.

Mr. CHANCE: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether he has any reason to suppose that the evidence now published has been in any way condensed from the original notes?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; I have no reason whatever to make any such supposition.

Mr. E. HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): Can the right hon. Gentleman say how it is that not one word of certain witnesses who were examined at Killarney appears at all?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware of that, nor does it come within my province.

### POST OFFICE—SALE OF STAMPS TO RAILWAY TELEGRAPH CLERKS.

Mr. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is prepared to re-introduce the system of commission on sale of stamps to railway telegraph clerks as allowed until October, 1885; and, whether he is prepared to compensate those clerks who were in 1885 deprived of this portion of their income?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that I do not see my way to re-introduce the payment of commission on the sale of stamps; but I am glad to add that the Treasury have authorized certain terms of compensation, and I am in communication with the Railway Companies on the subject.

### LAND ACT (IRELAND)—WICKLOW TENANTS.

Mr. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that a great many tenants in the County Wicklow are anxious to get their rents fixed under the Land Act; and, whether anything can be done to expedite the matter by sending a Sub-Commission to the county speedily to hear their cases?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I understand from the Land Commissioners that about 56 cases from Wicklow are pending, and they expect that a Sub-Commission will sit in that county about July. I may add that the Government have at present before them the question of increasing the number of Sub-Commissions.

### HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE (CHANCERY DIVISION)—AN ADDITIONAL JUDGE.

Mr. F. W. MACLEAN (Oxford, Woodstock) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether his attention has been called to the unanimous recommendation contained in the Report, dated 7th August, 1885, of the Committee appointed by the Lord Chancellor (the Earl of Selborne) relative to the subject of the business of the Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice—

> "That an additional Judge be appointed to the Chancery Division, and that the same staff of clerks be attributed to each of the Judges."

And to the unanimous Resolution of the Committee—

> "That an additional Judge be appointed, to be a Judge of the Chancery Division."

And, whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to take such steps as may be necessary to give effect to the above Recommendation and Resolution?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): The matter referred to in the Question of the hon. and learned Member is engaging the attention of Her Majesty's Government; but, at present, no final decision has been come to.

### EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — SCIENCE AND ART DEPARTMENT—LOANS OF WORKS OF ART, &c.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether, considering that the works of the Schools of Art sent up for the National competition can only be exhibited at the South Kensington Museum in a gallery imperfectly lit, owing to the want of space at that Museum, he will provide space in one of the numerous galleries by circulating some of the duplicate and triplicate specimens of furniture, china, pottery, metal work, glass, embroidery, and other objects which now crowd up the Museum, to different parts of London, and other centres of dense population, and so assist to supply that local demand for the loan of circulating collections, which the Science and Art Department's last Report, at page xvii., states is now a severe tax on the resources of the South Kensington Museum?

The VICE PRESIDENT (Sir William Hart Dyke) (Kent, Dartford): My hon. Friend has practically converted into a Question a Motion which has stood for some time upon the Notice Paper. I believe that the system of loans is now carried out to the full extent of the present resources of the Department. So long as the practice is adhered to of exchanging the objects lent every year, and in the case of loans to temporary Exhibitions at shorter periods—a course which is greatly preferred by the localities—it is obvious that the temporary removal of different objects from distant parts of the Museum would not supply the space in any given part of it, which is assumed in the Question. Twenty-six thousand one hundred and sixty-four objects were in circulation last year, through 32 Provincial Museums (not including Bethnal Green), 26 temporary Exhibitions, and

260 Science and Art Schools; but the number of duplicate and triplicate speciments is comparatively small.

### LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—MR. E. RYAN, COMMITTED FOR CONTEMPT.

Mr. FINUCANE (Limerick, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Edmond Ryan, P.L.G., Cahircanlish, County Limerick, was committed for contempt of Court eight months ago by Judge Boyd; whether Cahircanlish has been, and is now, one of the most peaceable districts in the County Limerick; and, whether, under those circumstances, the Government will request Judge Boyd to order the release of Mr. Ryan?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): It would clearly be a most un-Constitutional proceeding for the Government to make such a request to the Judge as is here suggested. It is, of course, open to the prisoner himself, or to his friends, to petition the Judge for his release.

### EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—NOTICE TO RELIEVING OFFICERS.

Mr. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether, having regard to the fact that 48 hours' notice of an intended eviction, from a landlord or some one on his behalf, must be given to the relieving officer of the union in which the property is situated, and that at any time within a year the landlord may proceed with the eviction without further acquainting the relieving officer, he will consider the advisability of amending the law, so as to compel owners of property, or their agents, to inform the relieving officer of the exact dates of evictions, to ensure that provisional relief should be administered to the persons evicted?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Holmes) (Dublin University): Although I have not heard that any actual inconvenience has arisen from the state of the law mentioned in the Question, I should like to see it, in some respects, altered; but I fear that any change that could be suggested would cause considerable difficulty. I am, however, at present engaged in further inquiring into this subject.

*Sir William Hart Dyke*

### LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE HERBUSTA CROFTERS—MRS. M'MILLAN.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the following medical certificate concerning Mrs. M'Millan, one of the Herbusta crofters, ordered for trial at Edinburgh on 4th January, but not proceeded against:—

> "I hereby certify that Mrs. Alexr. M'Millan, presently residing at 284, Crookston Street, S.S. Glasgow, is under my professional care, and has been for the last three weeks. She is suffering from chronic metritis, following an acute attack of the same illness caused by an abortion, which, in my opinion, was brought on by exposure and mental excitement.
>
> "(Signed) R. Pollock,
> "M.B. and C.M., &c.
> "Febry. 24th, 1887."

Whether it is a fact that on or about the 18th ultimo Mrs. M'Millan, while under medical care in her sister's house in Glasgow, was ordered to present herself at the office of the Procurator Fiscal, and, on her pleading inability to walk, was on the following day visited by that official, and subjected to a long and inquisitorial examination, the result of which was to aggravate her illness; and, on what grounds Mrs. M'Millan was subjected to this interview?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities): Mrs. M'Millan was ordered to be tried, along with eight other prisoners, for mobbing, rioting, and deforcement. Before the trial, but after she had arrived in Edinburgh, I was informed by her counsel of her condition, and I accordingly did not proceed with the case against her. As she had not been tried, it was considered an exceptional case, in which her expenses might be paid, and £5 was given to her for that purpose. She left Edinburgh without applying any part of the £5 to pay her lodging expenses there; and shortly after a request was made by a Mr. Cowan, who, I understand, is the Secretary of a Highland Land League, for payment of these. Directions were then given to the Procurator Fiscal in Glasgow to see Mrs. M'Millan, to ascertain whether this application was made on her behalf, and what expenses she had already paid. It is not the fact that she was ordered to present herself at the

Procurator Fiscal's office. The chief officer who called on her had instructions from the Procurator Fiscal that if she expressed any doubt about being able to come, or if he himself thought she seemed to be in delicate health, he should so report, and the Procurator Fiscal would call. This was accordingly done. There was no long or inquisitorial examination. The interview lasted only 10 or 15 minutes, and no complaint was made. I am further informed that that interview did not aggravate her illness. As it was found that she had been detained in Glasgow some time by the after effects of her illness, it was thought proper to allow £3 additional, and the order to pay this sum was given before I received Notice of the hon. Member's Question. The ground on which the interview took place was, that until I had ascertained how the facts stood I could not, consistently with my duty, entertain the application for more money.

### PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (IRELAND)—NORTH ANTRIM ELECTION—MALICIOUS INJURY TO PROPERTY.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a paragraph in *The Belfast Morning News* of the 25th February last, from which it appears that malicious injuries were inflicted on the properties of several persons who had supported the Liberal candidate, Mr. M'Elroy, who stood in opposition to Mr. Lewis at the last North Antrim election; whether stacks of corn and hay belonging to a Protestant Liberal (Mr. Daniel M'Mullen, of Mullahduff), near Armoy, were maliciously burned; whether the windows of houses belonging to two Catholics (Mr. Thomas Burns and Mr. Patrick Quin, of Castlebawn) were broken, and other outrages committed in the district on the same night; and, whether any steps have been taken by the Constabulary to bring the offenders to justice?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): There is no reason to believe that feelings caused by the recent election had anything to do with these occurrences, which, moreover, are exaggerated in the report quoted from. The burning of Mr. M'Mullen's stacks is believed to have been accidental. A shilling's worth of damage was done to the windows of a man named Burns, who did not mention the occurrence to the police. No other so-called "outrage" has been reported in the district.

Mr. M'CARTAN asked, whether it was not the fact that these occurrences took place on the very night of the election?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he could not give the date.

### CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—SACRILEGIOUS INJURY TO ATHEA CHURCH, CO. LIMERICK.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the statement in *The Times* of the 9th instant that—

> "The Protestant church which was built at Athea, in the west of the County Limerick . . . . was entered on Sunday night . . . . the memorial stained-glass window, erected by Archdeacon Goold in memory of some of his family, smashed with stones. . . . . The Bible was also torn from the lectern, the seats knocked about, and the interior of the building disfigured and outraged;"

whether, if this report is true, he can give any information as to the cause of these outrages; and, what steps have been taken to bring the perpetrators to justice?

Mr. ABRAHAM (Limerick, W.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, I wish to know whether he has received a copy of a telegram received from the parish priest, in which he states that the utmost indignation prevails among the Catholic inhabitants of the town; and, also, whether a public meeting was held yesterday, at which strong resolutions were passed condemning this outrage, and offering a reward for the discovery of the perpetrators; also, whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware that the utmost cordiality has prevailed among the Catholic and Protestant inhabitants for the last 50 years?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I have received the telegram referred to, and which I thank the hon. Member for having sent me. I also heard of the meeting which was held yesterday. The outrage is believed to have been the work of some drunken boys. I am happy to say that the police authorities do not think it has any political or sectarian character. Four persons are in custody, and will be brought before the magistrates this week.

### MERCHANT SHIPPING ACTS — BOATS AND LIFE-SAVING APPARATUS ON PASSENGER SHIPS.

Captain PRICE (Devonport) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether the Committee which sat last year on the question of boats and life saving apparatus to be carried by passenger ships reported in October last; whether the Report was signed by all the Members of the Committee; what has become of the Report; and, whether, considering the interest taken by the public in the means taken to preserve life at sea, he will cause the recommendations of the Committee to be made known by publishing their Report?

The SECRETARY (Baron Henry De Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Yes, Sir; the Departmental Committee referred to by my hon. Friend reported in October last. The Report was signed by all the Members. It has been sent to the Royal Commission on Loss of Life at Sea, in accordance with a promise made to that effect; but as we think the question should be dealt with at once, without waiting for the Report of the Commission, it is proposed forthwith to move for a Select Committee of this House to inquire and report on the whole subject. The Report of the Departmental Committee will be presented as a Command Paper, and will be referred to the Select Committee if they so desire.

### POST OFFICE — NEWSPAPER WRAPPERS AND "VANITY FAIR."

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is the fact that, immediately upon the reduction in price of *Vanity Fair* newspaper from 1*s.* to 6*d.*, the Post Office Authorities peremptorily required the publisher to discontinue the use of a printed wrapper which had been in use for the transmission of the newspaper through the post for over 18 years, without any complaint being made of it?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): The Regulation to which the hon. Member refers is in no way connected with an alteration in any newspaper. It was considered necessary "some time back," for the due performance of the sorting duty, to restrict the printed matter on newspaper wrappers to the title and the address of the publisher, and the Warrant prescribing this has been in force since July last. From time to time a question has arisen as to what is really a part of the title of a newspaper. But I should state that an application from the publishers of *Vanity Fair* was made a fortnight ago; and that, under the representations made, a consent was at once given to the wrappers hitherto used passing unchallenged. I am anxious that the Regulation should not be enforced in a vexatious manner.

### SHIPPING—REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

Mr. THOMAS (Glamorgan, E.) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, When the Report of the Royal Commission on Shipping will be laid upon the Table of the House?

The SECRETARY (Baron Henry De Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): I understand that the Commissioners are now considering their Report, and that they hope it will be laid before the House in the course of the present Session?

### ARMY—SENTENCES BY COURTS MARTIAL — THE RECENT RULES AND REGULATIONS.

Mr. A. R. D. ELLIOT (Roxburgh) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, in order to carry out the object of His Royal Highness Commanding in Chief, manifested in the Regulations and Instructions recently issued, enjoining sentences by courts martial of much less severity than heretofore, the cases of those convicted and sentenced previously have been, or will be, considered, with the view of shortening their imprisonment; and, whether this has been, or can be, done in the cases of sentence to penal servitude without the stigma of a ticket-of-leave or licence, or will require a Royal pardon?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): In order to carry out the object of His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief, manifested in the Regulations and Instructions recently issued, enjoining sentences by courts martial of much less severity than heretofore, every sentence passed within the last 12 months which has seemed severe has been inquired into, and remission made in cases which appeared worthy of it. Under an arrangement with the Home Office, all cases of soldiers sentenced to penal servitude are brought forward for consideration after certain periods of the sentences have been served; and when the interests of discipline will not suffer remissions are granted without licences or tickets-of-leave.

## PROCLAIMED MEETINGS (IRELAND)—RETURNS.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in view of the importance of accurate information on the subject, he will give a Return of the public meetings proclaimed, or attempted to be suppressed, in Ireland from 1st August, 1886, to 28th February, 1887, inclusive, with Copies of the placards calling the meetings, and of the Proclamations prohibiting the holding of the same?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The House has already been informed that eight meetings were prohibited within the period from August 1 to February 28. It may be of interest to state in this connection that in the same period considerably over 100 meetings were held without any interference on the part of the Authorities. I do not think it necessary, or would be expedient, to put in the form of a Parliamentary Return the placards with regard to the proclaimed meetings; partly because, having been posted over the districts concerned, they are already matters of notoriety; and partly because they might be taken to represent the whole case on which the Government acted, and might, therefore, be misleading.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): Would the right hon. Gentleman have any objection to give the specific dates of the eight meetings suppressed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course, I cannot give them at this moment.

## LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—FATHER KELLER, YOUGHAL.

VISCOUNT LYMINGTON (Devon, South Molton) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Executive will, without further delay, make the fullest use of such powers as they are already possessed of to enforce the warrant of Judge Boyd upon Father Keller, of Youghal, who is defying the orders of Her Majesty's Courts?

MR. LANE (Cork Co., E.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question I wish to supplement it by asking whether the only act of defiance of the orders of Her Majesty's Court which the rev. gentleman has been guilty of is refusing to proceed to Dublin to disclose in Court the secrets the parishioners confided to him in his capacity of parish priest?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I believe the summons was issued for contempt. In answer to the noble Viscount, I may say the Executive will give every assistance to the Court in carrying out the order.

MR. LANE: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman, if he is not aware that it is announced in the papers this morning that the summons and proceedings to induce this clergyman to go to Dublin have been withdrawn altogether?

[No reply.]

## INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS — COMBINED DEPARTMENTS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.

SIR JOHN DORINGTON (Gloucester, Tewkesbury) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in consequence of the Report of the Inspector of Reformatories and Industrial Schools as to the objections he entertains to combining departments for boys and for girls in the same industrial school, he intends to take any action in the direction of closing one of such departments in such industrial schools?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I share the opinion of the Inspector, that it is desirable, if possible, to place boys and girls in separate industrial schools; and I am now considering whether it will be possible to effect this separation, having regard to the number and situation of industrial schools in different parts of the country.

### WAR OFFICE (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—CONTRACTS—CARTRIDGES—MESSRS. KYNOCH AND CO.

Sir FREDERICK MAPPIN (York, W.R., Hallamshire) asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, Whether the present contract for cartridges is the first Messrs. Kynoch and Company, of Birmingham, have entered into with the British Government; if not, whether the rejections have exceeded 20 per cent, or what has been the percentage; whether Messrs. Kynoch and Company have previously supplied the British Government with any other articles or materials other than cartridges; and, whether the rejections in any case have exceeded 20 per cent of the contract?

The SURVEYOR GENERAL (Mr. Northcote) (Exeter): There have been three previous contracts with the firm, all for solid-drawn cartridge cases, to a total of 1,700,000. Of the first of these contracts for 500,000 cartridges, 40 per cent were rejected as not according to pattern, and of the two others 8 1·3 per cent were rejected for failure at proof; and a large number were withdrawn by the contractors after being sent in as of the same sort as those which had failed at proof. No articles other than cartridges have been contracted for with the firm.

### WAR OFFICE—WARRANT OFFICERS—REGIMENTAL SERGEANT MAJORS.

Mr. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will take into consideration the case of Regimental Sergeant Majors, who have been deprived of the relative rank and privileges granted to them as Warrant Officers in 1881, and enjoyed by them up to the date of the Queen's Regulations issued in November, 1885, and also of Army Warrant Officers of the second and third class (including Regimental Sergeant Majors), who, not being mentioned in the General Order, No. 28, of the 1st March, 1886, only rank when on board Her Majesty's Ships with Chief Petty Officers, and have thus been deprived of the advantages and position due to their Warrant rank; and, whether he will take steps to restore Army Warrant Officers to the position in which they were placed in 1881?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The question of the relative rank with the Navy to be allowed to Warrant Officers of the Army is extremely complicated, and I can scarcely deal with it within the limits of an answer. If, however, the hon. Member can make it convenient to call upon me at the War Office, I will explain to him the position of the question, and will consider any specific grievance he can adduce.

Colonel HUGHES (Woolwich) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will renew to all Warrant Officers in the Army the privileges enjoyed by them in 1881, and which in 1885 were limited to two classes—namely, conductors and first and second class master-gunners?

Mr. E. STANHOPE: I am not quite sure which are the privileges to which my hon. and gallant Friend refers. If, however, he alludes to that of being permitted to appear out of uniform—which, as the hon. and gallant Member is aware, does not extend to non-commissioned officers or private soldiers—I would observe that, before 1881, the Warrant Officers were very few in number, and almost necessarily serving away from other Warrant Officers. In those circumstances, no inconvenience was felt in allowing them the same undress privileges as are accorded to officers. When, however, by the Royal Warrant of 1881, the rank of Warrant Officer was very largely extended, and was subdivided into many classes, it was anticipated that there would be military disadvantage in allowing them such great liberty in the matter of dress; and the new classes of Warrant Officers were limited for plain clothes to times when on pass, or furlough, and leaving the place where they are stationed. So far as I can learn, no ground exists for any relaxation of this rule.

### EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—EVICTIONS AT ENNISCORTHY — EMPLOYMENT OF THE CONSTABULARY.

### A POINT OF ORDER—ALTERING QUESTIONS.

The following Notice of a Question stood on the Paper:—

Mr. J. E. REDMOND (Wexford, N.) —To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the attention of the Government has been called to the proceedings which took place at certain evictions in the town of Enniscorthy on 15th February; whether the following account of some of the proceedings, taken from a local paper, is correct:—

> "The police, of which there were about 40, with some horsemen, and who were under the command of District Inspector Mulock, were told off in twos to enter the houses and demand possession. They were told to take possession. It may here be mentioned that with such aversion are those evictions regarded that no bailiff could be got to undertake the work, and therefore the police were ordered in the name of the law to act as bailiffs. The tenants and the members of their families having almost without exception refused to stir from the houses until every article of furniture was removed, the police set about their work. Four or five police together entered each house, and proceeded to carry out the effects which the tenants had left in the houses. A scene of indescribable commotion was caused when a policeman was observed carrying out the cradle from which the infant child of three weeks old had just immediately before been taken out;"

and, whether it is legal for the police to act as bailiffs at evictions?

MR. J. E. REDMOND: Before asking this Question, I will ask permission to submit a Question to you, Sir, on a point of Order. It is with reference to the practice, which is becoming common, of altering the terms and substance of Questions handed in by Members at the Table. The Question I have to put is this—If the Question handed in is irregular, should not the Member be communicated with? That used to be the course adopted, but that is not the course now; and, with reference to this particular Question on the Paper, the last inquiry I put was whether the practice of the police acting as bailiffs at evictions was approved of by the Government? That was entirely struck out, and an entirely different Question, which I have no desire to ask, substituted. The Question I have to ask is, whether it is by your authority that my Question was struck off the Paper, and an entirely different Question substituted?

MR. SPEAKER: The reason why the Question was partly struck out was that the hon. Member asked the Government a Question on a matter of opinion, which was entirely without the scope of a Question. The hon. Member is not entitled to ask a Question as to a matter of opinion. With regard to the other point the hon. Member has raised, I may say that, as a general rule, hon. Members consult with the Clerk at the Table as to whether their Questions are in Order or not; and, as a rule, everything is done in an amicable manner. The Questions, however, are now so numerous that it is almost impossible for the Clerk at the Table to communicate with hon. Members by letter. I assure the House that no Question is struck off which is not palpably against the Rules of the House.

MR. J. E. REDMOND: I would ask permission to ask you whether in your recollection almost the identical Question was asked of the late Chief Secretary and answered by him—whether he approved of police acting as bailiffs at evictions? He said he did not approve of it. I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary if he holds the opinion his Predecessor held; and unless you rule me out of Order in putting that Question I will put it to him.

MR. SPEAKER said, that the only Questions which hon. Members were entitled to ask were Questions of fact, not of opinion. The Question to which the hon. Member said the late Chief Secretary had replied ought not to have been asked, and he regretted that it had escaped the usual ordeal.

MR. J. E. REDMOND): Then I will add to the Question as it stands on the Paper—whether it is a fact that the present Chief Secretary approved or sanctioned the action of the police acting as bailiffs at evictions?—if that will make it more in Order.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): With regard to the rider to the Question which the hon. Gentleman has just asked me, I may point out that as the incident occurred on the 15th of February, and as I became Chief Secretary rather less than a week ago, it has never come under my personal cognizance; but I entirely endorse every word that fell from my right hon. Friend the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), who spoke in the name of the Government and in the name of his Colleagues. As to the details stated in the Question, I understand that the goods had to be removed from the house, and in one instance a cradle was included; but I may point out that this case was not an agrarian case. The eviction was from a town house.

MR. J. E. REDMOND: Does the right hon. Gentleman intend in future to sanction the employment of constables as bailiffs at evictions?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In the case to which the hon. Member refers the magistrates were acting under statutory powers; and, in such circumstances, it would be impossible for me to interfere legally.

## THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—DISTRICT INSPECTOR SMITH, OF MACROOM—THE PROCLAIMED MEETING AT ASHGROVE, CO. CORK.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the action of District Inspector Smith, of Macroom, as reported in *The Cork Daily Herald* of Monday's, 7th ultimo, issue, that Smith stated to the Representative of that journal, on his inquiring on Saturday evening as to whether the proposed meeting at Ashgrove would be proclaimed—"Why should it, there is no necessity for such a step;" whether Smith was aware on the said Saturday evening that the meeting was proclaimed; whether he had been engaged that day in perfecting details in connection with the matter; at what time was the notice that the meeting was proclaimed forwarded to Smith from Cork; and, whether he will inquire into the circumstances of the case?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): District Inspector Smith denies that he made the statement attributed to him. He was, of course, aware that the meeting had been proclaimed, and he was properly discharging his duty by making arrangements accordingly. I see no ground for further inquiry into the circumstances.

## LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT—LABOURERS' DWELLINGS—NOTICES ON THE CORK UNION.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in October, 1885, all the necessary notices were served in the Blarney District of the Cork Union upon the ratepayers and all whom it concerned; whether all the forms of application were correctly filled and sent to the clerk of the Cork Union, who placed them before the Board of Guardians; whether all the other necessary preliminaries were duly executed for the erection of 13 labourers' dwellings in the said district, and if, notwithstanding the lapse of a year and a half, nothing has been done towards the erection of those houses; whether the cabins in which the 13 applicants lived were condemned by the sanitary officer as unfit for habitation in October, 1885, and if it is true that since then no attempt has been made to improve those condemned dwellings; whether some of the labourers have on several occasions gone before the Board of Guardians, and were told the Local Government Board blocked the way; and, whether he will call the attention of the Local Government Board to the alleged grievances?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Any delay which may have occurred in the preliminary proceedings was on the part of the Local Authority. The Local Government Board were not furnished with the necessary documents until August last. They proceeded as quickly as possible; but the scheme for the Union was exceptionally heavy—embracing 349 proposed houses. The Board issued their order two months ago.

## PRISONS (IRELAND)—HOURS OF OFFICIALS.

MR. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether clerks to prisons in Ireland perform on week days from 12 to 16 hours' duty, and on Sundays eight hours; whether these periods are in excess of the time during which similar officers in England are engaged; and, whether he will cause inquiry to be made, with a view to the reduction of the present hours?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Sunday duty is, of course, unavoidable in the Prison Service. From the Report submitted by the General Prisons Board, I find that the average length of attendance is not so great as from 12 to 16 hours' duty on week days, and on Sundays eight hours, as stated in this Question. I am not aware of any ground for general inquiry into the subject; but if the hon. Member has before him any particular case which he thinks is one of hardship, and will mention it to me, I will undertake to look into it.

### LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—AFFRAY AT DRUMSNA, CO. LEITRIM.

Mr. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on the 2nd March, a bailiff named Frank Cooke passed through Drumsna, County Leitrim, in a drunken state, and, without provocation, drew his revolver on a resident of the town named Simpson; whether, on the attention of the police being drawn to the matter, Sergeant Henry merely shook hands with Cooke, and told him to put his revolver in his pocket; whether, in consequence of this, Simpson was obliged to swear information against Cooke, and a car had to be got, at the public expense, to follow the latter to Mohill; whether, on the next day, instead of adopting the usual course of lodging Cooke in gaol, in default of finding bail, Sergeant Henry accompanied him back to Mohill; whether, on the following morning, Cooke threatened and brandished his revolver at some small boys; and, whether the Government will consider the propriety of inquiring into the matter?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The official Reports submitted to me by no means bear out the view of the case here suggested; but as informations have been sworn against Cooke, and the case is pending for hearing at the next Petty Sessions, I cannot make any detailed statement on the subject.

### ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—ALLEGED MISCONDUCT AT MACROOM.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to a report in *The Cork Examiner* of Tuesday the 8th ultimo, as to the conduct of the constabulary in the streets of Macroom on last Sunday evening the 6th March, which stated that on Sunday evening, when the Cork Forces were on their way to the station, they were preceded by a dozen policemen with drawn batons, who first jostled and then indiscriminately batoned the people; that Mr. Smith, District Inspector, on returning from the station, as if in reply to one of his men, was heard to say, "Sweep the devils down," when another policeman then said, "Wait till they come from prayers;" that a man, named John Murphy, of Massytown, was felled to the ground by the blow of a baton, and had his head cut open; that the city police, who wear numbers on their collars, turned up the collars of their overcoats to avoid detection in their assaults on the people; that a young man, named Cotter, when knocked down, was brutally kicked while on the ground by the policemen, because he did not immediately get up when ordered, he being insensible; that Constable John Neill, of Macroom, followed a young girl off the street into a house, beating her on the staircase, and would have dragged her into the street to more justifiably beat her, but was prevented by the owner of the house; whether this report is true; and, whether the Government will order an investigation into the conduct of District Inspector Smith, and the police under his command, on the occasion in question?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): It appears that the police, while on the way to the station, were stoned by the mob and had then to use their batons, and that John Murphy, who was a member of the crowd, received a blow on the head. All the other allegations in the Question appear to be untrue, and the Government see no reason to order an investigation.

Dr. TANNER: Is the right hon. Gentleman certain about Constable John Neill not beating this girl?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed, Sir, that the statement is untrue.

### ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY — THE RIOTS AT LURGAN.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, during the recent riots in Lurgan, District Inspector Bigley assaulted and knocked down a Catholic drummer at M'Geown's Corner, Lurgan, and struck the drum with a blackthorn stick after the drummer had fallen; whether the assault was committed before Mr. Bigley had given orders to the police to fire, and whether the drummer was doing anything illegal at the time; whether Mr. Bigley swore at the magisterial investigation that Shankhill Street, into which the police fired by his order, was an exclusively Catholic street; whether there was any opposing crowd in the street at the time of firing; and, whether Mr. Bigley took the advice of, or had any communication with, the Resident Magistrate in charge of the district before he gave the orders to fire on the people?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): During the riots referred to, a drumming party was endeavouring to force its way into a hostile district. The police, in endeavouring to prevent them, were severely stoned. The District Inspector may, in self-defence, have struck one of the rioters, or knocked another down; but it is right to say that at the Assizes now proceeding 16 of the rioters were tried and 14 of them convicted, and that at no time during the trial was any act of imprudence or illegality imputed to the police. The answer to the third portion of the Question is yes, and to the fourth portion, no. The Resident Magistrate was five miles away on the occasion of the riot, and, therefore, could not be consulted.

MR. M'CARTAN: Can I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether or no the drummer assaulted by the Inspector was charged with any illegal act?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I presume he was part of the crowd who were acting illegally.

MR. M'CARTAN: I shall put a further Question on this subject.

### LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACTS — THE ROYAL COMMISSION—EVIDENCE AS TO EVICTIONS.

MR. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been called to the Minutes of Evidence taken by the Royal Commission on the Land Acts (Ireland), on the subject of evictions; whether he has noticed the following Question (16,480), put by Sir James Caird to Sir Redvers Buller:—

> "Do you desire some Court that should have power of staying evictions, or that discretion should be given to an existing Court, which, upon satisfactory proof to it, that Court should be enabled to stay evictions,"

to which Sir Redvers Buller replied in the affirmative; and, whether, in view of the sufferings entailed on helpless women and children by being evicted from their homes in winter time, some means can be devised to put a stop to evictions temporarily, or at least till fine weather approaches?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Government have under their consideration the provisions of a Bill dealing with certain aspects of the Irish Land Question; but they are not at present prepared to enter into any details, or make any statement on the subject.

### RUSSIA — RUMOURED ATTEMPT ON THE LIFE OF THE CZAR.

MR. PULESTON (Devonport): I wish to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government can give any information as to the reported attempt to assassinate the Czar of Russia?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Sir, Her Majesty's Government have, with deep regret, received information that some persons were arrested with explosives upon them on the road by which the Emperor of Russia was expected to go to the anniversary service for the late Emperor; but I am glad to say that it does not appear that any attack was made upon His Majesty.

### HORSES—SUPPLY FOR MILITARY PURPOSES.

SIR WILLIAM CROSSMAN (Portsmouth) inquired, Whether the Government were prepared to consent to the appointment of a Select Committee of the House to examine into the question of the supply of horses for Army purposes?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle), in reply, said, the Department was at present considering various schemes put forward for improving the horse supply of the Army. They had before them a great number of suggestions, including one or two for which they were indebted to the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir William Crossman). He understood that the hon. and gallant Gentleman, by his Question, rather contemplated a more general inquiry. Before giving an answer on that subject he must consult his Colleagues; and perhaps the hon. and gallant Gentleman would be good enough to postpone his Question.

SIR WILLIAM CROSSMAN: In consequence of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman I will postpone the Notice of Motion which stands on the Paper in my name for to-night.

# MEMORANDUM OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

RELATING TO THE

# ARMY ESTIMATES, 1887-8.

(*Presented to Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.*)

The Estimates of 1886-7 showed an anticipated expenditure of £15,156,900 for effective, and £3,076,300 for non-effective services, making a total of £18,233,200. But, in introducing them to the House, the Secretary of State (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) explained that, unless the Army in Egypt could be reduced during 1886-7 to 8,000 men, it would be necessary to ask for a Supplementary Vote. This Army was in fact maintained for some months at a force considerably above this strength, and accordingly Supplementary Estimates have become necessary. The total amount is £459,000, of which nearly £200,000 is due to the increased demands of the Navy, and the greater part of the remainder to Egypt. The Estimates, which are now submitted to Parliament, show an expenditure of £18,393,900, of which £15,305,700 is for effective, and £3,088,200 for non-effective services. It will thus be seen that, as compared with last year's original Estimates, the amount now required for the service of the Army shows an increase of £160,700. But this does not represent the true state of the case. As the House is aware, the War Office supplies the armaments and warlike stores of the Navy, and the cost is borne by the Army Estimates. For 1887-8 the Army Estimates have to provide for an increase, on account of the armaments of the Navy, of £292,000 on the previous year.

Nor is that all. Certain other increases in charge are altogether beyond the control of the Secretary of State, and may be summarized as follows:—

| | |
|---|---|
| (1.) Indian Contribution to Vote 1 (the additional strength of the Indian Army having been nearly provided in the current year) is reduced by | £100,000 |
| (2.) Leap year causes an additional expense over all the Votes of | 30,000 |
| (3.) Deferred Pay has increased by | 20,000 |
| (4.) Retired Pay by | 45,000 |
| (5.) The Army Reserve—by the increase of numbers—requires in addition | 25,000 |
| | £220,000 |

These two sums, amounting altogether to no less than £512,000, show that, instead of an increase, the present Estimates show a reduction of expenditure, even without taking into account the Supplementary Votes for 1886-7.

Increases have also been caused by the rise in the establishments, by the new grants to the Volunteer Service, and especially by the demands for armaments and military stores, which will presently be referred to.

On the other hand, large savings have been accomplished by the withdrawal of half the British force from Egypt, the effect of which is mainly to be traced in the Vote for Supplies and Transport. The Vote for the Non-Effective Services, with the exception of the large automatic increase in the item of Retired Pay (which will be to some extent checked by the new Royal Warrant), shows on all points a diminution of charge.

A small reduction has also been effected in the Vote for Military Education. The general improvement in the education of the country will soon tell upon the special charges necessary for this purpose in the Army, and by greater recourse to civil schools, and the reduction in the establishment of Army schoolmasters. I hope that in future years greater economies can be effected on this head.

Some steps have also been taken by my predecessor, after very careful examination, for the reduction of the General Staff, and of certain permanent appointments.

Leaving these details, I may say generally that, without pretending to have been able, within the limited time at my disposal, to scrutinize personally all parts of these Estimates, the Vote for Armaments has undergone a renewed examination ; and I have satisfied myself that, looking to all the circumstances of the present time, the Estimate prepared by my predecessor represented only that necessary demand for this service which any Secretary of State would be bound to make.

But, as attention has been specially attracted to Military Expenditure, it may be well to pass in review some of the great heads of expenditure, though as time has not enabled the Financial Secretary and his Department, who have given much trouble to the matter, to work out the figures in all cases from the present Estimates, the results will be found to be in some cases founded on the figures of 1886-7.

### Heads of Army Expenditure (figures of 1886-7).

The whole expenditure of the Army may be divided into three heads, the cost of the "personnel," of general administration, and of supply. The subjoined table attempts to show the total amount under each head.

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1886-87, recalculated, showing approximately the Cost of the Personnel of the Regular and Auxiliary Forces as distinguished from the remaining Expenditure.

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## 1. *Charges for Personnel.*

### REGULAR FORCES.

| | £ |
|---|---|
| Estimated annual cost of Regimental Warrant Officers, non-commissioned officers and men, including Pay, Good Conduct Pay, Deferred Pay, Engineer and Departmental Pay, Clothing, Rations, Fuel and Light, Transport, Equipment, Ammunition, Barracks, Barrack Stores, with cost of Medical Attendance and Medicines, Chaplains, Prison Staff, Schools and Libraries, and Regimental Paymasters .. .. .. .. .. .. .. ..<br>136,350 men. Average cost, £52$\frac{4}{5}$ per head. | 7,201,000 |
| Ditto Officers ditto ..<br>4,934 Officers. Average, £278½ per head | 1,374,000 |
| Total effective cost of "personnel" of the Army .. .. | 8,575,000 |
| Total non-effective cost of "personnel" of the Army .. .. | 2,770,300 |
| (Average rate per head, effective and non-effective, £80$\frac{3}{10}$ all ranks). .. | 11,345,300 |

### AUXILIARY FORCES.

| | | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Average, £11 11*s.* 8*d.* per head, 119,356 enrolled Militia | .. | 1,382,250 | 2,720,150 |
| ,, £9 9*s.* 3*d.* ,, 11,590 ,, Yeomanry | .. | 109,700 | |
| ,, £3 13*s.* 9*d.* ,, 218,207 efficient Volunteers | .. | 805,200 | |
| ,, £7 8*s.* 8*d.* ,, 56,900 Reserve .. | .. | 423,000 | |
| Total charge for Personnel .. .. .. | .. | | 14,065,450 |

## 2. *Charges for Administration.*

| | |
|---|---|
| General Staff (Vote 1) .. .. .. .. .. .. | 224,960 |
| Commissariat, Transport, and Ordnance Store Department (Vote 9) .. | 149,850 |
| Army Pay Department (District Staff only) .. .. .. | 60,000 |
| Educational Services (excluding Regimental Schools, £42,230) (Vote 14) .. .. .. .. .. .. .. | 91,370 |
| Miscellaneous Effective Services (Vote 15) .. .. .. | 37,100 |
| Allowances and Transport of above (Vote 10) .. .. .. | 216,900 |
| | 780,180 |
| War Office Staff (Vote 16) .. .. .. .. .. | 255,500 |
| | 1,035,680 |
| Non-effective Charges of above .. .. .. .. .. | 306,000 |
| Total charge for Administration .. .. | 1,341,680 |

## 3. *Supply Charges.*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Purchase of Horses (14,151) and Forage at £25 a-year .. .. | | | 464,210 |
| Veterinary Department .. .. .. .. .. | | | |
| Wages, &c. (Vote 9) .. .. .. .. .. .. | | | 345,510 |
| Rents and Water (except £34,000) (Vote 10) .. .. .. | | | 88,000 |
| Transport of Stores .. £68,000<br>,, &c., Egypt (excess) £130,000 (Vote 10) .. .. | | | 198,000 |
| *Warlike Stores, Vote* 12.— | | £2,569,000 | 2,076,650 |
| Less amount estimated for Barrack Stores | £140,000 | | |
| ,, ,, Equipment .. | 150,000 | | |
| ,, ,, Auxiliary Forces | 202,350 | | |
| | | 492,350 | |
| *Works and Buildings, Vote* 13.— | | 925,800 | 488,800 |
| Less amount estimated for Barracks .. .. | | 437,000 | |
| Maintenance of Local Force at Suakin (Vote 1) .. .. .. | | | 58,000 |
| Total Supply Charges .. .. | | | 3,719,170 |

## ESTIMATES, 1886-7.

### *Numbers.*

| | All ranks. |
|---|---|
| Regular Army, enrolled | 141,284 |
| Reserve ,, | 56,900 |
| Militia ,, | 119,356 |
| Yeomanry ,, | 11,540 |
| Volunteers, efficient | 218,207 |
| Total of all forces | 547,337 |

### *Cost.*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Personnel of above forces | | £14,065,450 |
| Administrative Departments | | 1,341,680 |
| Supply services | £3,719,170 | |
| Less Navy | 1,000,000 | |
| | | 2,719,170 |
| | | £18,126,300 |
| Less Indian, Colonial, and Egyptian contributions included in appropriations in aid of Vote 1 | | 908,000 |
| | | £17,218,300 |
| Add small sums not included in foregoing figures | | 14,900 |
| Total agreeing with Net Estimates for 1886-7, viz., £18,233,200 less £1,000,000 for Navy | | £17,233,200 |

These tables show pretty clearly that, assuming the maintenance of the existing establishment of the Army on the present scale, any substantial reduction of expenditure must be effected either in the cost of administration or in the charge for works, armaments, and stores.

### Vote 12 (Stores).

And indeed it is sufficiently notorious that reductions of Army expenditure, while maintaining our existing establishment, have largely been effected in past years by drawing upon our reserve of stores. There have been occasions when considerations of economy have reduced this to a dangerously small amount. But indiscriminate reductions, effected for such an object, are neither safe nor altogether honest, and I hope that the time may soon come when the necessary reserve of stores will be authoritatively fixed in all branches, and rigidly maintained in all circumstances. It is, however, to be observed that the expenditure in Vote 12 comprises not only the sums necessary for the maintenance of our armaments and our reserve of stores, but also large sums which are now being annually voted to strengthen the defences of the country all round. The estimate for the supply, manufacture, and repair of warlike stores (Vote 12)—that is, for the manufacturing departments of the Army—amounts next year to £2,943,500. Of this £1,707,000 is required for Navy armaments. The system under which the Army Votes at present bear the charge for naval armaments has the effect of preventing the true charge for the respective services from being understood by the public, but it is intended next year to make arrangements for separating this expenditure.

The following table illustrates the normal and special expenditure under this Vote :—

## VOTE 12.—GENERAL OUTLINE OF ESTIMATE.

| Head of Service. | (A.) Ordinary normal expenditure. | (B.) Special Services in addition to A. | (C.) Total amount required to complete Special Services mentioned in B. | No. of years to complete C. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | |
| Maintenance of armaments and practice, including equipments, transport, ambulances, &c. .. | 200,000 | .. | .. | .. |
| Gunpowder .. .. .. | 50,000 | .. | .. | .. |
| Field Artillery .. .. .. | 20,000 | 80,000 | 248,000 (4) | 3 |
| Rifles .. .. .. .. | 100,000 | 125,000 (2) | 1,190,000 (5) | 3 |
| Ammunition .. .. .. | 120,000 | 80,000 | 240,000 (6) | 2 |
| Carbines, pistols, and swords .. | 20,000 | 40,000 | 50,000 | 1 |
| Barrack stores .. .. .. | 80,000 | .. | .. | .. |
| Accoutrements .. .. .. | 40,000 | 20,000 | 50,000 | 2 |
| Harness .. .. .. .. | 21,000 | 10,000 | .. | .. |
| Machinery .. .. .. | 30,000 | 31,500 | .. | .. |
| Minor items .. .. .. | 242,500 (1) | 35,888 (3) | .. | .. |
| Coaling stations, armament of.. | .. | 126,680 | 358,310 | 2 |
| Total .. .. .. | 923,500 | 549,068 | 2,136,310 | .. |
| Total, normal (A) .. | 923,500 | .. | .. | .. |
| Total, special (B) .. | 549,068 | .. | .. | .. |
| Naval requirements to be transferred next year to Navy Estimates .. .. .. .. | 1,707,561 | .. | .. | .. |
| Total .. .. .. | 3,180,129 (7) | .. | .. | .. |
| Appropriation in aid | 236,629 | .. | .. | .. |
| Total .. .. .. | 2,943,500 (7) | .. | .. | .. |

Remarks.

(1.) Includes establishments, experimental services, camp equipments, War Department vessels, &c.

(2.) Less than previously proposed owing to delays of patterns hindering manufacture. 25,000 magazine rifles only.

(3.) Includes vessels, and miscellaneous.

(4.) For 31 batteries to complete 60, to be armed with B.L. armament.

(5.) Includes 375,000 magazine rifles.

(6.) To get up to 60,000,000 reserve of ·4 cartridges.

(7.) Repayments *not* included, as they are added to items of Vote and deducted *en bloc*.

N.B.—The purpose of this statement is to show broadly the appropriations of money to certain general heads of Service. These appropriations will not be traced in the Estimates which are necessarily prepared under the head of Wages, Materials, Contract Supplies, &c.

Vote 13, which deals with works, buildings, and repairs, may be analyzed in a somewhat similar form.

## VOTE 13.

### GENERAL ABSTRACT OF ESTIMATE.

Total of Vote .. .. .. £862,300.

| | Vote for 1887-8 | Required to complete. | Remarks. |
|---|---|---|---|
| For Maintenance— | £ | £ | |
| Ordinary and current repairs .. | 353,190 | .. | |
| For new works (under £1,000, to be completed in this year) .. | 117,589 | .. | |
| For works in progress (begun before 1887-8)— | | | |
| Barracks .. .. .. | 111,249 | 315,065 | |
| Fortifications and Ordnance Store buildings .. .. | 61,227 | 200,407 | Of this, £133,000 is for submarine mining works at military and mercantile ports. |
| Manufacturing establishments | 40,500 | 4,110 | |
| New works (over £1,000 to be begun this year)— | | | |
| Barracks .. .. .. | 29,700 | 46,120 | |
| Fortifications and Ordnance Store buildings .. .. | 38,957 | 60,705* | |
| Manufacturing establishments | 12,750 | 27,850 | |
| For coaling stations .. .. | 77,200 | 201,210 | |
| Total .. .. | 842,362 | 855,467 | |
| Salaries and miscellaneous Engineer services .. .. .. | 125,802 | .. | Annual charges, subheads A to K, of Vote 13. |
| Total .. .. .. | 968,164 | .. | |
| Less appropriations in aid | 105,864 | .. | |
| Total .. .. .. | 862,300 | 855,467 | |

* Of the £60,705, the following items are each of £5,000 and upwards, viz.:—

| | |
|---|---|
| York—New Ordnance Store Establishment .. .. | £15,500 |
| Portsdown Hill—maintenance of revetments .. .. | 11,000 |
| Woolwich Arsenal—means for lifting and landing guns up to 240 tons .. .. .. .. .. | 10,200 |
| Fort Augusta—new powder magazine .. .. .. | 5,000 |

The object of this analysis of these Votes will now be clear. I am anxious to bring prominently forward the fact that the manufacturing and engineering departments necessarily enter into contract engagements extending over several years, and that a sudden curtailment of Estimates may often mean not only the stoppage of a particular work, but the loss of a large part of the money already expended, or it may involve a breach of faith. Take, for instance, the expenditure upon our coaling stations, which is, and ought to be, regulated by the General Scheme laid down in 1884, accepted by the Treasury, and at that time submitted to Parliament. Upon the faith of that scheme we have induced some of our Colonies to vote, and to expend large sums of money, on the understanding that, if they would undertake the cost of the works, the Imperial Parliament would find the armaments. In more than one case the Colony has kept its part of the bargain, while the Imperial Government has not obtained the necessary funds to do so. In all these cases the faith of Parliament is deeply pledged, and, quite independently of the great interests involved, we are bound in honour to provide the necessary funds at least upon the scale laid down in 1884.

Or take the large expenditure occasioned by the introduction of the new rifle and of the new field gun. It has long been admitted that the rearmament of our forces in these respects is a matter of urgent necessity. The above table shows the large sums required to accomplish this result. As soon as a step of this sort has been decided upon by the military authorities, a comparatively small Vote is proposed to Parliament for the expenditure during that financial year; but the House becomes practically pledged to continue similar votes from year to year until the whole sum has been provided. To suspend it for a single year is to cause great waste of public money, or to inflict losses upon the trade only to be satisfied by pecuniary compensation. The system, indeed, has great disadvantages; and it is well worthy of consideration whether some scheme could not be devised which would on the one hand guarantee proper Parliamentary control at the initiation of such expenditure, and at the same time secure the completion of the works or of the armament without being exposed to the fluctations of Parliamentary opinion. In the time of Lord Cardwell, whose Army Estimates have often been taken as a standard by economists, some part of this expenditure was outside the control of Parliament and not shown in the Army Estimates, and was from time to time borrowed under the head of "Defence and Localization Works." Works of precisely the same character, but in these modern days of far greater cost, cause the large increase in Votes 12 and 13. Perhaps I may be allowed to give an illustration of this increase of cost. The Commission on the Defences of the United Kingdom in their Report of 1860, which proposed works at the cost of 11 millions sterling, thus dealt with the armaments:—

"Upon a general estimate we are led to believe that the works herein proposed will require for armament not less than 2,500 pieces of artillery, in addition to any that are now mounted, or already demanded for works which have been sanctioned previous to this report. Taking them *at an average of* £200 *each*, on the supposition that a portion of them will be rifled ordnance, the estimated expense under this head will be £500,000."

It is scarcely necessary to observe that the sum then named as the average price of the guns required, is now about the cost of a single shot from one of our big guns.

### (War Office Administration.)

So much for the question of armaments and stores. Coming now to administration, I may observe that the cost of administering the War Office shows an increase of £2,600 due to the increments of salaries, most of the clerks appointed at the reorganization of 1857 having now reached their maximum. It may be not uninteresting to trace the history of this Vote. It shows, as estimated for 1886-7, an increase of £6,700 since 1864-5, and of £33,800 since 1857-8. But in 1857-8, the Army Reserve, and the Volunteers did not exist, and the Regular Army was smaller by £25,000 men. Since 1857-8 the Intelligence Department, which cost £12,300 in the current year, has replaced the small military Topographical Department, supervised by the Director of the Ordnance Survey. Yet the cost of administration, which in 1857-8 was about £1 18*s.* 4*d.* to every £100 administered, had fallen in 1886-7 to £1 1*s.* 2*d.*, a decrease of 17*s.* 2*d.* per £100 expended. In 1864-5, the charge for clerks was higher by £10,000 than in 1886-7, though the work has largely increased in the interval. The reduction has been mainly caused by the employment of cheaper labour. The civil clerks have been reduced by 13, while the military clerks have been increased by 65. By these savings the expenditure on the Intelligence Branch, the increase of technical staff from 21 to 43, and of the Works Branch from 13 to 20, has produced a net increase of £6,800 only in 22 years.

(Establishment.)

Having thus examined the Estimates upon the assumption that our present establishment is maintained, it becomes necessary to consider, shortly, the reasons for the retention of that establishment.

The following table shows the force which we are now maintaining abroad and in the Colonies (excluding the Royal Engineers, who are separately treated) :—

| | Cavalry regiments. | Artillery batteries. | | | Infantry battalions of the Line. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Horse. | Field. | Garrison. | |
| Egypt ... | 1 | .. | .. | 2 | 4 |
| Colonies ... | 1 | .. | 1 | 32 | 19 |
| India ... | 9 | 11 | 42 | 29 | 53 |

The force in India is incapable of reduction, and it is hardly possible that any substantial diminution could take place in the force maintained in our Colonies. This leaves us with the following disposable force at home, according to the latest arrangements :—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Cavalry regiments .. | Household .. .. | 3 |
| | Line .. .. .. | 17 |
| | Yeomanry .. .. | 39 |
| | Vol. Light Horse, &c... | 4 |
| Artillery .. .. | Horse (Batteries) .. | 8 |
| | Field ,, .. | 38 |
| | Garrison ,, .. | 38 |
| | Militia (brigades) .. | 35 |
| | Volunteers (corps) .. | 60 |
| Infantry battalions .. | Foot Guards .. .. | 7 |
| | Line .. .. .. | 65 |
| | Militia .. .. .. | 135 |
| | Volunteers .. .. | 207 |

But, in estimating the military value of these battalions of Volunteers, it must be remembered that in the event of any prolonged anxiety it would be impossible to keep in the field the full strength of our Volunteer Army. A very large deduction must be made for men who, being engaged in civil occupations, will necessarily be absent, except in cases of great emergency. On the other hand, the number of the Army Reserve is gradually growing towards the full number which is required to bring up our Army to its full fighting strength when necessary. At the present time it numbers about 47,000 men. Owing to the change in the term of colour service in 1881 2, there will be a decrease in the Reserve in 1888 of no less than 9,000, unless we can adopt other means for adding to it; but after that date it will again steadily increase under present conditions until it reaches 60,000 in 1894. The desire to utilize this disposable force to the fullest advantage has led to the adoption of various schemes of mobilization, of which I proceed to give a short account.

(Mobilization.)

The success of the Prussian organization in 1870 for the first time drew the attention of this country to the question of the localization of our forces in peace time, and to the means of mobilizing them with rapidity when war was anticipated; and accordingly, in 1874, a plan for the localization of the forces was worked out and adopted, followed shortly afterwards by one for the mobilization of the Army. The former practically applied only to our Infantry. Under it our whole Infantry, whether Regulars, Militia, or Volunteers, was formed into brigades, each attached to a certain portion of the country, and each having a general head-quarters at the depôt of the Line regiments belonging to the brigade. The tie between these Line regiments and their district was at first slight, and consisted only in the fact that their depôt was situated therein; but the Auxiliary troops were really and genuinely local, and belonged entirely to the district with which the localization scheme associated them.

The next step taken was to arrange for the proper mobilization of our forces when war was apprehended; that is, for their assembling, receiving their reserves, their stores, and their fighting equipment, and for their classification into Army Corps, each ready to move to the point where its services might be required, as an organized fighting body complete within itself in all arms of the Service. It was with this object that the mobilization tables of 1875 were drawn out, under which the whole of our land forces were divided into definite brigades, divisions, and Army Corps, each with its local head-quarters and its staff organization; and also, speaking broadly, these tables indicated the place at which each unit was to receive its reserves, its arms, and its stores.

This scheme of mobilization was very carefully devised, but it had the serious defect of aiming too high. It assumed as its starting point that the whole of the Militia, as well as the Regular Army, was available for mobilization, and it passed over the fact that the strength of our Cavalry, Artillery, and other branches of the Service was much below what it should have been, to correspond to the strength of our Infantry. It was, I believe, hoped at the time the scheme was framed that the deficiencies in these former arms would be gradually made good, and on this basis the constitution of eight Army Corps was arranged for, in addition to the garrisons of our fortresses. The materials to complete these Corps were, however, not forthcoming, and hardly any attempt was ever made to fill up the gaps existing. The result was that the mobilization scheme of 1875 never had more than a paper existence. A partial mobilization of two Corps took place in 1876, but the occasion never arose of testing any one of them at a war strength; and after remaining for some years as a sort of academic exercise in military organization, the scheme dropped out of the pages of the Army List and disappeared. When in 1878 it was considered desirable to make preparations for placing an Army Corps in the field, the selection of the troops to constitute it was not governed by the scheme of 1875, but was determined by independent considerations.

The next endeavour to make our standing arrangements in peace, preparatory for war, was made by Mr. Childers in 1881. He carried the localization of our forces considerably further than had been done by Mr. Cardwell. The whole of our Infantry, except the Guards, the Rifle Corps, and the Rifle Brigade, was definitely territorialized, and local designations, and sometimes names of unnecessary length, were substituted for the old titles. The Militia and Volunteers were, of course, already local, and from 1881 it may be said that our Army has had a distinctive territorial constitution.

The preparations for mobilization made by Mr. Childers only extended to providing one Army Corps, which it was intended to be ready to take the field at any time, in any of the small wars in which we are so often engaged. It was to consist entirely of Regulars, and to furnish it, and at the same time meet considerations of expense, the establishments of our battalions were carefully graduated so that those first for foreign service stood at the highest strength. Twelve of these, together with six battalions from the Mediterranean and three battalions of Guards, were to form the Infantry of the Army Corps, which it was considered we should be able to put into the field at any moment.

This scheme, being mainly intended to meet the exigencies of the small wars in which this country is so often engaged, was inadequate to meet the real and permanent requirements of our position; while, on the other hand, the abortive scheme of the eight Army Corps in 1875 had required larger numbers than our forces at our highest strain could furnish.

The result of all this was that, until 1886, we were no further advanced toward actual mobilization in the event of an European war than we were when the Prussian successes first compelled a consideration of the question. But it may be fairly said that although until recently the arrangements for combining our different military units into larger organizations for the purposes of defence had not materially advanced, the military value of those units is very different now from what it was in 1875. The Auxiliary Forces have been steadily approaching more and more to the standard of efficiency of Regular troops, and short service has given us a strong and available reserve on which we can place our hands at short notice.

It was under these conditions that, in 1886, a third attempt was made to grapple with the question of mobilization. The method followed on this occasion was, however, somewhat different from that which had previously been adopted. In the first attempt to deal with this problem, the proposed organization required larger forces than were really available for mobilization. In the second, the exigencies of our smaller wars had chiefly been taken into account. In 1886 the calculations began with a careful examination of our actual military assets, and the endeavour was made to see how these could be best put into an effective fighting organization with the least possible disturbance and the fewest additions. The problem attempted to be solved on this occasion was not what army we ought to be prepared to put into the field in the event of a big war; but, how we could get the maximum result out of our existing force with the minimum of change and of expense.

This examination brought very clearly to light one essential defect which has hitherto prevailed in our system. In every army the various arms and the various services, such as the Cavalry, the Artillery, the Infantry, the Engineers, the Commissariat, and the Medical Department, should bear to each other a certain proportion; and this proportion has been so thoroughly worked out by military experience, that within very narrow limits it may be said to have been practically determined.

But our composite Army has grown up piecemeal, and no real endeavour has ever yet been made to introduce into it any proportion between its various branches. It was at once evident, when stock was taken of our military strength, that in order to extract the full value from our material, a certain amount of conversion was necessary. There was too much of one arm and too little of another. But making allowance for this conversion and for some comparatively minor additions, the results arrived at were as follows:—

Subject to these changes and additions, our present forces might be so arranged that they would be sufficient to provide men for all our home and Colonial garrisons, and also to furnish two Army Corps of regular troops, each stronger by four battalions than those contemplated in 1875, together with a strong Cavalry Division, and the necessary troops to guard their line of communication. After doing this, there would still remain a balance of disciplined troops, which would form a nucleus round which a further army might be collected.

The details of the measures by which the above results would be arrived at are almost completely worked out at the War Office; and I hope before long to be able to show to every unit of our home forces the precise functions it will have to fulfil should this country be either threatened with invasion, or called upon to take part in a serious war. I feel assured that when our Auxiliary Forces realize what an integral part of our national defence they will form under the new scheme, they will cheerfully submit to any modifications in their present condition that it may require.

I am not going to assert that our land forces have in all respects reached the condition aimed at by these measures. But there are two great points which may be urged in favour of the mobilization scheme of 1886. In the first place, the aim is one well within our reach, without any substantial increase of our forces, or of our expenditure. And, secondly, if this aim can be accomplished, it will give us an enormous advance in the defensive powers of the country. It must, however, be remembered that this scheme can only succeed if a certain amount of finality be attached to it. If it be accepted, as I hope it may be (and it is for this purpose that it is described in this statement), as the standard up to which our military arrangements have to work, all these must steadily be made to fit in with it. The establishment of our Infantry battalions, the raising of a Militia or Volunteer regiment, the strength of all branches of our Artillery, must all be considered and dealt with as part of a general scheme. And, above all, by establishing the standard at which we ought to aim, it will strengthen the hands of the Secretary of State for the time being in resisting, on the one hand, any attempt to enlarge any branch of our establishment beyond the strength so declared to be essential, and, on the other hand, in pressing upon Parliament, as circumstances permit, the additions to, or alterations in, our existing system which are still urgently required.

This scheme of mobilization having been generally accepted by my predecessor (the present First Lord of the Treasury), the steps which are necessary, or are being taken to make it a reality, may be best described by a short reference to each branch of the Service.

I take first those services in which the mobilization scheme mainly contemplates the utilization, and not the extension or conversion, of our existing forces.

### (Cavalry.)

It is satisfactory to learn that this country already possesses sufficient regiments of Cavalry to satisfy all the requirements of the new scheme, though in this, as in other branches of the service, the necessary supply of horses is one of great urgency and importance. Both as regards efficiency and popularity, I am informed that the Cavalry never stood higher than at the present moment. On the 1st of January last the Cavalry of the Line was no less than 527 in excess of its establishment, and we have been compelled to suspend recruiting for this arm of the Service in more than one district.

### (Infantry.)

Neither is any considerable change contemplated in our present force of Infantry. After providing for the reinforcement of Home and Colonial garrisons, there still remain more than sufficient battalions of Infantry for the proposed establishment of two Army Corps and the necessary line of communications. The present Estimates provide for a small reduction in the numbers of every Infantry regiment from 750 to 730. This reduction is in consequence of the fact that the abnormal demand for the increase of the British Army in India having been nearly satisfied, the necessity for so large an establishment no longer exists.

For this branch of the Service also the reports of recruiting are satisfactory. The Inspector-General states that the great advance made in 1885 has been fairly maintained during last year. The total number of recruits tested and finally approved is 39,409, which, though less than in 1885, was considerably more than in any other year since the introduction of short service. The report also shows that an increasing number of the men recruited for Infantry regiments were born in the regimental district.

The effect of the new mobilization scheme, as regards the Cavalry and the Infantry, may be described as a readjustment of existing forces, but in respect to the Artillery and Engineers, organic changes, and a great deal of new material, are entailed by the requirements of the new system.

(Royal Artillery.)

In the event of war, the demands upon the Royal Artillery, according to the new scheme of mobilization, would be as follows :—

(*a.*) For Horse and Field Artillery to furnish artillery for two Army Corps, a Cavalry Division, and their line of communication:—

8 batteries of Horse Artillery of six guns each.
24 batteries of Field Artillery of six guns each.
14 Ammunition Columns formed from Field batteries.

The total number of batteries required being 46, and the total number of guns 192.

It may be observed that the proportion of guns to Infantry is larger than that which prevailed in the German Army during the war of 1870. In peace time five of the Horse Artillery batteries and 13 of the Field batteries will be maintained at 1st Army Corps strength, with six guns each; 11 batteries of Field Artillery will be kept at 2nd Army Corps strength, with six guns each, while the three Horse batteries of the 2nd Army Corps, and the remaining 14 Field batteries will be kept up with only four guns each. In war, of course, these Horse batteries will take the field with six guns each.

Comparing this establishment with that of our existing organization, it represents a reduction of two batteries, and the conversion of four batteries of Horse into Field Artillery. No doubt these two additional batteries would have been valuable for home defence, but they are not required for the two Army-Corps which alone we could hope to mobilize, nor for service with the existing Army in India; and for purposes of home defence their reduction is more than counterbalanced by the large increase in the number of guns which will be issued to the Volunteers, and for which provision is made in the Estimates.

The conversion of the batteries of Horse into Field Artillery has been the subject of much comment. It involves, I need scarcely say, no diminution of that feeling of admiration for the condition of this splendid force—a condition which has always done so much credit both to Officers and to men; but, as was pointed out by Lord Napier of Magdala in a recent debate, the existing proportion in our Army of Horse to Field Artillery is larger than that in the German, and slightly larger than that in the French Army. The real value of Horse Artillery batteries is to be found wherever extreme rapidity is required, and in all other cases they possess disadvantages in the large cost which they involve, and in the increased number of horses which are necessary, and which require far more food, forage, and transport in time of war; and when it is remembered that the weight of a horse's daily ration is about the same as that of six men, both having to be carried, the importance of saving every unnecessary horse becomes apparent—all the more when the special difficulty of horse supply in our own country is borne in mind. It is, moreover, represented that the tendency of modern Artillery tactics is against the frequent moving of Artillery when once in action; and therefore, except in the case of the batteries which are attached to, and move with, Cavalry, extreme rapidity of movement is not required.

The simple fact is that we have at present more Horse Artillery than is required for two Army Corps and a Cavalry Division, while we have not enough Field Artillery. If Parliament is prepared to sanction a large increase to this latter force, then it may be ready also to leave intact the former. But I do not think I should be justified in asking the country to bear the additional expense this would cause while the excess of Horse Artillery above the requirements of two Corps and a Cavalry Division remains as now. And short of this —if the mobilization scheme is to have any real existence—there is no alternative but the conversion already decided on.

(*b.*) In the event of war, the Royal Artillery will also be required to provide garrisons for the fortresses at home and abroad for our coaling stations, and for some of our seaports, besides filling up the batteries in India to full strength.

The careful examination which has taken place has revealed a serious deficiency of men for these purposes, even including the First Class Army Reserve, which can at present furnish only one thousand men. This is a matter of extreme urgency, as to which no avoidable delay can possibly be defended. For home garrisons the Militia and Volunteer Artillery have been utilized to the fullest extent possible; but the latter are not available for foreign service, and the former only partially so, while the necessity for the increase in the Garrison Artillery is mainly caused by the garrisons necessary for the coaling stations and military ports abroad.

It has, therefore, been proposed to raise the establishment of the Garrison Artillery at home to 40 batteries, exclusive of depôts, and to keep those 40 batteries up to a full strength of 128 non-commissioned Officers and men. This represents an increase of about 1,800 men over those now serving, with an addition of only 16 officers. If carried out it would fill up the great deficit and facilitate the increase of the Reserve. This recommendation is now being acted upon, so far as is possible, bearing in mind the present condition of recruiting for Garrison Artillery, and the probable increase which can be obtained during the coming year. Estimating the total deficiency at 1,800 men, it is not expected that we can get more than half that number this year, and accordingly provision is made in the Estimates for that increase.

Before quitting the subject of Artillery, I may mention that while all the Volunteer Artillery living within a certain distance of our seaports has been utilized for the defence of our fortresses, there are 21 inland corps, some 12,000 strong, situated so far from the forts to be defended that they have not been included in the garrisons. These it is proposed to equip with more guns, and in time of emergency they will form a most valuable supplement to our regular Field Artillery.

### (Royal Engineers.)

The effect of the mobilization scheme upon the Royal Engineers is very difficult to explain, especially as some of the questions which regulate it have not yet been decided. It may, however, be shortly stated that there is a large deficiency of Engineers for field, as well as for fortress purposes. In the former case we should require for two Army-Corps and their line of communication, an addition to our pontoon troops, our telegraph battalions, our field companies—in fact, to almost every branch of the corps.

The Estimates of 1887-8 make provision, for the first time, for such an increase of the Engineers as will meet the requirements of two Army-Corps, with the exception that in the case of the Second Pontoon troop the necessary cadre only has been provided.

The exact extent of the deficiency in respect of Fortress Engineers depends upon certain questions, of which I will here mention only the most important. In the defence of our home forts, the one essential condition is that there should be absolute unity of command, so that in the presence of danger there may be no risk of divided responsibility or of difference of opinion. In this view both the Admiralty and the War Office, I need scarcely say, heartily concur, and a Committee is now sitting to consider the best means of promoting this unity, without unduly interfering with the land defence on the one hand, or on the other with that portion of the sea defence which sailors are best qualified to conduct against a hostile fleet. Upon this point I have no doubt that a satisfactory solution will be arrived at, but until it is, there will remain the question as to which is the force to be charged with the supervision of our submarine mining defences, upon the solution of which depends the amount of increase that will become necessary in the Corps of Royal Engineers. It is not, therefore, possible at present to lay down the arrangements for this corps in the same detail that has been done with others.

While upon this point, I may mention that a great deal has recently been accomplished in submarine mining, especially at our military and mercantile ports, for which money has been taken in the Estimates of recent years. This

Service is now being rapidly pushed forward, and forms one of the most important of our means of defence.

The ultimate result produced by the change of establishment now contemplated is shown in the following table:—

STATEMENT showing variation in numbers for 1887-8.

| | Officers. | Warrant Officers. | Sergeants. | Drummers, &c. | Rank and File. | All Ranks. | Horses and Mules. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| INCREASES:— | | | | | | | |
| Royal Artillery .. | 37 | .. | 84 | 8 | 876 | 1,005 | .. |
| „ Engineers .. | 2 | 1 | 33 | 6 | 305 | 347 | 82 |
| Infantry Transport .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 240* |
| Colonial Corps (Local Artillery) .. .. | 6 | .. | 12 | 5 | 194 | 217 | .. |
| Commissariat & Transport Corps .. .. | .. | .. | 51 | 17 | 140 | 208 | 68 |
| Miscellaneous .. | .. | .. | 12 | .. | 6 | 18 | .. |
| Total Increases.. | 45 | 1 | 192 | 36 | 1,521 | 1,795 | 390 |
| DECREASES:— | | | | | | | |
| Cavalry of the Line.. | 7 | 1 | 13 | 1 | .. | 22 | 50 |
| Royal Horse Artillery | 29 | .. | 45 | 10 | 504 | 588 | 328 |
| „ Artillery .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 6 |
| Infantry .. .. | 137 | .. | 206 | 11 | 3,350 | 3,704 | 2 |
| Total Decreases.. | 173 | 1 | 264 | 22 | 3,854 | 4,314 | 386 |
| Net Increase .. | .. | .. | .. | 14 | .. | Decrease | Increase |
| Net Decrease .. | 128 | .. | 72 | .. | 2,333 | 2,519 | 4 |

* Infantry transport.

Turning to the Auxiliary Forces, no change is proposed either in the Militia or in the Yeomanry.

(Militia.)

The Militia has been gaining in numbers since 1883, showing on 1st January, 1887, an increase of 2,202 in enrolled strength compared with the previous year. To complete the establishment 14,000 men are still wanted, but this force gave nearly that number of recruits to the Army during last year. There is still a large deficiency of Officers, though it is satisfactory to note that, in spite of the large number passing into the Army, there has been a gain of 119 Officers during the year. The Militia, indeed, not only fulfils the important function of being, under the Territorial system, the conduit pipe to the Army, but the mobilization scheme assigns to every one of our Militia regiments a necessary place in the home and colonial garrisons.

(Yeomanry.)

The Yeomanry holds its ground fairly well, although no class has suffered to a greater extent from the agricultural depression than that from which this force is recruited. Their efforts deserve encouragement and support, and I may mention that with the assistance of the Under Secretary of State for War, whose interest in the force is well known, I am at present considering whether it would be possible to afford to Yeomen greater facilities at the close of their permanent duty for finding a ready sale for such of their horses as are suitable for Cavalry remounts. If such a system can be devised, it would in itself afford some encouragement to the force.

(Volunteers.)

I come now to the Volunteers, amongst whom it has long been a grievance that too little attention has been paid to them, and that too low a value has been placed upon them by military authorities. That complaint, if ever well founded, no longer exists.

The Volunteer Force has now been included in the mobilization scheme for the general defence of the country. In the event of any necessity arising, every corps within a fixed distance of the harbours and forts to be defended, will be called upon to join the other land services in garrisoning those places; whilst the remaining Volunteers outside those limits will be mobilized at such points as the circumstances of the case require. No greater compliment could have been paid to the Volunteer system, than that it should have come to be recognized as an integral and essential part of the organized defence of the country. But, if the Volunteers are really anxious, as I for one feel sure that they are, that the services they are prepared to render should be turned to account at such a crisis to the greatest advantage, they must be prepared to co-operate with the military authorities in supplying the deficiencies which at present exist, rather than in supplementing those branches of the Service of which the numbers are already adequate, if not excessive.

It was for this reason that my predecessor decided to entertain, this year, no applications for any increase of Volunteer Infantry. The enrolled strength of this force last November was over 226,000 of all arms, leaving only a margin of about 27,000 before the authorized establishment is reached.

It was, in his opinion (one in which I entirely concur), wise to arrest the increase of Volunteer Infantry until it was determined whether an increase in other arms could not be brought about, which would render the defence of the country more perfect. In some parts of the country there exists a strong desire to raise Submarine Mining or Medical Staff Corps, which deserves every encouragement, and a most interesting experiment is about to be tried at Crewe in the formation of a Railway Corps thoroughly fit to render service in the defence of the country, and to furnish a force of Engineers fit to lay a military railway in any part of the world. A certain proportion of this Corps will be passed into the 1st Class Army Reserve, and will be placed on precisely the same footing as the Post Office Corps, who have done such good service in the field.

On the other hand, in some parts of the country, the mobilization scheme has revealed a deficiency of Artillery, of Engineers, or of Submarine Miners.

Our first duty, then, appears to be to see whether the same loyal spirit, which has produced the Volunteer movement and given it that continuity which has so surprised its enemies, will not enable us little by little to supply the gap now existing in our system of defence, without largely adding to the total establishment of the force. In the same spirit, that of recognizing the Volunteer Force as an integral and essential element in the defence of the country, we ought to approach the report of the Committee on the Capitation Grant.

That report, I am sorry to say, discloses, on the face of the returns which have been made public, a most unsatisfactory financial condition. It is only fair to say that the alleged insufficiency of the grant of public money, which was the main reason for the appointment of the Committee, is confirmed by the report. But it shows, in addition, a very large expenditure upon unnecessary objects, which has, in many cases, imposed a burden of debt, threatening the existence of some of our most effective battalions, and which makes the difficulty of obtaining Officers a great and a growing one. It appears, further, that many Commanding Officers, who have long foreseen the danger which is threatening them, find themselves powerless to restrain this expenditure, or to find any successor to themselves willing to assume the burden of a growing debt.

If, therefore, Parliament is to be asked to increase the Capitation Grant, it seems to me that the opportunity should be seized to establish a proper examination of the expenditure of all Volunteer Corps. For this purpose a form will annually be issued from the War Office which will be returned by each corps at the close of the Volunteer year, showing its expenditure under different heads. This will afford an opportunity of examining not only the items of "necessary" expenses as defined by the Committee, which may fairly be charged to the Parliamentary Grant, but will also, as I hope, enable the War Office to strengthen the hands of Commanding Officers in checking unnecessary expenditure, and in gradually reducing the existing debts. Some forms of expenditure must, however, be in future absolutely prohibited, as, for instance, any extra payment for camp allowance, or extra pay for the Permanent Staff.

With these preliminary stipulations, I am prepared to propose to Parliament to increase the Capitation Grant to Volunteers, but in a form somewhat different from that recommended by the Committee. Their recommendation would establish two rates of grant, one of 30*s.* for each efficient, and another of 35*s.* for those who shoot out of the third class. This system would in practice be somewhat cumbersome. Reference to the Musketry Returns of the two previous years would be rendered necessary in every case of a Volunteer failing to pass into the second class, in order that the proviso suggested by the Committee, "that those who fail to pass out of the third class during the course of any three years should cease to draw any grant whatever," may be observed.

I prefer to adhere to the present system of one rate of Capitation Grant, and to make its amount 35*s.* But in return for this we are, I think, justified in endeavouring to obtain from the Volunteers even a higher rate of efficiency with the rifle than that demanded by the Committee. It will not be forgotten that up to the present time no accuracy with the rifle has been demanded of the Volunteers. As long as each man fired off 60 rounds of ball cartridge, he might shoot into the ground or into the air, and yet remain efficient as regards musketry. The great improvement in match shooting which has been so marked in recent years does not appear generally to extend to the bulk of the force, but it is confined to those who are really anxious to improve themselves as marksmen. The first condition of improvement in the Volunteer Force, then, appears to be a general efficiency with the rifle. I propose, therefore, that the first year (1887-8) shall be a year of grace and training, when the Capitation Grant of 35*s.* can be earned by all men who hit the target 12 times in their 60 rounds, but that in subsequent years it shall be paid only to those who pass out of the third class, with the exception of the recruits; and lest anyone should suppose that the test imposed is altogether excessive, I may add that even at the present time 90 per cent. of the efficients pass out of the third class. This will enable all corps to earn a large sum this year, and to prepare themselves, by weeding out those Volunteers who have no efficiency whatever with the rifle, for greater stringency in the future conditions of the grant.

I may add that special circumstances as to Artillery and Engineers justify me in recommending the increased grant in their case without any such conditions.

Closely connected with this subject is that of ranges, the closing of which in many parts of the country is placing great difficulties in the way of earning the Capitation Grant. Unfortunately, as the country becomes more densely populated, this difficulty is not likely to decrease, and some remedy, even if to some extent an artificial one, becomes urgent. Safety screens have been erected on several ranges by Mr. Morris and the Royal Engineers, with the effect of making them practically safe. The chance of a bullet missing the screens or the butt is reduced to a minimum.

Unfortunately, there are two objections to their use: one the expense (£60 per firing point), and the other that whilst the erection of a safety screen makes the range safe (say) at 200 yards, it obviously renders the range useless at longer distances, owing to the interposition of the screens. It has been suggested that the only way of overcoming this difficulty is to allow the Volunteer to shoot his course, in these exceptional cases, at the safe distance only, the figures on the target being reduced in proportion to the distance at which he is supposed to be shooting. This is, of course, an artificial expedient, to be justified only by the necessities of the case. But we are making experiments in the matter, and it may be desirable to adopt some such system rather than to throw upon the shoulders of the Volunteer Force or upon the public funds a charge for ranges of a very serious character.

Further facilities will, however, be also afforded to Volunteers by the adoption of the recommendations that allowances be paid to Volunteers having to travel long distances to their places of firing. Provision is made in the present Estimates for these allowances, as well as for grants for marching columns, and for knowledge of tactics and signalling amongst Officers.

I am not able to accept the proposal of the Committee for the general provision of greatcoats, which would obviously be liable to abuse; but I hope that Parliament will approve the items, which we have included in the Vote, for giving a grant of 2*s.* for each greatcoat of approved pattern produced at an inspection.

There remain a few special questions without a reference to which this Memorandum would be even more incomplete than it is.

### (Field gun.)

Satisfactory progress is being made in supplying the Artillery with the new field gun. Further experience tends to confirm the very favourable estimate which has been formed of it. It possesses the advantages of rapidity of working, a low trajectory, and great velocity. By the close of the present financial year 19 batteries will have been furnished with it. The Estimates now presented make provision for 9 more batteries, thus completing the equipment of the two Army-Corps.

### (Magazine rifle.)

After a series of exhaustive experiments with every description of magazine rifle, the Committee specially charged with this question have found themselves able to recommend two forms of rifles (the Lee-Burton and the Improved Lee) for final trial. If this should prove to be, in either case, satisfactory, as there is every reason to hope, the construction of the new magazine rifle will be proceeded with as quickly as possible.

### (Coaling stations.)

It will be observed that provision is made in the Estimates for carrying on the works of defence at our coaling stations, and for providing them with guns; beside the amount to be voted for the work of submarine mining. The sum taken is somewhat in excess of that which has for the last two years been included in the Estimates. It will enable the defences of Hong Kong, Sierra Leone, and, approximately, those of Singapore, to be completed. Some advance will be made in other cases also, but it cannot be denied that an acceleration of this work beyond the rate of progress laid down in 1884 would be eminently desirable, especially as it is well known to everyone who has looked into the subject that more than one station of primary importance still remains undefended. But, at any rate, no Government could possibly justify to itself any less expenditure for this object, because it would involve the neglect of precautions as to the necessity of which there has hitherto existed a very general agreement.

EDWARD STANHOPE.

WAR OFFICE,
28*th February*, 1887.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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### SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

### COAST DEFENCES AND COALING STATIONS—THE PROTECTED BARBETTE SYSTEM OF FORTIFICATION.

#### RESOLUTION.

COLONEL DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn), in rising to call attention to the heavy expenditure caused by neglecting to employ the protected barbette or disappearing system in coast fortifications; and to move—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the best way of utilizing the protected barbette or disappearing system in coast defences and coaling stations,"

said, that in these Military Estimates there was nothing which was in any way a mystery, or into which the common sense of a Parliamentary Committee was not competent to inquire. Military affairs owed much to the Volunteer movement, which had made all classes in the country familiar with such questions. It was the duty of Parliament to legislate not merely for the laws and liberties, but also for the lives of the people, and he thought that if he could show that the adoption of the system he advocated would minimize the risk not only to our soldiers, but to the whole population in time of war, he would be justified in bringing forward this Motion. He thought that he might take it as a postulate that we were no longer able to feed our people without importing food from abroad. That implied the existence of a Naval Force to protect the food-bringing ships; because the interruption of even one day in our supplies would give rise to panic and distress. But a Fleet for the purpose which he had described would have but an ephemeral value if it had not a protected base. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), in his *apologia*, had said that we flung ourselves into the arms of engineers. We certainly had done so some score of years ago, and the engineers had created frowning fortresses, which had merely invited notice, and the system of which had become obsolete before the mortar was dry. Time had passed, until the demands of the country and the resources of our manufactures showed that it was necessary and possible to make some change, although every obstacle had been for many years put in the way; and in spite of the opinion of a Committee in favour of some system of giving invisibility to our fortifications, and in spite of the opinions of the ablest engineers, every difficulty was put in the way of Colonel Moncrieff, as to the merits of whose invention there could be no doubt, and which consisted in this—and he thought it was the principal—that its adoption would greatly minimize the risk to which life was exposed by the present system. The official mind, however, was an interesting, but very irritating study; and the officials of the War Office had started with the assumption that all change must be deprecated, and detested the very presence of an inventor. But circumstances sometimes proved stronger even than permanent officials, and the recent development in machine and quick-firing guns had shown the absolute necessity of making a change. That necessity had now given weight in the official mind to arguments long neglected, and the angel of common sense had at last troubled the waters of the pool of officialdom. In fact, to make a man stand at a gun in open barbette, in an embrasure or elsewhere, exposed to the fire of these machine and quick-firing guns, was an utter impossibility, with any regard to the end to be attained; for it was simply to pronounce upon him a sentence of certain death. It might be asked why he wished for a Parliamentary Committee and not a professional one. His answer to that was, that although a professional Committee might be very useful for advice, and even as an Executive Body, a Parliamentary Committee had more power as an expression of the opinion of that House. He should like to see Committees of that House studying questions of design and principle, and not only that of paying the bill; he thought that, in such matters, the Representatives of the people ought to take some share of responsibility. The question which he had brought up was becoming more and more important. In various parts of the world besides the Coasts of our own country, on which there were over 1,600, we had muzzle-loading guns which might be efficiently and economically worked by means of this system, by which the guns were absolutely safe, being only exposed at the moment of firing. The system was not only applicable to small guns, as had been thought at one time to be the case; it was applicable to all. All that was wanted now was a little wind to fill the sails of the War Office officials, such as could only be given by that House. The adoption of the protected barbette or disappearing system would save the money which was spent upon the maintenance of the old fortifications, and there would also be a saving as regards garrisons. Great interest was undoubtedly taken by Members of that House in such matters, but this interest must not cease with criticism; they must also accept some responsibility for the consideration of these questions. As a soldier, he wished to see Parliament inquiring into such matters. For two years a movement had been going on quietly in the right direction; but a little incentive was required, and everything should be done to insure that the plan, unlike those of General Trochu, should not be only a plan upon paper. When things were done in a scare and a panic they were always done at great expense; and by the House and War Office officials working deliberately and hand-in-hand the country would be enabled to get more value for its money. Although the Continent was at the present moment quiet, it was a matter of serious concern to think what the position of England would be in the event of a European war, when they looked at the huge armaments of other nations. If a Committee such as he now asked for were appointed, the country, for the first time in its history, would be undertaking the consideration of our fortifications without panic. It was stated that £3,000,000 sterling would have been saved if this system had been adopted some years ago; and he thought that an inquiry by a Parliamentary Committee into a system of defence admirably suited to the conditions of modern warfare might obviate the spending of perhaps many millions more. Let them, at all events, avoid the risk of spending more money uselessly, and this they would do by the adoption of the system which he had referred to. In conclusion, he begged to move the Resolution which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the best way of utilising the protected barbette or disappearing system in coast defences and coaling stations,"—(*Colonel Duncan*,) —instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE (Mr. NORTHCOTE) (Exeter) said, he wished to take the earliest opportunity of stating to the House the reasons why the Government were not able to accede to the request just preferred by the hon. and gallant Member with so much ability. As regarded one point touched upon, he would only say that, while he had no exception to take to the praise which the hon. and gallant Member bestowed upon inventors, he could not but remember that, when last Thursday the claims of a valuable invention were voted upon by the House, the hon. and gallant Member found it necessary to vote with the opposite Party. With regard to the alleged necessity for Parliamentary inquiries in order to fill the sails of the War Office, he thought, on the contrary, that the War Office was already scudding under quite a sufficient press of canvas. In fact, it was, if further overweighted, in danger of foundering, and none of its officials had any disposition to whistle for a breeze. The Government were unable to accept the Motion for several reasons. In the first place, they could not accept it for the same considerations which prevented them accepting the suggestion to refer the Brennan torpedo to a Parliamentary Committee — namely, that there must be a limit to the devolution of Executive authority, and when the whole question had already been considered by competent and responsible officers, they must throw upon them the responsibility for the advice they gave to the Secretary of State for War. In the second place, it was already proposed that a Parliamentary Committee should be appointed to go thoroughly into the question of the

Army and the Navy Estimates, and it was possible that the matter which had been raised by the hon. and gallant Gentleman would come within its purview. And, in the third place, there was a special reason why a Special Committee should not be appointed, in the fact that, generally speaking, the War Office had practically accepted the view which the hon. and gallant Member had put forward. They had accepted the principle, as a principle, of the protected barbette or disappearing system of emplacements as against casemates; and, as a matter of fact, out of 48 guns ordered for coaling stations, 32 were on disappearing mountings, and 16 on the barbette system. At present, as the House might be aware, there were in the Service two classes of disappearing mountings—the Moncrieff counter-weight carriages, and hydro-pneumatic mountings, the former being the old type of mounting, the latter the new. Of the counter-weight type they had 79 in position, and five in store at Woolwich unappropriated. Of the 79, 34 were in the Western and Southern Districts of England, one in the South-Eastern District, 11 in Ireland, 19 at Bermuda, 12 at Malta, and two at Halifax. Of the hydro-pneumatic mountings, the War Office had ordered six 6-inch muzzle-loading guns and 28 6-inch breech-loading guns. Eight of those were allotted, temporarily, at all events, to Home Stations, 12 to Aden, nine to Hong Kong, two to Jamaica, and one to St. Lucia. It had not yet been demonstrated that these hydro-pneumatic mountings were suitable for heavy guns; but two experimental mountings were under order from Elswick and Messrs. Easton and Anderson for 9·2-inch breech-loading guns—the gun from Elswick would be ready this month—the latter was complete—and if they were successful, further orders would probably be given. Two orders for 10-inch mountings had also been given to the same firms. There was a proposal now under consideration, made by Colonel Moncrieff, to apply his counter-weight system in substitution for the fixed mountings of the 9-inch and 10-inch rifled muzzle-loading guns now in the Service, and the Inspector General of Fortifications and the Director General of Artillery were now considering the possibility of carrying out Colonel Moncrieff's idea. Such was the exact position of the Service as regards the disappearing mounting system; and he might be allowed to add that, as between barbette and hydro-pneumatic mountings, the former was 50 per cent cheaper. The cheaper way of mounting was, generally speaking, used when the guns were placed in an elevated position; when they could be more or less concealed from the sight of an enemy—the hydro-pneumatic mounting was employed when guns could not be so withdrawn. Already all questions regarding fortifications, including the mounting of guns, went through a seven-fold process of inquiry and report — surely a good reason for not adding an eighth in the shape of a House of Commons Committee. It was upon that ground, and on the further grounds that he was unwilling to relieve officers from all Executive responsibility, and that a Parliamentary Committee to inquire into the Estimates was about to be proposed by the Secretary of State for War, that he ventured respectfully and regretfully to say that the Government were not able to accede to the proposal of his hon. and gallant Friend.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

## DEFENCES OF THE EMPIRE—COAST DEFENCES OF GREAT BRITAIN.

### OBSERVATIONS.

Sir EDWARD HAMLEY (Birkenhead), who had the following Notice on the Paper:—

> "That there is urgent necessity to set in operation a complete system for protecting this Country from an enemy's enterprizes, and to provide for it financially by means more adequate than are to be found in the Annual Estimates,"

said, he was going to venture to call the attention of the House to the defences of the Kingdom, and in doing so he might be allowed to observe that the Memorandum just put forth by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) appeared to him the most satisfactory statement of the kind that had been issued in his time, for it recognized the necessity of a complete scheme of defence, and implied an intention to provide for it. In dealing with the subject he would like to begin by conciliating possible objectors. Many hon. Members regarded all proposals for an increase of our armaments with distrust, as in their minds tending also to increase the probabilities of war. He wished to assure them that he would deal only with matters absolutely and purely defensive, which, far from increasing those probabilities, would tend to diminish them by lessening the chances of invasion, for the most formidable enemy would think twice before invading a prepared Great Britain. He would also ask those hon. Members who attached to all military plans a bellicose and provocative character to believe that officers who occupied themselves with measures of defence must be actuated by the desire to preserve the people of England from those very evils which the most peace-loving of our citizens desired to avert. They had lately heard proposals from a very influential Member of the House to cut down expenditure by the simple method of making it conform to the standard of some former year. But he would remind hon. Members that material of war was becoming every year more and more costly, and also that when expenditure on necessary armament had been for a series of years less than it ought to be, there would inevitably come a time when it would look greater than it ought to be. Therefore, endeavours to rule present and future expenditure by the standard of the past were absolutely irrational and fallacious. The situation, then, as it impressed itself on his mind was this—a small Island on the one side, a whole Continent of possible enemies on the other; the Island having a Coast line which offered to the enemy many imperfectly defended ports and numerous favourable landing places, and opposite to it impregnable harbours, where Fleets could assemble, and whence invading Armies could issue; the Island with a large population indeed, affording plenty of willing defenders; but these, for the most part, so imperfectly equipped that they would be absolutely unable to take the field even for a few days—and even when they sent forth an Expeditionary Force it could only be made complete by pulling to pieces the Regular Forces left at home; while opposite they saw the Continent absolutely swarming with Conscript Armies burning for action, kept at all points fit for immediate war, in equipment, in training, in organization, in transport, in means of concentration—the fact that each was always in presence of tremendous antagonists binding all under the heaviest penalties to maintain themselves in the completest readiness for action. And when they remembered that this Island contained immense wealth, and that that wealth would be looked on by the enemy as the legitimate reward of victory, it was no wonder that the situation inspired many experienced soldiers, many experienced sailors, and, he might add, experienced War Ministers, with absolute dismay. Economists argued that because England had never been invaded in our time it never would be. He was not aware that the Bank of England had ever been broken into in our time; but that was no reason why the Directors, while continuing to pour gold into their cellars, should dispense with bolts and bars and police. Now, if he referred for a moment to the Navy—which he did with great deference to the Naval Members of that House—it was because, it being often and justly styled our first line of defence, that phrase was taken to mean that it could be relied on for the defence of our Coasts. But experienced sailors and other naval authorities had lately assured us that its many Imperial duties would not leave it to be relied on for this task, and that such an alliance of Great Powers against us as we often hear talked of might well deprive us for a time of the command of the Channel. It was for such an opportunity, and for that alone, that Napoleon was waiting in 1805, when it was to be noted the naval power of England was at its height. His Army of Invasion was ready at Boulogne—transport flotilla prepared for instant embarkation—all that was wanted was the presence of the French and Spanish Fleets in the Channel for a few days, when a powerful Army, commanded by Napoleon himself, would have descended on our shores, and nothing but a series of fortunate events, leading to the victory of Trafalgar, prevented this plan from being realized. They must, then, take it for certain that if we were to be secure we must render our Coast independent of our Fleet; and he now turned to the question of insular defence, which might be considered as of two kinds—first, the means of repelling an enemy's ship from the Coast; secondly, of opposing an invading army. So dependent were we on our communications with other lands, that it was difficult to say which of our many great Ports we could lose without sustaining vital injury. But the great Military Ports having Dockyards and Arsenals were of prime importance. It was on these that our ships of all sorts must rely for secure harbourage against an enemy superior at the moment. And as soon as our Fleets were at sea, it was on those Ports they must rely for indispensable supplies of all kinds. It was to them disabled ships must look for repairs; it was in them new ships must be built to replace the waste of war. They were, then, indispensable to our Navy. On the other hand, should an enemy seize one of these Ports, imagine what a footing it would give him for invasion, with a safe harbour in which to land his troops and material, on which to rely for supplies of all kinds, and in which to mature his plans before marching on London. A generation ago the Government of that time (Lord Palmerston's) was aroused to a sense of our weakness, and fortified the most important of these Ports against the ships and artillery of that time. But ships and guns had since made progress at a fabulous rate, so that now, while the works then constructed might be ruined by the armament of some foreign iron-clads, we had not, so far as he was aware, a single gun mounted on the works that would pierce the armour of a first-class war ship. Since those times, however, a new kind of defence had been devised—that of torpedoes and submarine mines; and these were in course of being applied very completely for the defence of our Ports. Placed under water at certain points and in sufficient numbers, and exploded by electricity from the shore, the mines would inflict ruinous injury on the most formidable ships. But in dark nights or fogs they were, of course, less to be relied on; and it was a regular branch of naval tactics to send light craft to destroy them, or nullify their effect. Consequently, these defences required themselves to be defended, and the appropriate means was found in light, quick-firing guns, and machine guns to fire on the light craft. But if the iron-clads could stand in with impunity, they would crush these light weapons with their huge shells. Therefore, in order to keep them off, it was necessary that the defence should possess guns capable of piercing the armour of first-class war ships. Here, then, they had all the requirements—the submarine defences, the light artillery to protect them from the boats, and the heavy artillery to keep off the iron-clads. What was needed, then, was artillery of the kinds mentioned, and suitable forts to hold and protect it. Now, he would not convey the idea that because we were still unprovided with guns and works the officials whose business is was to provide them were in fault. They had, one and all, for years been persistent in their representations. Indeed, considering the great interests involved, it was almost pathetic to read the remonstrances uttered by these War Office officials and War Ministers and their reception by the Treasury. Scarcely inferior in importance were our great Commercial Ports, on which we relied not only for the maintenance of our trade, but for the means of feeding our population. Setting London aside as of a paramount importance that we all recognized, what would be the effect in this country if the telegraph should announce that a hostile iron-clad was approaching Liverpool? Should its enterprize be successful, should it with impunity set on fire or hold to ransom that great city, the example would inspire incessant depredations on our Coasts; while, on the other hand, the sinking of an iron-clad or two in such attempts would be a warning that the enemy could not afford to neglect. Now, such of these Ports as were situated on rivers or estuaries were more easy to defend than those which lay open to the sea, and which might, therefore, be bombarded at long range. It was very satisfactory to know that our chief river harbours were being now put in a condition of submarine defence; but it was still necessary to supplement that kind of protection with artillery, generally by guns placed in earthworks. Some Ports, like Liverpool, had expanded so greatly towards the sea that they were now within range of ships. Therefore, the chief requisite—though in less degree than for the Military Ports—still was light artillery, to protect the submarine mines, and armour-piercing guns to keep off ironclads. These guns might, according to circumstances, be placed in existing works, adequately strengthened, or in earthworks on commanding points, or in floating batteries. In fact, he was certain that the statement of our exigencies by those whose business it had been to consider these matters would confirm his view—namely, that our requirements were mainly limited to guns of the classes he had named, and to sufficient works in which to place them. Now, the estimate of cost of guns, of completing the submarine defences, and of the works for the whole system of Military and Commercial Ports throughout the Kingdom, was, in round numbers, under £5,250,000. With respect to the question of cost, it seemed to him well worth consideration whether the great Ports whose property and trade and the safety of whose inhabitants these measures were designed to secure might not, on due appeal, see fit to contribute to the expenses. It was true that the question was a national one; but they had the paramount interest in it, and by taking a special part in their own defences the necessary works could proceed simultaneously, and be all the more acceptable, because giving large employment to labour in their respective localities. Another consolation was afforded by the fact that the problem of defence was no hasty scheme inspired by panic, but had been long and carefully considered by experienced officers, and that nothing but money was wanting in order to begin at once to put it in execution. And there was yet another circumstance which might bring us comfort. We were often told that when implements of war were undergoing constant changes, so that the weapon or the ship of one year was obsolete in the next, it was not worth while to provide ourselves with them till finality should be reached. The argument, though fallacious, as tending to render our armaments inferior to those of Powers which kept abreast of the times, was easily turned to powerful account. But what he would point out was that finality was, in an important particular, now in sight. For it was evident that if ships were to keep the sea and to possess high speed—both indispensable requisites in war ships—there must be a limit to the weight of armour they should carry; and if the limit was over-passed, they became means of destruction, not to the enemy, but to their own crews. That limit must now be nearly, if not quite, reached, so that the armour-piercing guns of to-day would remain permanently effective, and we need not hesitate to provide ourselves with them. And, finally, he should point out that in a competition in defensive strength between ships and shore batteries the batteries could always be made stronger than the ships, and could also be provided with appliances for screening the guns, which a ship did not admit of; and we might thus feel confident that we could render our Military and Commercial Ports absolutely secure if we chose to set about it. He now came to the question of our internal defences against invasion—that was, the Army with which we could meet an invading Army; and he concluded that everyone would agree that, if we had an Army at all, it should be sufficient for that purpose. We might remember that no less influential a person than the noble Lord the Member for Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) suggested that we should dispense with costly defences, and rely on a substitute of unparalleled cheapness—our "undying historic memories." It was unfortunate that the only historic memory applicable to the case should be our subjugation by William the Conqueror. But, however that might be, he could imagine the perplexity of a hostile Army landed and looking to be met with a storm of shot and shell and a forest of bayonets on finding itself confronted only by "undying historic memories." He was inclined to think that, on recovering from its pleased surprise, it would resume its march upon London, while we, on our part, would have to console ourselves with the advantages which the noble Lord said our refusal to spend money on armaments would have secured to us—namely, cheap beer, and tea, and tobacco, and an Income Tax still not exceeding 8*d*. But he feared the beer, and tea, and tobacco would be for the refreshment of the enemy, who would also undertake the control of the Income Tax along with all the rest of our National Revenues. Happily, we had something more substantial to rely on. In conjunction with the Regular Forces in the country, the Militia and Volunteers formed an immense Army, fit in numbers and in quality of men to oppose any Armies which could land on our shores. But those Armies would consist of trained and disciplined troops, while our Auxiliary Forces could give only a fraction of their time to military exercises. Moreover, they could not take the field for want of equipment. The first step was, then, to equip them. Supposing them to be as complete in field equipment as the Regular Army, there were circumstances which would be much in favour of our national troops defending their own soil against even a professional Army which crossed the sea to attack us. In the first place, we might be prepared beforehand to such a degree that it might almost be said every soldier would know his own place in the system of defence. For in Great Britain we had a very compact and not extensive theatre of war, in which the points at which an enemy could land and the groups of roads by which he would march inland were all ascertained, as were also the positions in which in each case the Field Army could be concentrated to oppose him. And troops could act efficiently on the defensive with much less training than if they had to manœuvre and attack. After being trained in their own exercising grounds in the construction of hasty intrenchments, such as all troops were expected to assist in making, and in the occupation of them for battle, they could, in the place of the present annual exercises, rehearse what would be their part in case of war—whether the defence of their own particular section of coast line, their share in a pitched battle, or the duty of garrisoning fortresses. For instance, it being known beforehand where a battery would be placed near the Coast for the defence of the Mersey, the Lancashire Volunteers might be trained in occupying ground for the defence of that battery against troops or seamen landed to attack it. Again, the line being known beforehand of a position, say in Sussex, to oppose an invading Army coming from Brighton, the troops to form the Field Army being all assigned to their corps in it, might be encamped in their places for their Autumn exercises in the parts of the line they would occupy. And, lastly, all the troops destined to garrison the fortresses in their own localities—those of Devon and Cornwall, for example, for the defence of Plymouth—should, as a regular annual exercise, form the actual garrison of that place for a time sufficient to make them thoroughly acquainted with their duties. That was specially necessary for Volunteer and Militia Artillery, who would thus become familiar with the many appliances, the magazines, and stores of all kinds, and the actual guns—and that was most important—which would be in their charge in resisting an attack. And whatever bodies of Artillery were disposable for Coast defence or for the Field Army should receive at once the guns—and practise with them—which they would use in the field. A step had already been made in that direction, with the best effect, in giving the Volunteer Engineers who were located on the banks of our great rivers an important share in taking charge of and working the submarine defences of the neighbouring ports. Besides thus assigning the troops to their own ground we should possess another kind of advantage, for while an enemy must bring everything with him—horses, forage, provisions, transport—we should possess ample supplies of these all over the country, and by keeping a constant register of them—horses, wagons, wagoners, and forage—in each district, they would be always available on the shortest notice. We had already gone so far as to make considerable progress in a military study of the country by instructed officers. That should include the registration he spoke of; and also the precise use of every road and portion of railway for any intended concentration should be laid down beforehand and exact calculations of all movements prepared. Such matters would, in his opinion, be best intrusted to a specially selected staff under experienced direction, and their work might be periodically submitted for approval to a military council, also specially selected. Besides men, and material, and equipment, there would still be another matter indispensable to the efficiency of our Field Army, and that was the building of stores and magazines at points where they would be ready for the supply of the troops with equipment and stores and ammunition and guns when taking the field. In this way the whole scheme of operations for our Home Army might be laid out in all its particulars; and what would else, on the approach of an enemy, be a scene of hopeless tumult and confusion, would become one of orderly and prompt action. And as nothing so demoralized troops as apparent want of purpose of those who directed them, so nothing gave them such assurance of victory as to see that all their movements were tending to the execution of a well-considered plan. And, in the meantime, the immediate effect on the Auxiliary troops themselves could not be but most encouraging—everyone would know and feel that he had certain duties, and that he was fitting himself to perform them, and a Volunteer, instead of that somewhat vague entity which he now felt himself to be, would know that he had a distinct part in that design of defending the country for which alone the Volunteers were called into existence. Lastly, in all schemes of defence, it was necessary to secure the safety of London by forces independent of armies in the field, so that no corps suddenly cast upon the Coast for the purpose, or which should have succeeded in evading for the moment our Field Armies, should be able to clutch us by the throat, a move which might be itself decisive and bring us to our knees. The plan he advocated to prevent this was the most inexpensive, and, he would add, the most easily practicable that had yet, as far as he knew, been propounded. It was to raise the Volunteers of London from 25,000 to 60,000, and to train them specially for its defence—by laying down the positions which they must occupy on any side threatened in order to keep an enemy at arm's length—and to give the London Artillery Volunteers, already sufficient for their purpose, the requisite number of guns of position. Thus a line north from the Thames at Barking would bar the approaches from the Essex Coast; one by Erith, through Chislehurst to Bromley, would close the approaches from the Coast between the mouth of the Thames and Hastings; other positions would complete the circuit around London, and the capital would be secure against a sudden rush from any side. And these guards of London would always be kept instructed and prepared for this service of its defence. He calculated that all these steps necessary to put our National Forces in this condition of defence—the equipment, the leases, and construction of all magazines and stores, the execution of the military plan of defence, and the raising of certain additional Volunteers, especially Artillery—for they were not always most abundant in the localities where most needed—would cost less than £1,000,000. He had now, in as few words as he could employ, endeavoured to place before the House the requirements for Home defence. He had spoken only of Great Britain, because he wished to confine the first view of our defences to what most nearly concerned us, what was most vital, and what could be most easily taken in at one view. It needed no words of his or of anybody to enable hon. Members to imagine what weight and consideration we should derive in the Councils of Europe from a recognition of the fact that this Island was practically impregnable. Many plans of invasion now reposing in many foreign war bureaux might then be torn up. Commercial enterprize of all kinds would, he imagined, receive a fresh impetus from the feeling of security against recurring panics. And all this might be realized for the sum he had stated—that was to say, in round numbers, £6,250,000. It might, perhaps, be asked why so small a sum could not be spread over a term of years, and provided for in the Annual Estimates? He answered, first, because that plan had been so often found a total failure. As an instance, he might quote that the defence of our Commercial Ports was provided for in this way—the cost was to be spread over five years; last year was to be the first of those years, when £100,000 was to be taken for the purpose in the Estimates as the instalment of that year. What was the result? The sum was cut down in the Estimates to £10,000. If this work was to be done by means of the Annual Estimates, then if it were ever done, of which he was seriously doubtful, it would be certain to be spread over a period vastly in excess of that originally estimated for. He would ask, then, that it should be raised by a loan, and set apart for the purpose intended, and for no other, and thus made secure from the exigencies and temptations of the Budget. Another advantage would be that the work might proceed at once all over the

Kingdom, and be finished in a comparatively brief time—two years might see it accomplished; a period surely long enough for us to remain with our defences incomplete. Also, in considering the comparative smallness of the sum, he would point out that it was only a part, though a vitally important part, of the Imperial scheme of defence. The defence of Ireland must be provided for when the proper time arrived, and of the Colonies also; the coaling stations were already in progress, but that progress might be greatly accelerated by including them in the loan; and notwithstanding the progress of the Navy, the Admiralty would not object, he presumed, to be endowed with the financial power to raise the Navy to its proper pitch. And it must be remembered that, of all modes of expenditure, the various defences of the Kingdom were the most satisfactory, as at once giving a vast impetus to employment at our great centres of population. This plan of a loan had already been tried on former occasions with success, and on occasions, he might say, not comparable in urgency to the present crisis. There was, then, no novelty in what he proposed, nothing which had not already been agreed to and found to answer. We should thus have a guarantee against the tendency of all Governments in this country—a natural tendency, but one nevertheless very dangerous—to be so solicitous to discharge their duty as guardians of the public purse that they were apt to neglect their other duty as guardians of the public safety. From this cause, and also because of the vast means of offence which other nations had accumulated, we had fallen far below the requirements of our position. We were fond of boasting that we had an Empire on which the sun never set; but we forgot that Empire was a luxury expensive in proportion to its extent, and that the boast would be indeed a vain one if, when the time came, we should be found unprepared to defend our Possessions.

CAPTAIN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) said, the scope of the question of defence could not be limited purely to the United Kingdom. The danger of invasion from a given Power was largely influenced by its carrying power — in other words, its Mercantile Marine. He entirely agreed with the hon. and gallant Member for Birkenhead (Sir Edward Hamley) that if this country went to war with a Maritime Power there would be a scene of disastrous confusion, due more to moral causes than to a hostile landing being effected. It was hard for him, at least, to realize that any Power could throw 100,000 men on our shores unless we had, more or less, lost command of the sea. Moreover, it would puzzle any European Power to concentrate carrying power for such a force. The great danger to this country would lie in a series of small blows delivered at its seaports, and for that method of attack we were unprepared. We had for years talked much of the defence of our seaports, but had done very little. The value of the export and import trade of London and Liverpool was in excess of the value of the total sea-borne commerce of France, which meant that if we were unprepared a blow could be delivered by a small force at or off these places which would be equivalent to the universal destruction of the whole sea-borne commerce of France. Then, again, the trade of the Port of London alone was more than double the value of the whole sea-borne commerce of Russia. The effect of leaving our Mercantile Ports undefended would be to enable a French or Russian cruiser to do irreparable damage to our commerce. He protested against any delay in taking the common-sense precautions which were absolutely necessary. Assuming, however, that there maritime or coast provisions were made, no complete step would have been taken for the safety of the people of the country. It would be in vain that our Ports were protected, or our coast line secured. We could not maintain a passive defence of this Kingdom for more than a few weeks, because the people could not live. If our arrangements for the protection of our sea communications were weak, the effect would be apparent in time of war almost immediately. The sense of insecurity would at once affect the Stock Exchange; there would be the stopping, first, of the food supply, and, secondly, of the importation of raw materials. The price of both would go up, the factories would have to close, and hundreds of thousands of workpeople would be turned on the streets, where they would be met with extremely dear bread. In fact, such a state of confusion and disorder would arise—with which it would be almost impossible for the authorities to cope—that the results would be irreparable; and under the pressure of such circumstances no Government could carry on even a passive defence. Further, he wished to point out that the interests we had to defend were drifting further and further away. The task of establishing satisfactory defences was vastly more complicated than it was when we last fought for our supremacy at Trafalgar, when we had a population in the United Kingdom of only 15,000,000 persons to be provided for, and when the food supply of the country was provided within our own shores —wholly independent of external resources—but now all that was changed. In those days one ton of shipping was sufficient to meet the wants of six inhabitants, whereas now each man, woman, and child required the services of a ton and a-half of shipping during the year. Then, 23-24ths of our external trade was confined to European waters; now, more than a moiety of it was thousands of miles beyond European waters. It would not matter, therefore, whether the blow was struck in the Channel or thousands of miles away, the consequences might be equally grave. He earnestly trusted the House would forget for a moment current controversies and Party differences, to consider whether, in the event of war, in two months, under conditions which it was perfectly possible and reasonable to contemplate, our naval and military preparations were adapted to our requirements. If not, a great responsibility rested upon them not to shirk the question, and not to shirk spending such sums as were reasonably necessary. It was not merely or primarily a question of expenditure, but one of administration; and he desired to say that he would be no party to dipping further into the pockets of the taxpayers unless the present system of administration was entirely changed. Between the War Office, the Admiralty, and the Colonial Office, a great deal of money was lost. With constantly changing Heads of Departments, and a general tendency to get rid of expert authority, there was no guarantee for economy and efficiency. While cordially supporting the Motion, his contention was, let naval work be done by naval men, and military work be done by military men, and let us appoint, for a fixed period of years, a capable War Minister, who should be responsible to this House and the country, and control the war expenditure and all war forces.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester) said, he thought it desirable that some sort of protest should be raised from that side of the House against the assumption which had pervaded several previous speeches—that our chief business was to spend money on naval and military armaments. He was glad to hear the hon. and gallant Member who had just resumed his seat (Captain Colomb) say he was not inclined to dip more deeply into the public purse, because he desired, in the first instance, to see some improvements in administration. He agreed with him so far, but he could not agree with the general tone of alarm which characterized the greater part of the hon. and gallant Gentleman's speech. But not only he, but other hon. and gallant Gentlemen who spoke before him, complained that, do what they would, and do what their Predecessors would, they had never been able to stir up the Administration of the country to a proper state of alarm as to the perils which are always impending over our seaports and our sea coast. He was aware, as one who had taken an interest in public affairs before he became a Member of that House, of the repeated efforts which had been made to stir up alarm on this subject. Every few years there was a panic excited, and a few millions had been spent; then the panic subsided, and the people became indifferent until the hot fit came on again. Why could not the Government be stirred up to take so serious a view of this matter as the hon. and gallant Gentleman thought necessary? He thought it was because the Government practically believed that our seaports are safe. And why? Because they thought that it was not for the interest of anyone in the world to attack them. The hon. and gallant Gentleman spoke of this country as an Island teeming with wealth; and he seemed to think that all other countries were teeming with burglars, and that their one idea was to come and rob our ports. He was aware it was often said that expenditure on military and naval armaments was a question of policy; and he was of opinion that, if we pursued a right line of policy, our seaports would never be in danger. Why did the United States feel so tranquil? It was because their position and their policy kept them free from the entanglements of the Old World. It might be said that we should have a difficulty in pursuing an isolated policy like that of the United States. He admitted that we could not take up quite the same position as the United States; but he said that our position as an Island, separated from the Coast of Europe, enabled us to keep clear of most of the difficulties, the petty jealousies, the international rivalries, and the dynastic intrigues which constituted the questions which were perpetually threatening war on the Continent of Europe. For if we could mind our own business, and attend to the substantial interests of the country, we should never be in danger of invasion. In that way we could secure the blessings of peace. They had all heard of the difficulty of getting more money out of the already over-burdened taxpayers of this country. The hon. and gallant Member for Birkenhead (Sir Edward Hamley) had told them of the touching appeals made by military administrators, and even by the War Minister himself, to the Treasury to give them a little more money for naval and military armaments. But there were appeals far more pathetic than these appeals, such as that made by the Victoria University for £2,000 a-year to improve the education of the Northern Districts, appeals for free schools and for technical education to keep us abreast of other countries in the world. Those were more pathetic and interesting appeals than appeals for increased armaments; but these appeals on behalf of the higher wants of the country would never be met so long as we lavished our treasure on the means of destruction. He was as anxious as anyone that our land should be kept safe from attack; but the taxpayers could not bear the two burdens—that of the old barbarism and of the new ages of improvement. They could not afford at the same time to lavish our treasure on guns that, as the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) said, take £200 to fire a single shot, and at the same time supply our people with free schools, technical instruction, and all the higher needs of this age of progress. We could not bear the two. He, therefore, thought it was the duty of our Government so to frame our policy that we should not irritate other nations of the world, and not invite attack, confining ourselves to minding our own business. If we took that line, he contended there would be less expenditure necessary for our Fleet to protect our commerce and Dependencies, while for our military strength we could depend to a large extent on our Volunteers. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen seemed to laugh at the Volunteers. ["No, no!"] Possibly, then, it was himself they were laughing at, and their laughter had more justification. Although the Volunteers might not have in all respects the value of long-trained soldiers, yet he did think that should an enemy invade our land—a thing to his mind almost impossible—our Volunteers would be able to give a very good account of him; so that for purposes of defence we might rely more than we did on our Volunteer Service. He rose to make one protest against the assumption that the chief object of the House was to prepare for war, and also to urge that if we only adopted a common-sense, pacific policy, we could do with much less expenditure on our Naval and Military Services.

MR. TOTTENHAM (Winchester) said, he believed that the country owed a debt of gratitude to the hon. and gallant Member who had introduced the debate (Sir Edward Hamley); but he thought it was a mistake and fatal policy to spread over a term of years a work that ought, in the interests of the nation, to be undertaken with the least possible delay, in order that the country might be put in a state of defence. There were two subjects to which he desired specially to draw the attention of the House. One was the proposed reduction of the Artillery Force. He asked the Secretary of State to pause before committing himself to the mistaken policy of reducing our Forces in the very arm which it was impossible to supply at short notice. Comparing the numbers of the Artillery Force of this country with those of the Artillery Forces of Continental nations, he found that Great Britain had 612 guns to 337,000 men, including the Native Indian Army, which was without Artillery; France, 1,938 guns to 565,000 men; Germany, 2,040 guns to 460,000 men; and Russia, 2,278 guns to 871,000 men; so that the proportion of guns for every 1,000 men was in Great Britain 1·81; in France 3·43; in Germany 4·43; and in Russia 2·61. Instead of economizing by reducing the Field Artillery, let the authorities begin their economies in that Augean Office—the War Office—and other Departmental Offices, including the Circumlocution Office described by the Surveyor General of Ordnance—and sweep away half that army of quill-driving officials, who could not distinguish a cutlass from a piece of hoop iron, or a properly made cartridge from one that would jam, and who went upon the principle that because these things were in store they had got to be used, and who seemed to think if their ideas and calculations were not carried out the Army must go to the dogs. In 1884 he insisted upon the necessity of the numbers of the Army being increased, and received an answer from the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) denying such necessity. He was, however, glad to say that within two years of such answer his right hon. Successor at the War Office (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) added to the numbers of the Army some 20,000 men —the numbers being in 1884 201,905, and in 1886 220,063. In 1884 he also pointed out that the term with the Colours ought to be increased; and he was glad that something had been done in this direction. Lord Airey's Committee, composed of a distinguished body of officers, laid down in their Report four cardinal points—that the term with the Colours ought to be altered; that the numbers of the Army ought to be increased; that the system of one battalion feeding another should be abolished; and that once a man was posted to a battalion he should remain with it during his whole active service. The first two recommendations had in a degree been carried out; the last two had been disregarded, and the evils which they were intended to remove still continued. The system of one battalion feeding another was in the highest degree detrimental to the Service—one battalion dragged the vitals out of the other, to the disgust of men and officers, and to the destruction of the *morale* and *esprit de corps* of the regiment. Regimental officers and non-commissioned officers complained of the persistent round of drill and drudgery without ever being able to see their battalion in an efficient state. In 1882, when a certain regiment was sent to Egypt, 400 Reserve men had to be drafted into it to fill up the vacancies left by 400 recruits who were left behind; and the officers gave a pitiable account as to the state of their regiment for several months after—the Reserve men having been away some time from the Colours, and being rather lax, and there being no sufficient leaven of old soldiers. The using of the Reserve in this way had the further objection that it was using up our second line in the first. If the Reserve men were called upon in this way, there would be nothing to fall back upon. Next, as to the system of sending men from one battalion to another. It was a great hardship on the men, who had thus to break up old friendships, and were always in a state of uncertainty as to whether they might not the next day be moved into another battalion, and be made to serve under new officers, of whom they knew nothing. It really seemed as if they were tending towards the system of a third unit. There were at present nine double battalion regiments with both battalions abroad, and with depôts of 650 men each at home; and the Cameron Highlanders, which is a single battalion, with a depôt of 321 men, so that out of the 68 depôts there were 10, or one-seventh of the whole, under the system that he advocated. In addition to this, every depôt was in excess of its strength, some double or treble, and in some cases four times the number of its establishment. Taking the first 12 regiments on the list, he found that they had an effective strength of 2,104 men, against an establishment of 828 men. Two of these with 277 and 243 men respectively against establishments of 69 each. Taking the whole Army, the numbers were 14,971 effective, against an establishment of 10,396, showing an excess of 4,575. It could not, therefore, be said that the depôt system was not capable of expansion, as here they had it already expanded by nearly 4,600 men. Why not extend it boldly still further, instead of allowing it to creep in by degrees in the face of paper establishments? He should like to see three battalions to every regiment, one to be always at home, and to act as depôt. Effective battalions were wanted at home as well as abroad, and under the present system they would never exist. It was absurd to appoint Royal Commissions and Committees of Inquiry composed of officers of distinction and practical experience if their recommendations were to be overruled by civilians and financial considerations. He hoped that before the debate closed the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) would be able to give the House an assurance that before next year the whole of the recommendations of Lord Airey's Committee would be considered, with a view of abolishing or mitigating a system which was fraught with injury to the Service, and a danger to the country at large.

GENERAL FRASER (Lambeth, N.): Permit me, Sir, to endeavour to put forward a clear statement of a question now pending of momentous importance to the whole nation, to the efficiency of the Army in general, and of the Cavalry Service in particular—namely, the proposed immediate abolition of five of the batteries of Horse Artillery, out of a Home Establishment of 13 batteries. It will be allowed on all sides that no reduction in any branch of the Service should be carried out, unless it is distinctly evident that the efficiency of the Army will be increased thereby; or else that an important economy will be effected by such reduction, without impairing that efficiency. I request the indulgence of the House whilst I prove, from the mouth of distinguished soldiers accustomed to organize and command Armies, and by not complicated statistics, that the efficiency of the Service would, on this occasion, be deeply impaired, and that the cost of the re-establishment of these batteries at a future time will be extremely heavy. I venture to claim that I am able to show that sufficient Horse Artillery is an essential and most important element in an Army; that its conversion to Field Artillery is no sort of compensation for its loss, as Field Artillery cannot perform the duties of Horse Artillery; and, further, that I am able to prove, by the simplest calculation of numbers, that if the proposed abolition of five batteries of Horse Artillery takes place, it will only be possible to make the First Army Corps up to the War Establishment; that the Second Army Corps would be mythical, and that all Horse Artillery in India and elsewhere will be dependent for reinforcements and supply in cases of any emergency, and even for relief, to the breaking up of that First Army Corps. The reduction of the five batteries out of 13 of the Royal Horse Artillery would affect, to a vital extent, the operations of the divisions and brigades of Cavalry in the field, in which Horse Artillery bear a part of such paramount importance; and it must tie the hands of the Commander in campaigns and battles when he would wish to throw guns up at speed into important positions. Marshal Von Moltke has given his opinion that—

> "Because, in modern warfare, the long range and destructive fire of Artillery necessitates a scattered formation, there will be more frequent opportunities for Cavalry."

General Sir Edward Hamley says, in his *Operation of War*—

> "Let it also be granted that Cavalry properly trained and led, may play as great a part as ever on the stage of war; combined with new and larger proportions of Artillery, its action may be decisive of the fate of battles, and launched in pursuit of a broken foe it may finish a campaign which would else wade through fresh carnage to its woeful end."

Further, he says—

> "To gain from this mobility its greatest effect, field batteries should, to a certain extent, be converted into Horse Artillery, by which the greatest possible rapidity of manœuvre would be attained; batteries would constantly shift their position, so as always to take the line diagonally or in flank, and by rapid retreat would baffle a counter attack."

In 1870 Horse and Field Artillery were ordered to push on at once to the battle field of Spicheren. The Horse Artillery accomplished the distance—21 miles—in three hours, and arrived in time, while the field batteries took four and a-half hours, and only came up when the action was over. The same happened to the same batteries on another occasion, when the field batteries were again too late. Marches at such a pace are impossible in Field Artillery, and, therefore, they cannot take the place of Horse Artillery. Prince Kraft zu Hohenlohe desires that the whole of the Corps Artillery should be composed of Horse Artillery. We have the instance also of Sir Drury Lowe's Cavalry and Horse

Artillery's brilliant advance on Cairo after Tel-el-Kebir. Horse Artillery is an arm most difficult to construct, and impossible to improvise. The impression that the new Horse Artillery gun is a heavy gun, that cannot work with Cavalry, is quite erroneous; it is a 12-pounder breech-loader, powerful and accurate, with all ranks mounted, and it is able to go anywhere with Cavalry—whose right arm it is—when pushing out miles in front, on outpost duty, in advance and rearguard duties, reconnaissance, covering the deployment, and concealing the movements of an Army, keeping up communication and cutting off and threatening those of the enemy, protecting the fronts and flanks of an Army. It is a powerful auxiliary in the attack, and a friend in need in pursuit, and in the hour of danger and defeat; it can keep pace with the advance, and by pouring a destructive fire on the enemy, pave the way for the Cavalry to victory; it dislodges the enemy from positions in which the sword cannot reach him, and it does fearful execution when the enemy's Infantry, concentrated in masses, bids defiance to the horsemen; it checks pursuit, and gains time for the Cavalry to re-form under fire; it is of great use in passing defiles and bridges in the face of the enemy, in defending broken ground against odds, and in many other ways it is Cavalry's best assistant. The action of Cavalry and Horse Artillery in spreading a curtain round an Army was brilliantly exemplified by the Germans, in the War of 1870, by which, often without bloodshed, their sudden appearance, miles in front of the Army, caused towns to give up their keys and surrender. The enemy felt, the touch was never left go, troops were watched and their movements reported, whilst the main bodies were advancing at comparative ease. Cavalry and Artillery work in complete harmony with the Infantry—the principal arm always—and subordinates its action to that of the latter. The rapid advance to the Moselle of the Cavalry, and the consequent paralyzation of the French plan of operations, contributed not a little to the success of the German operations. Cavalry and Horse Artillery can never be dissociated. Frederick the Great, fully recognizing the necessity of this association in the Seven Years' War, organized batteries of Light Artillery, capable of moving at the pace of squadrons, and intended to support all their enterprizes. The Duke of Wellington's letters from India describes the advantages that Lord Lake derived from attaching quick-moving guns to his Cavalry. Amongst numberless instances, let it be remembered, that Lord Gough, at Sobraon, kept his Horse Artillery fresh, and brought it up at speed to carry annihilation into the Sikh Army, retiring across the Sutlej. To-day we read in the *Italia Romana*, in a letter from an Italian officer in Abyssinia—

> "We are all sure that the catastrophe would have been averted, if the column had been accompanied by a small force of Cavalry and guns."

Valentine Baker Pasha has said, that had a Horse Artillery battery been available at the second action at El Teb, where he was himself severely wounded, the loss to the British Force would probably have been greatly diminished, as the battery could have taken, from its mobility, the works of Osman Digna in flank before the delivery of the main attack on the front. Horse Artillery is essential to the rapid movement and the quick tactic of the present day. Field Artillery—to whom all honour in their magnificent service is due—in consequence of the weight and the impossibility of carrying the detachment men on the carriages, the difficulty of keeping up a supply of men in time to fill up casualties, and the slow advance, as the men who work the guns have to march on foot—are not available for this duty. A true and well-known axiom is—

> "Mobility is an essential for good Artillery; it is the power to move rapidly when requisite, not continual movement that is required."

General Lord Wolseley, in his *Pocket Book*, lays down—

> "It must be remembered that batteries of Field Artillery are not supposed to move faster than a walk, as the gunners march on foot."

An incident at the Alma may be mentioned. Lord Raglan prayed that some guns might be brought to a particular knoll, whence they could dislodge the enemy's guns on the causeway. Two guns of Turner's field battery were at length brought up—a gun horse killed in the river had delayed them—had this been a Horse Artillery gun a detachment horse would at once have replaced it—then two guns ultimately reached the spot indicated, but without those detachments, who had been unable, being on foot, to keep up, the Artillery officers, including Colonel (now Sir) Collingwood Dickson, and Brigadier General Strangways, who had been at Leipsic, and was killed at Inkermann, and who was commanding the Artillery of the Crimean Campaign, dismounted and worked the guns with their own hands. Had this been a Horse Artillery battery, the detachment would not have been left behind. As a result of this incident, the number of Horse Artillery batteries was speedily and importantly increased. Are we to expect in all future wars that a contingent, such as we sent to Egypt, will suffice, and that no further batteries of Artillery would be required? Turn back to 1854-5. Is no experience gained by the unprepared state of the Army in those days? The position of England is quite exceptional, and it does not do to compare her with other nations. Not only have we to keep up the usual proportion of Horse Artillery guns recognized for the requirements of our Cavalry and Corps Artillery, but we have always India, for which we must be prepared to meet an emergent demand at any moment for more guns; and also, looking at our numerous Colonies and interests abroad, how often do we not have to enter into small wars where, possibly, Horse Artillery are required, sometimes without a Cavalry Brigade? I would instance the case of the *Trent* affair in 1862, when a battery of Horse Artillery was placed under orders to proceed to Canada, but subsequently countermanded. There has been a battery of Horse Artillery in Egypt for a length of time without a Cavalry Brigade. Owing to the great mobility of Horse Artillery, it has frequently been sent on service to accompany Infantry. For instance, the Chestnut troop with the Light Division in the Peninsula; C Troop with Light Division in the Crimea. Several instances in India, especially in frontier warfare. The non-commissioned officers and men are specially selected, as well as the officers; and it is their pride in their work and efficiency, and in the knowledge of their own value, which has kept them always in their high state of efficiency. The contemplated reduction of the five batteries of Horse Artillery will seriously affect the pay of non-commissioned officers and men of those batteries. The change will deprive every non-commissioned officer and artificer of 2*d.* a-day, gunners 1½*d.* a-day, drivers ½*d.* a-day, trumpeters no less than 9½*d.* a-day. The trifle that Government may save by such economy will do an infinity of damage in the Recruiting Department, and to the confidence in the class from which the best soldiers are drawn. I have it, on the best authority; that a very large number of men who enlist for the Artillery ask to be sent to the Horse Artillery. They are told that that cannot be, but that they must work their way to it by good conduct and smartness. Beyond doubt, surplus Artillery is worse than useless; it hampers and delays the columns, keeps troops out of action for escorts, blocks roads, and impedes a retreat. Have we at present a surplus? No; on the contrary, we have not one man, one horse, one gun too many for our absolute requirements. To supply the two Horse Artillery batteries sent to Egypt in 1882, the batteries left at home were so crippled that they could not have drawn their own guns out of the barrack yard. The Secretary of State for War has spoken of this reduction as being, in part, simply "a conversion." Death itself is simply a conversion; he admits that five batteries of Horse Artillery are to be obliterated, which loss is tantamount to death to them, and to the Service; besides this destruction of five batteries, certain other batteries of Horse Artillery will have only four guns instead of six—namely, after the reduction, there will be five batteries with six guns, and three batteries with only four guns. The reduction of certain batteries by two guns in peace time, to be put into store, is most paralyzing. In Germany the batteries in peace time are reduced; but men are available immediately from the "Reserve," which is a fact there, and not a fiction as in this country. Artillerymen from the "Reserve" have to attend trainings at manœuvres a certain number of times, so as to keep up their knowledge. Our Reserve Artillerymen never have this practice. Further, the mode of draught in their Artillery is the same as that for all farm purposes; ours is quite different. The horses of the country are all available; ours are not. They are also registered; ours are not; pairs of horses accustomed to work together, can be procured and put into batteries at very short notice. In our Service, we should have to unman and unhorse other batteries, supposing that they exist. The Secretary of State for War claims that the increase of guns for Garrison Artillery, and for the Volunteers, will make up for the loss of guns that should be in the fore-front in a campaign. It would be as well to say that, in the interest of India, the 11th Bengal Lancers are to be reduced, but that the 3rd West India Regiment is to be increased. The allotment of baggage animals to Infantry regiments—namely, 240 horses (see Army Estimates), cannot be put as a set-off for the loss of five batteries of Horse Artillery; and the arrangement does not get over the fact that 30 guns, with the greatest mobility, are lost to the Service. We, at the present time, have of Horse Artillery—four batteries of six guns for the First Army Corps; four batteries of four guns for the Second Army Corps; five batteries of four guns for a Reserve. It is quite safe to say that, to complete the batteries of the First Army Corps to War Establishment, every gunner, driver, and horse of the five Reserve batteries would be required. If these, then, are abolished, the batteries of the Second Army Corps will have to supply, as far as they can, the men and horses required, and thus the Second Army Corps' batteries will be entirely denuded of horses, and almost entirely of non-commissioned officers and men. It is only by keeping up a strong force of Horse Artillery that we can hope to put an efficient proportion of it in the field. The difficulty in these days of procuring good horses, sound, and of proper stamp for the Horse Artillery, is great, even in peace time, when there is no hurry; and what may we expect when war is upon us? Remember, a single unsuitable horse may mean the impotence or loss of a gun. It was my duty to buy, as quickly as possible, 500 horses in Ireland, during the Campaign of 1882 in Egypt; horses for Horse Artillery and Cavalry were most difficult to procure, and but very few indeed were at all fit to send out to a campaign; baggage horses were easy to obtain. The power of Artillery in the field is in the number of guns efficiently put into the field; and not in the number of men capable of garrisoning the forts at home and in the Colonies. If it became necessary to increase the Garrison Artillery, it could be done at any time, to a very large amount, from the Auxiliary Forces—Militia and Volunteers, Reserves, &c. Guns put into store are guns reduced, as the men and horses to work them will not be kept up. The Secretary of State for War has not explained the cost of the proposed changes, or the amount of saving in expenditure; we must therefore conclude that the saving is *nil*, or else that the saving is to be expended elsewhere. He states that all the Horse Artillery that will be required—that is, for this new scheme of organization—will be eight batteries of six guns each for the First and Second Army Corps; that none of them will be kept on war strength, and five only of those eight batteries will be maintained at First Army Corps strength with six guns; that three Horse Artillery batteries of the Second Army Corps will only have four guns each, and men and horses in proportion—adding that, "in war time, of course, these Horse Artillery batteries will take the field with six guns each." He does not explain how this is to be, as the five other batteries to-day in existence, and able to supply officers, non-commissioned officers, men and horses are to be abolished next month! It should be understood that there are to be three Establishments in the Horse Artillery — batteries at war strength, at which there are to be none—175 men and 163 horses; First Army Corps' strength, at which there are to be five batteries—162 men and 104 horses; and a low Second Army Corps' strength, at which there are to be three batteries—120 men and 72 horses. Therefore, it is evident that to form only four batteries at war strength in case of need for the First Army Corps, it would be necessary to denude the whole of the 2nd Army Corps, with the exception of 470 men and 84 horses, and this without eliminating the men and horses unfit for active service from any of the eight batteries that it is proposed only to retain. Are the two Army Corps—if they can be formed—(which they have never been, except on paper, for 12 years) to be left entirely without reserve? Is India, in emergency, to be dependent for a supply of Horse Artillery on the breaking up of these two Army Corps? If the proportion of Horse Artillery is too large for our Army, it would appear that the authors of this new scheme are the very advisers who are responsible for the taxpayers of the country having been for years past heavily burdened for an excess of force in this arm! Field Marshal Lord Napier of Magdala, in "another place," has clearly demonstrated that the proposed reductions in the Royal Artillery in general are fraught with extreme peril—that they would cripple efficiency; that 30 guns would cease to be Horse Artillery guns; that more than 600 trained and skilled Horse Artillerymen would be taken from this important arm, and would have to be sent to other duties which require much less skill; also that the Imperial Forces have not, by an immense number, their proper proportion of guns, according to the proportion recognized by the principal Military Authorities of Europe. That noble and gallant Lord took the numbers of batteries of Horse and Field Artillery, assuming that, on an emergency, the considerable number of batteries that have already been reduced from six to four guns might be completed to six guns—a process most exhausting to other batteries—and proved that the 106 batteries of 636 guns are not, in any way, in proper proportion to the Imperial troops, of which Returns give a total strength of 289,960, and that this 636 guns would stand to them in the proportion of only 2·2 guns to 1,000 men. Napoleon laid down three guns to 1,000 men—a low estimate for the present day—but according to which we should require 869 guns, or 233 more than we possess. The German standard is now 3·6 guns per 1,000 men, according to which we should have 1,043 guns, instead of 636. Jomini, with whom General Lord Wolseley agrees in the *Pocket Book*, says this—"the proportion should be three guns to 1,000." Frederick the Great began with this proportion, but quickly increased it. In India, in 1879, a proposal very similar to the present scheme of reduction was recommended by a Commission on Army Organization. The Minutes of the Commander-in-Chief in India on the Report is so much to the point that I venture to quote from it. The Commander-in-Chief wrote—

> "It is proposed by the Commission to reduce the Horse Artillery in India from 15 to 10 batteries. In this sweeping reduction I cannot concur. The Commission consider that after providing this arm for two Army Corps, no more is required. No Reserve and no means of keeping complete or efficient the 10 batteries of Horse Artillery in the two Army Corps has been provided, nor is any provision whatever made to meet the contingency of more of this arm being required elsewhere. It suffices to say that, in Bengal, with six Horse Artillery batteries in the field and four in the rear, these latter have been so denuded of men to replace the casualties in the former, that it has been found absolutely inexpedient to further denude them of the few effectives still left; and we have been obliged to telegraph home for 110 men of this branch to meet requirements during the coming season, and which will cause an increase in the present fixed Establishment of this arm in Bengal of 70 men. Such facts speak for themselves."

Now these were six-gun, not four-gun, batteries. Again—

> "No Horse Artillery would be available for external uses in the event of any considerable force being despatched beyond sea. In fact, this branch, which perhaps requires the longest training of all, is entirely overlooked, not only as regards Reserves for that portion employed in the field, but also with reference to any internal or external contingencies which might arise during another war, such as that in which we are now engaged. . . . At present, Bombay, with its two batteries of Horse Artillery in or about to take the field, has no Reserve, and if the casualties from invaliding, &c., in these batteries approach those of the Horse Artillery batteries, which took the field from Bengal in 1878-9, the result will be that, after completing the foremost battery from the one in rear, the latter will be unable to turn out more than two guns, if it be not rendered entirely unfit for service."

The Commander-in-Chief in India explains—

> "To place a battery in the field, the first thing to be done is to transfer to it men and horses, not recruits and raw horses, but men and animals trained to the work. The wear and tear in the field is excessive, and has to be met from batteries in the rear. The history of I. C. Royal Horse Artillery, and a statement of the drafts required to keep it efficient, and the necessity under which it became obligatory to relieve it, would astonish those who have had no concern with the details of such affairs."

Sir Frederick Haines, in a further Minute on the subject, remarks—

> "In my Minute of the 20th March, 1880, reference is made to the fact that Bombay had but two batteries of Royal Horse Artillery, that they were in or about to take the field, and that they had no Reserve. What happened? E-B battery suffered severe losses at Maiwand, an it was necessary to repair them by the despatc of a complete division, men and horses, harnes and guns, from a battery in Bengal, at Umballah, Bombay, having no reserves either in men or horses trained to that branch of the service."

He further explains—

> "On the outbreak of war it would be necessary to complete the batteries selected for service in the front from those that remain in rear. There are many men and horses, though equal to the ordinary duties of peace time, are quite unfit to stand the exposure and privation of active service, and all of them have to be eliminated, and their places filled up by effective transfers from the other batteries. This same process has to be continued throughout the campaign, and the result is that, whilst completing and maintaining the batteries in front, we render inefficient a large proportion of those in rear, and this to an extent which is not apparent from the mere returns of the casualties occurring in front—for while giving away these serviceable men and horses, the rear batteries, in many instances, have been receiving in exchange the inefficients they replace, so that not only are the numbers reduced, but their quality becomes seriously deteriorated; in fact, they can no longer be looked upon as efficient batteries. In India, in 1878, to complete 10 batteries to a war footing, it required 105 transfers of men. To complete the same batteries for service again in 1879, it required 244 more men. The drain, therefore, on the rear batteries during one year alone amounted to 349 men, which is equal to the strength of two batteries. To complete I.C. Royal Horse Artillery in the field, for the period of the war, lasting eight months 42 men and 44 horses were required; for the second period, lasting five months, 41 men and 46 horses were required; or, in the whole period of 16 months, from the time they were warned for service in 1878 until their recall in 1880, they expended 83 men and 90 horses, which was more than half their original strength."

The Commander-in-Chief added to his Minutes these words—

> "The advantage of Horse Artillery consists in its mobility, which enables it to act with Cavalry. Field Artillery is less mobile and to substitute it for Horse Artillery would be either to deprive the Cavalry of its guns, or to reduce its mobility to that of a Field Artillery, the *rôle* of which is to work with Infantry; and also it appears to me that by looking too much to the saving that might be effected in the time of peace, the necessity of being prepared for war has, as regards this branch, been lost sight of."

It is fully recognized abroad that—

> "Horse Artillery must be trained and kept ready; it is too late to make them when war begins."

Mounted Infantry, and much that is most useful, you can improvise. Since the Mutiny, no Horse Artillery in India are manned by Native Artillerymen; consequently, the Horse Artillery batteries are completely dependent on the Home Establishment for Reserves. The Indian Government keep, at its own expense, two small depôts in England, consisting of recruits intended to replace annual reliefs in India of men discharged and invalided, and a certain number of old horses, and old guns, for training purposes only. The whole of the Horse Artillery throughout Her Majesty's Dominions would be dependent, in case of necessity, on the breaking up of the First Army Corps to fill up any casualty that might occur. The Secretary of State for War has stated that he would not place a responsibility on the House that he should himself bear. That responsibility on this occasion is indeed most onerous. The responsibility of deducting so seriously from the efficiency of the arm, most difficult to establish, and of such eminent importance in war; and this responsibility he must take in direct opposition to those officers who have had immense experience in organization and in war, and who have commanded our largest Armies, in opposition to the opinion of officers of high standing in the Continental and English Armies—in opposition to statistics which prove distinctly that the whole fabric of the First Army Corps must fall to pieces if this reduction is persisted in. One question must strike all thinking men. What is this First Army Corps?—for 12 years a paper Army, only to be found in the Army List—it cannot exist in substance—it must be but a shadow of the substance; for instance, one regiment of Cavalry that helps to form it has, out of an Establishment of 400 horses, 82 three year-old, and 48 four year-old, and 30 wanting to complete. I may here say that one battery of Horse Artillery has, during the past year, been raised, at considerable expense, to the First Army Corps' strength. It is now complete with men and horses, and the latest equipment throughout. The battery is to be reduced at once, or converted into something else. Does this seem to be wisdom? Thanking the House for the indulgence extended to me, permit me to say that it has been my duty, for several years, in India and at home, to instruct Horse Artillery and Cavalry combined; also that I have witnessed Horse Artillery so enfeebled and reduced by the casualties of a campaign and climate that it could hardly reply to the enemy's fire. I feel sure that it is the wish of Englishmen that troops in front of campaigns may be sustained in a way worthy of England.

No doubt, the proposed reduction of so many distinguished batteries is a source of bitter disappointment to officers, non-commissioned officers, and men. Famous batteries are to be obliterated, for a time at least. Who's heart has not thrilled at the story of the deeds of the Rocket Troop—the only English force at Leipsic—the Battle of the Nations! where 80,000 men were killed—and of the glorious history of the Royal Artillery, which splendid corps has won the motto that stands pre-eminent amidst all trophies—"Ubique." On this I will not further enlarge. I have avoided all thought of sentiment. I represent the case solely on practical grounds. In the interests of the nation and of the Army, I do earnestly entreat the Secretary of State for War to relinquish this scheme. As to the question of expenditure. In the recent five years, under my command were some 50 batteries and battalions, and it has been my duty to inspect every regiment of Cavalry at home, and my knowledge of soldiers tells me that there is no wish that the expenditure of public money on the Army should be increased; but that there is a very deepfelt anxiety that waste and extravagance should be put a stop to, that the money should be well spent, and that sudden and reckless blows should not be struck at any branch of the Service which, hitherto, it has been accounted necessary to maintain in the highest state of efficiency. In the next campaign on the Continent, that an English Army may be engaged in, may the Commander, by consummate skill, paralyze his enemy by gaining his flank, by cutting off his communications; then, indeed, will the bloodshed be comdaratively small, and most assuredly in succeeding in that grand aim, Cavalry and Horse Artillery, with its mobility and speed, will prove itself to be that Commander's best weapon and England's truest friend.

Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN (Durham, S.E.) said, he hailed with the greatest pleasure the appearance for the first time of a lucid statement, which afforded some promise of a consecutive and well-thought-out scheme of organization in our Army. He hoped that it might be found to combine efficiency with economy, and with those strong military features to which previous speakers had referred. While he said this, however, he concurred in the remarks of the hon. and gallant Member for Lambeth (General Fraser), who had stated the case against reduction of the Royal Horse Artillery. He should like, however, to put the case even more strongly, and to say that he believed no possible economy which could be attempted would lead to greater extravagance or waste in the end than this economy which had been palmed off on the Secretary of State for War. He was at a loss to conceive who were the military advisers of the right hon. Gentleman. He was almost inclined to think that some of the right hon. Gentleman's advisers had been attempting to play a practical joke upon him; but it was a joke which would not be likely to be successful, when the right hon. Gentleman had held the reins of Office for 12 months more. If there was any real military weight at the back of the right hon. Gentleman's opinion, where was it to be found? Who was the military originator of the scheme? Certainly not the Adjutant General (Viscount Wolseley), who was opposed to it, and there was the strongest possible condemnation of it by Lord Napier, whose authority stood only second to, and whose experience was in some respects more varied than, General Wolseley's. But it was not only in regard to the Home service that he objected. He contended that it was a veritable breach of faith in regard to our Army in India, and of the contract entered into with the Indian Government in 1879-80. This reduction was unwise, not only as regarded the Army at home, but as regarded the possibilities of augmentation in case of war in Europe, and the possibility of our having considerably to reinforce our military forces in India. To his mind, the proposed economy resembled the economy which would be practised by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War, if he were to take his best case of Sunday razors and apply them to the cutting of paving stones. He could not conceive any greater waste or misapplication of money than that which would eventually be caused by replacing the Horse Artillery, a splendid arm of the service, which they were now destroying for no purpose whatever. He recognized the necessity that we should have two Army Corps, capable of being placed in the field at short notice, instead of one; and in this connection he supported the Secretary of State for War in that augmentation. But he trusted, before the debate closed, the House would have an indication from the right hon. Gentleman that he reserved an open mind on the question of reducing the Horse Artillery, and that he would reconsider the subject before the Estimates were finally passed. As an instance of the importance of Horse Artillery at certain critical moments, he would refer to an illustration partly used by the hon. and gallant Member opposite. The battle of Sobraon had been referred to, an action in which the regiment in which he had the honour to serve had taken a leading part (the 10th Foot). The battle was fought on February 10, 1846. In the course of the fight 12 guns in all of Horse Artillery were brought into play at a critical moment of the action on the 1,000 of Sikhs then swarming across the river, and, by their aid, the neck of the Sikh army was practically broken in less than twelve minutes. He could also cite, as further examples of the immense importance of the services of Horse Artillery at critical moments in action, the case of the battle between the French and the Germans at Gravelotte, where he was a personal spectator of the scene, and also the experience of a battle fought by Lord Wolseley in Egypt, at Masammah, on the 24th August, 1882. He turned next to a most important question connected with the popularity of recruiting. As a magistrate of two counties he had observed that there could be no more deplorable position than that of soldiers passed into the Reserve, who were often obliged to go about the country like beggars, unable to find the means of obtaining a decent livelihood. Something, he urged, ought to be done to prevent men who had served the Government in a military capacity from becoming reduced when they passed into civil life into the condition of waifs and tramps, who had frequently to ask for charity because they could not procure suitable civil employment. If some prospect of occupation in civil life could be held out to those men it would be of very great advantage to the Army and its recruiting, and also to the employers of labour, who, if they knew that all the men were not liable to be taken away from them at short notice, would not, as they did now, think the Reserve men were a class who ought to be avoided like a pestilence. That was a matter in which he was sure that all economists might concur, and he hailed with satisfaction the opportunity which the right hon. Gentleman held out to him of having that important subject discussed fully when the Vote for the Reserve was brought forward. With regard to the details which had been placed before them by the right hon. Gentleman, they were not only useful in the highest degree, but they were put forward in a manner which offered every assurance that the right hon. Gentleman was entering on a career of usefulness which would correspond to the high promise that he had given in the offices of State which he had hitherto filled. It was a distinct advantage that he had now laid before them an organized military system and the prospect of organizing two Army Corps instead of one, and that the line of communications of the two Army Corps would also be looked to. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman should not see his way to taking steps for the improvement of the organization of the Cavalry. Since 1875 our Cavalry organization had been truly declared to be the most wretched and unsystematic in the world; and no greater field of usefulness was still open to the right hon. Gentleman than that of giving a methodic organization to our Cavalry, both at home and in India, which, as to both horses, men, and officers, were second to none in the world. He did not think they could find in Great Britain one regiment, and not half-a-dozen in India, which they would send into the field at the present moment with a strength of 600 effective men and 600 effective horses. There was another subject which an hon. and gallant Member had touched upon, that of Mounted Infantry. He was very much disappointed that no mention was made of that arm of the service, which used once to be sneered at by the Cavalry, but was now acknowledged by them to be their best assistant. Lord Wolseley had always said that our Cavalry was so very expensive, and in such small numbers, that we could not spare a single horse for Mounted Infantry. But he had advanced the opinion that Mounted Infantry could be improvised whenever a campaign took place. Upon that subject he (Sir Henry

Havelock-Allan) begged most respectfully to disagree with the noble General, who formed his opinion in 1882, when we had the nucleus of a good Mounted Infantry which had gone through the two Zulu campaigns of 1879 and 1880. He understood that a proposition for teaching men of the Infantry some part of Cavalry duty—about 50 in each battalion—set on foot by the hon. and gallant Member for South Hampshire (Sir Frederick FitzWygram) had been again submitting this year in the South-Eastern Division by Sir Baker Russell, and especially at the camp at Shorncliffe, and that it had been rejected because it would cost the paltry sum of £5,000. If they could form a permanent nucleus of Mounted Infantry of only 10 or 12 squadrons which could be supplemented when necessary, it would be worth, not £5,000, but £10,000 or £12,000 a-year to the country as an adjunct to the Cavalry. There was one other subject upon which he would like to touch, although as a regular soldier it might be considered impertinent on his part; but he knew that many Volunteer Colonels were very much interested in the matter, and that must be his excuse in mentioning it. A Committee had sat on the particular mode in which it might be desirable to increase the Capitation Grant to the Volunteers. He was glad that the right hon. Gentleman had seen his way to increase the Grant of 30*s*. to 35*s*. all round, but he himself agreed with those Volunteer officers who said they would rather have the 35*s*. differently distributed. The present system went very hardly with those men who were bound to shoot out of the third class before they could earn any grant at all. He believed there had been a very strong feeling expressed that, with all the desire which the right hon. Gentleman undoubtedly had shown of encouraging the efficiency of the Volunteers by giving them a larger money grant; still that grant had been made in a way which did not entirely meet their wishes and requirements, and they asked for a reconsideration of the matter. If, instead of there being one grant of 30*s*. and one of 35*s*., there were one grant altogether, and there were a relaxation of the stringency of the rules relating to musketry for two years—after that he would like to see them more stringent—the efficiency of the whole body would be much increased. To revert to the civil employment of reserved soldiers, he trusted he might not be mistaken in supposing that the right hon. Gentleman intended to give him an opportunity of discussing at the proper time that important question. He took it for granted that when the right hon. Gentleman had further considered the matter he would give him a Committee on that subject, for he thought that would commend itself to everyone who desired economy and who wished to promote the efficiency of the Army.

CAPTAIN COTTON (Cheshire, Wirral) said, he hoped the House would allow him, as an Artillery Officer who had served in both the Royal Horse Artillery and the Field Batteries, to state his opinion on the proposed conversion and reduction of the Royal Horse Artillery. He congratulated the Government on the new departure which they had taken in endeavouring to render effective the paper system which had hitherto existed, of forming two Army Corps for our home Army, and of placing them on such a footing that they should be fit for immediate service. They all remembered that before the last Franco-German War Marshal Le Bœuf in 1870, told the Emperor Napoleon that the Army of France was complete in all its details, down to the very last button on the soldiers' gaiters. No doubt the buttons were there, but no one could place their hands on them when they were wanted, and that was very much the case with some matters in our Army. He rejoiced to think that the Government had realized the grave evils which existed, and were endeavouring to remedy them. But as an Artillery Officer, he could not be silent on the proposed conversion of the Royal Horse Artillery. As he understood it, the Secretary of State for War stated that, as there was a deficiency in our Field Batteries, in order to compensate for that deficiency without increasing the expenditure, he wished to convert certain Horse Artillery batteries, of which he had a surplus, to provide for the want of Field Artillery. That was an intelligible proposition enough, but he would reply with two others; first, that the Horse Artillery was a *corps d'élite*, one on which the greatest care and discipline was lavished, so that it was the most difficult branch of the Army to reconstitute. The next proposition was that if they reduced the Horse Artillery batteries to a minimum, the time must inevitably come on active service when they would have to call on the Field Batteries to undertake the duties of the Horse Artillery; and that, he maintained, they were quite unable and unsuited to perform. Many nations were not decreasing, but strengthening their Horse Artillery. Belgium was doing so, and also Italy; while he had good authority for stating that Spain would be glad to do the same, could she afford it. While he did not believe we intended to go to war with anyone, he would ask whether, if we were to have an Army at all, this was a time to mutilate and cripple one of its most important branches? He quite admitted they would have a sufficient number of guns in comparison with those of foreign nations; but the First Army Corps was supposed to be thoroughly equipped and ready for service at a moment's notice. If that was not so, then the whole *raison d'être* of the new scheme went away. With the First Army Corps they were to have five Horse Artillery batteries, with six guns each; but the batteries were not complete. They had no ammunition waggons. At the moment they were needed for service the Horse Artillery batteries would have to be put up to the war strength at once. Now the present full strength of a Horse Artillery battery was 104 horses, but the war strength was 168 horses; so that before we could embark a single man on active service we should have to increase these five batteries by 64 horses each—total 320. The only way we could get these horses would be by denuding the Second Army Corps of its horses. That was a very important point, and worthy of careful consideration. Then the men of the Horse Artillery were specially selected, not only on enlistment, but also on transfer from the rest of the Artillery. Therefore, considering what the Horse Artillery was, what it cost us to keep up, and the care there was to maintain it as an efficient force, it was evident it would be a work of the greatest difficulty to reconstitute it if once disestablished. Then there was the privilege of slightly higher pay, which the Horse Artillerymen enjoyed, and he thought that the loss of even 1*s.* per week would not be looked upon by the men with favour, especially by those who were married, while it would have a doubtful effect on the recruiting. With regard to the proportion of field guns per 1,000 men, it was already less with us than it was with some of the foreign nations. Russia had always had a strong force of Artillery; Germany had a little over 3 per 1,000; the French had 3¾, while we had under 3 per 1,000. These figures were only at the commencement of a campaign; but very often circumstances occurred in campaigns when the Field Artillery in places had to be very largely increased. When the German Army invested Paris in 1871, the number of Field Artillery guns was increased to 4 per 1,000; in Prince Frederick's campaign it was also increased to 4 per 1,000. Then, if occasion did occur when it was necessary to largely increase your Field Artillery generally, it is quite conceivable that occasions might also occur when there would arise an increased demand for Horse Artillery in particular. They were told that under the circumstances of modern warfare it was not very often necessary to change the position of Artillery, and therefore the Horse Artillery were not of so much use as they were formerly. He disputed that altogether. With a small active Army like ours they ought to use all the mechanical means in their power to strengthen it in every respect. They must have a very large number of guns, which should be able, not only to carry out the ordinary duties of Field Batteries, but, when required, to take up new positions with the greatest possible amount of mobility and celerity. This could only be done by Horse Artillery. It was an arm of the service which, as was said to him the other day, had to ride 25 miles to covert before it began its day's hunting. With the inferior breeding of the horses, the severe work they had to do would most surely tell on the Field Batteries. This would happen—either the men would have to dismount when going up hills, and they would arrive at the scene of action thoroughly exhausted, or there would be no gunners at all. It seemed to him quite impossible that Field Batteries could ever be a complete substitute for Horse Artillery. The Secretary of State would be better advised if he had drawn his information on this subject from practical Horse Artillery and Cavalry officers. Especially he would ask the House, before he sat down, not to be misled on this subject by what had been said in "another place" by the Under Secretary of State for War, that, as regarded the Artillery, there was not, taking the whole force, a reduction, but an increase; that there was a reduction in field and horse, but a considerable increase in the garrison artillery. Why, it might just as well be said that there was no reduction of the Cavalry and Infantry of the Line if you took 500 men from them and added the same number to the Marine Artillery. Under all these circumstances he would ask the Secretary of State for War if he could not see his way to reconsider the question of the conversion of these batteries of Horse Artillery. There was one battery which had a glorious history, which had played a glorious part in covering the retreat at Maiwand and prevented it being a rout; and he would ask the Secretary of State to pause and see if he could save it from being entirely expunged from the Army List.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine) said, he must express his acknowledgments to the Secretary for War for the excellent Memorandum which had accompanied the Army Estimates this year, and hoped its publication would be an annual one. Satisfactory as the Explanatory Statement was in many of its details, especially in regard to clearly showing the large sum borne by the Army Estimates for the cost of stores for the Navy; there was one reference to the cost of the Artillery batteries which appeared meagre, for it failed to afford any information about the relative charge for Horse and Field Artillery, and yet advocated economy by breaking up Horse Artillery Batteries, in order to raise up more Field Batteries. He could not but wonder at the partial attempt which the War Office had made to effect economy by reducing the Horse Artillery by five Batteries and replacing them by Field Batteries. He was no admirer of an undue proportion of Horse Artillery; but he thought it would be better for the Secretary for War, if he desired to effect economy by changes of organization, to look in other directions for better results. We had undertaken the defence of India, and to supply that country with a sufficient force of Artillery; but he had no hesitation in saying that the Artillery Establishment in India was entirely below what it should be. At present we supplied India with 11 batteries of Horse Artillery and 42 of Field, in all 318 guns, giving about three guns to 2,000 Infantry and Cavalry; a proportion far below the number which the most experienced General agreed on as necessary—the Horse Artillery guns, 66 in number, being far less than the number needed for our Indian Cavalry. He thought the House was entitled to ask that the views of those who had advised the Secretary for War to make this reduction should be published, and that proof should be given as to whether higher economies had been advised in other branches of the Service. Those who had studied the organization of the Cavalry and Infantry could point to large economies being possible in those two arms. For instance, the Household Cavalry of three regiments and 24 troops, comprising only 950 privates, could be converted into one regiment of six squadrons of 120 effective privates in each; the surplus 200 privates being told off into band, acting non-commissioned and employed men. So also with regard to the Cavalry of the Line, consisting of 28 regiments formed into 224 troops, and having about 13,000 privates; these might be formed into 60 squadrons of 150 effective privates each, leaving 4,000 surplus privates for band, employed, recruits, lance-corporals, and thereby needing only 15 regimental cadres, each of four squadrons. With regard to the Infantry of the Line, consisting of 141 battalions of 1,410 companies and 94,500 privates, this strength could only yield about 70,000 effective privates, after deducting band, recruits, lance-corporals, non-commissioned colour guard, pioneers, employed. This effective number could be formed into 600 companies of 120 privates each, and requiring about 100 cadres for battalions of six companies each. These were economies on an effective scale, which might, on money considerations, be enforced with a far more useful end than that resulting from the abolition of 30 fully-equipped Horse Artillery guns, of such good organization as could not be equalled on the Continent.

SIR FREDERICK FITZWYGRAM (Hants, Fareham) said, that the question of the Horse Artillery had been very fully discussed that evening, and he wished merely to refer to one particular point which he thought had not been sufficiently pressed. There were two distinct uses for Horse Artillery; in the first place to accompany Cavalry, and in the second place to act as a reserve to be sent to any point which might be pressed in an unforeseen manner. With regard merely to its first use, no doubt the proposed organization was sufficient; but as regarded the second, which was becoming of more consequence every day, he thought that it was utterly insufficient. In former days the range of muskets was small, and battalions were drawn up in close order, so that the line of fire was concentrated, and the amount of ground covered was, comparatively speaking, restricted. Now, on the contrary, in a great battle the troops covered three, four, or five miles. The Horse Artillery was with the attack, and the Field Artillery with the Generals commanding the different divisions. On a sudden attack upon any vital point it would be impossible to get up the Field Artillery in time. If the General commanding the division had to send Artillery to a point two miles and a half off, with the *détour* behind the troops which would be necessary, it would take Field Artillery an hour before it could get to the spot, whereas Horse Artillery could get there in 20 minutes. For this reason he thought that it was absolutely necessary to maintain the strength and efficiency of the Horse Artillery. Another point connected with the Artillery which he wished to bring before the House was the organization of the regiment of Artillery. He had not a word to say against the Artillery; on the contrary, it was a credit to itself and to the nation; but he had for a long time past thought that its organization was not as good as it might be. It was a very large regiment, and ought really to be divided into two corps, one concerned with field duties, whether Horse or Field Artillery, and the other having to do with garrison guns. These two duties were now totally different. In former days there had not been this marked distinction; there was only one form of gun, which was a smooth bore; the mechanical portion of the gun was the same; and the largest was a 68-pounder, the Horse Artillery being armed with a 6-pounder. Now, however, the two classes of guns were very distinct from one another; there was the small class of gun used by the mounted branch of the Artillery, and the enormous gun, the mechanism of which required a life of study to understand it. In spite of this, all officers of Artillery were placed in one corps, and went from one duty to another. This system was not good training for the officers, and the result was sometimes that the square man was put in the round hole. This did not conduce to the best interests of the Service, and he thought that the organization ought to be such as to avoid this evil. He would, perhaps, be told that the system was an advantage in allowing a certain amount of exchange; that those who were fond of riding and field sports, and were quick in the eye, could go into the mounted, and those who were interested in science and mechanics into the mechanical branch of the Artillery. He admitted that, and his suggestion would be that the Artillery should be maintained as a general corps as regarded subalterns; but that on obtaining his captaincy an officer should be placed, according as it seemed best to his superiors, either in the mounted or in the dismounted branch of the Service. With regard to the question of the Cavalry, his opinion was that we had too many regiments in our Cavalry, with the result that they were all weak and therefore ineffective. If there was one force that ought to be kept up to its full war strength more than another it was Cavalry, because it was a force that it was very difficult to organize in a hurry. It was true that they had Cavalry reserve men, but it was his experience that when they were in the reserve very many of the men never got outside of a horse, although some, no doubt, might be employed in stable work. The consequence was that after three or four years they were not fit to come back and take their place in a regiment which was ordered for service at short notice. He thought, therefore, that every Cavalry regiment ought to be kept at all times up to its full war strength, and also that every regiment should be of the same strength. He objected to having weak regiments in the second or third line for this reason—that when they augmented the regiments of the first line they ought to be fit for active service; whereas, as a matter of fact, there were generally about 120 young men not trained and 100 recently bought horses. This had come under his notice especially in the case of the 19th Hussars when they went out to Egypt in 1882. In his opinion every Cavalry regiment ought to consist of five squadrons—four for active service and one to form a depôt. In every troop and every squadron there were a certain amount of untrained men, and a certain number of men unfit for embarkation on the day, and under the present system it was necessary to draw upon other regiments; and the same was the case with regard to the horses. This was an evil which ought to be avoided, and if they had a fifth squadron it ought to be able to supply the complement of horses and men for service. He would probably be asked, "Where are you going to get the money for this augmentation?" He believed that they had too many regiments and too weak regiments of Cavalry; they had 17 regiments at home and one in Egypt. To add a fifth squadron would involve great expense. He ventured to suggest, however unpopular it might be to his brother officers, that it was absolutely necessary to reduce the three junior regiments. If they did so they would get four squadrons towards the 15 which would be needed to supplement and make efficient the other regiments; and when they had reduced the regiments, the staff, and officers, they might readily get the money to furnish each of the remaining regiments with the extra squadrons which he believed to be absolutely necessary for the efficiency of the Cavalry Service. With regard to the question of the age of the horses, his experience was that, though it was not desirable to get four-year-olds, yet they would do a fair amount of work, and would go fairly well through a campaign. He, therefore, saw no objection to four-year-old horses in the Army. Perhaps a more serious matter in this connection was that owing to the small percentage of horses allowed to be cast in each year we were obliged to keep every horse materially sound up to 18 years of age, and yet it had been declared that no horse over 14 years of age was to go on foreign service. To keep horses over 14 years unfit for foreign service was an absurdity and a fraud on the nation. The nation believed that it had 7,500 Cavalry horses, while he knew that a certain proportion, probably 1,000, were too old to go on foreign service. We had given up the system of keeping old soldiers unfit for foreign service; surely the same rule ought to apply in regard to horses. An old soldier might teach the lads habits of sobriety and order, but he failed to see that any such virtues could be imparted by an old horse that was not allowed to go abroad. A good deal had been said lately about the supply of horses in this country; but his own belief was that the supply was fully equal to the ordinary demand, but it was contrary to common sense to suppose that breeders would breed more than the trade and the commerce of the country and the usual demands of the Military Service would absorb. He believed the number of horses in the country, roughly speaking, was 3,000,000, and 500,000 in Ireland. It would, he suggested, be a useful thing if the Secretary of State would cause the police to send in a return of the actual numbers. There were probably 2,000,000 agricultural horses, of which, after making allowances for the horses that were too heavy, and for those under four years and the number over 14 years, he calculated there were about 250,000 of proper age and about a suitable size for military service. How many of these were sufficiently sound? Colonel Ravenhill, an experienced officer, thought that not above one in ten would be sufficiently sound for military purposes; but taking one in five as a fairer number, that would leave about 50,000 agricultural horses available. Again, 1,000,000 horses were employed in the ordinary trade of the country and among private owners; and of these, making similar deductions as before, about 35,000 would be available for purposes of war. Adding these 35,000 to 50,000 agricultural horses, there may be 90,000 to 100,000 horses suitable for Army purposes in this country. How many would owners be willing to sell? Few men keep more horses than they really required; possibly they might sell 10 per cent—*i.e.*, 10,000; add 5,000 in hands of dealers —total 15,000. No horses are of any use for an immediate campaign except horses in actual work. How many horses did we want? It was calculated that each Army Corps wanted 12,500; two Army Corps would want 25,000. Twenty-five thousand horses were wanted, and for use in campaign probably another 10,000, or 35,000 horses in all. Where, then, were the rest to come from? This was a serious question. There were various means by which the authorities might get the horses. They might take the horses by conscription, but he did not think the nation would listen to such a proposal. They might persuade the nation to keep 20,000 always up in case of war, but he did not think the nation could be persuaded easily to adopt such a plan. They might have a register of horses, but he did not believe in that proposal. Then they might resort to foreign markets. Hon. Members, no doubt, had lately read glowing accounts as to the number of horses to be had in foreign markets. His own impression was that those estimates were entirely fallacious. He did not believe that there existed, either in this or in any foreign country, a surplus of horses above what the trade and commerce of that country required. In 1880 a committee of gentlemen came from Hungary and offered the Government 10,000 horses, to be landed at the London Docks. He advised the Secretary of State for War to accept the offer. The Secretary of State for War sent several gentlemen of experience to Hungary, where they stayed six or seven weeks, with orders to buy 800 horses. They came back with 420 horses only, and of this number very few came up to the promised height of 15·2. Most of them were under 15·1, a large number were only 15 hands, and some only 14·2. More recently the Secretary of State for War sent a small committee to Canada to see what that country could do in the way of horse supply. The result had been what he anticipated. While they could buy horses straight from the ranche, they came back with only 50 horses of a suitable size and age accustomed to bit and bridle. With the view of increasing the number of horses, various schemes had been suggested for horse breeding. He did not believe that any scheme would produce a greater number than the trade of the country could absorb; and, in his opinion, there was no more fatal scheme than that of stopping the export trade. It was also proposed to place stallions throughout the country; but he doubted whether the Government could supply the number of sires necessary for horse breeding. He admitted that, to a certain degree, Government stallions might improve the breed of the horses of the country; but he denied that they would increase the number of horses in the country. There was one particular class of horse diminishing in this country essential for Cavalry purposes, and this was the riding horse. In former days every farmer rode to market; but now, owing to the improvement in communication and other causes, perhaps 20 or 30 farmers rode to market in the district with which he was familiar, where formerly there used to be 200 or 300. The result was that the number of riding horses was sensibly decreasing. Ireland was the country they had to look to for mounting our Cavalry, and he thought it might be advisable to station Government stallions in districts throughout that country. Last year he brought before the notice of the Secretary of State for War the subject of Mounted Infantry. The use of this force was increasing every day, and its importance was being recognized. In his judgment, there was no collision in the slightest degree between the Cavalry and the Mounted Infantry. The great distinction between the two forces was this—the Cavalry soldier fought on horseback, and his horse was his primary weapon; the Mounted Infantry soldier used his horse only as a means of transport to reach a particular point, where he dismounted and fought with his rifle like a foot soldier. Last year he suggested that bodies of 30 Infantry soldiers should be sent, after the drill season was over, to the nearest Cavalry barrack to be instructed in mounted duties, and to stay there from about the 15th of October to the week before Christmas, and that after Christmas a second batch of 30 men should be sent. In that way 60 men would be instructed in their duties during the year at very little expense. He was aware that a scheme had been started to set up a Mounted Infantry school at Aldershot; but to carry it out would involve the getting and keep of horses for the purpose. In the scheme he had suggested this would not be necessary, because at this particular period of the year spare horses were always available in Cavalry barracks. He did not think the Cavalry regiments would raise the slightest opposition to such a scheme. He also commended the position of the pioneers to the attention of the Secretary of State for War. He asked the Secretary of State for War for one favour—namely, that he would give the new rank of major to the senior riding-master in the Army. He thought the regimental riding-masters were an excellent class of hardworking men, who had a claim to one of the honours of the blue riband, which was bestowed by new warrant on the Department.

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN (Stirling, &c.) said, that that was the first occasion on which they had had before them, in anticipation of the discussion of the Army Estimates, a Memorandum prepared by the Secretary of State, and thought every hon. Member must fully appreciate the advantage of having such a paper instead of the general statement hitherto usually made orally by the Minister for the Department at a late hour of the night. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman, not only on being the first to have that opportunity, but also on the eminent ability, clearness, and completeness of the paper that he had laid before them. At the same time, he thought there were some points in the paper to which exception might be taken. The earlier portion of it was framed on this principle—the right hon. Gentleman endeavoured to analyze the general bulk of the Estimates, and he resolved them into three parts—namely, the *personnel*, the administrative portion, and those Votes which dealt with supplies, and he founded on that the argument that after all the amount of money on which saving could be effected or to which economical administration could be applied was but small; because, if they maintained an army of a certain strength, the men must be fed, clothed, housed, and so forth, and somehow administered, and it was not until they came to the supply of warlike stores and the erection of buildings that there was any great field for economy. Now, he ventured to think that there was a fallacy underlying that argument. In the first place, among the charges for *personnel* there were many matters which were the most proper subjects of all for economical administration. He did not speak only of the organization of the Army itself, which surely might be either costly or cheap; but such subjects as clothing, rations, fuel and light, transport, equipment, ammunition, barracks, barrack-stores, and others were sources of expenditure of a very elastic kind; and might either be managed economically or extravagantly according as the Minister and his assistants were frugal or careless. And even when they came to the particular division in which the right hon. Gentleman implied that the cost of the Army might be most easily diminished — namely, the supply of stores, he said very rightly that they had committed themselves to many great lines of expenditure and had entered on certain undertakings, and that it was desirable that there should be no interruption in them. But even there they might often be misled by phrases, and it is possible to proceed a little too fast or too far even on those lines of expenditure which were thoroughly good. The right hon. Gentleman said it was notorious that reductions of Army expenditure had largely been effected in past years by drawing on their reserves of stores. He was not aware to what the right hon. Gentleman referred, or whether he could give any instance or any proof of the assertion he had made. He knew it was often made; but he could not help thinking there was a considerable danger of real extravagance in the very opposite course, and that if they had too large a reserve of stores it was more extravagant than letting them rather run down to some extent. There were stores and stores; some stores could not be improvised, and required time to manufacture; but there were others of which the pattern was often changing, which were of perishable material, and which could be procured in this country without any long delay; and there was a danger, if the doctrine were accepted that they must always keep a large reserve of stores, of excessive expenditure being incurred in that direction without any corresponding benefit to the country. He did not at all imply that that was done in these Estimates; but when a principle was laid down as it was in that Paper it would be well to bear in mind that there was a corresponding danger in the very opposite direction. With respect to the particular scheme of expenditure under Vote 12 he had not much to say. No one knew better than he did the dreadful amount that was claimed from the

War Office year after year for the new armament of the Army and Navy, both heavy guns and small arms. They had embarked on it, and they must go on with it; but what he should like to say was that as much reluctance as was reasonable should be shown in adding new expenditure while they were still under the obligation to continue the old. Last year, when he came into Office with his hon. Friend near him, they found, as all the world knew, that they were engaged in the terribly costly undertaking of re-arming the Navy and also of supplying the Army with large guns of a new type. They had also begun the manufacture of the new field gun, which he believed was the most excellent weapon that any Field Artillery in Europe possessed, and which ought to be pushed on as quickly as possible. But they found also that a beginning had been made with a new rifle which was to take the place of the Martini-Henry. The new pattern had been approved; an enormous extension had been given to Enfield Manufactory out of the Vote of Credit at the end of 1885. Those extensions were not yet completed; and preparation was being made for going on at high pressure with the manufacture of the new rifle. Now that new rifle was only to be a little better than the Martini-Henry, and he must say that the very first decision they came to was that if possible that expenditure should either be stopped or abated in speed, while they had the other things in hand. It seemed to them that it was desirable to slacken the rate of production of that rifle. They were exposed to blame and odium on that account; but afterwards it was found out that the pattern was not the best; and it had only just been determined to substitute a new magazine rifle, against which he had nothing to say. This was an illustration of the desirability of sometimes being slow and hesitating to embark on a new enterprise. It was said it was intended to produce 25,000 magazine rifles this year; but he understood the pattern was not yet approved; and if that were so he would ask whether it would not be wise to be somewhat slow in commencing the manufacture? Even after a pattern had been approved, especially if it had been approved in a hurry, it was not expedient to be precipitate in embarking upon such an undertaking and committing the country to a very large expenditure. It was certain that the Vote for warlike stores reached a huge amount, and it had increased rapidly of late years. In 1884-5 it was £1,250,000; and it had sprung up pretty regularly until it now reached nearly £3,000,000, not to speak of a large sum spent on this service out of the Vote of Credit. This would show how costly all this business was; but the sums involved were so large, and had such a faculty of expanding from year to year, that he trusted some assurance would be given that the limit of the present Estimate would not be exceeded in another year. Last year he consented, in the Estimates he laid before Parliament, to an increase on the previous year of £340,000; and this year there was a further increase of £374,000. It might be necessary; but the amount must be dangerously near the limit beyond which it was impossible for military expenditure to go. Indeed, some thought it was far exceeded now. We might well consider we had reached the highest level, and that it was not to be exceeded another year. He should not say much about the Establishment of the Army; and he certainly was not prepared to give any opinion of his own on the very vexed question of the reduction of the Horse Artillery, though his prejudices would be rather in favour of that step. As to the general scheme of mobilization, he admitted that it had many advantages, and it was more than a paper scheme. It was well we should have some standard up to which we should move, some point at which to stop, but the scheme ought not to be too pedantically applied. An Army Corps was arranged for regular Continental warfare, with which we had little likelihood of having anything to do. We were mostly concerned with irregular wars; and it was quite possible that although this might be a most symmetrical and, theoretically, perfect arrangement, yet, for the purposes of our smaller wars, more of one particular arm than another might be required. Therefore, he regarded with some suspicion, as a little too austere—a little too pedantic and theoretical—any idea of fixing ourselves to a particular organization of one, or two, or three *Corps d'Armée.* But it would have the advantage of giving us some solid standing ground on which we could rest, and in that sense there was no harm in looking upon it as a practically efficient organization. The right hon. Gentleman, in the Paper which had been issued, referred to the promotion and retirement of officers. The Warrant issued at the end of the year had done a great deal to remove the serious grievance of men being obliged to retire into private life when they were perfectly fit for their duties. Before he left Office he had carefully considered this intricate subject, and had approved the main provisions of that Warrant, which went as far as was practicable in the direction the House and the country desired to see followed. In the Warrant was introduced a principle in which he ventured to think was to be found the key to any just system of promotion, at all events, in the higher ranks—namely, that rank should not be given for the sake of rank itself, but should follow employment; that no man, for instance, should be a colonel who did not exercise the duties of colonel; and so of other ranks in the Army. That system had been applied in the Warrant to the rank of colonel, and it would be the means of preventing a state of confusion that would have been hideous to contemplate, because it had looked very much as if in the coming time we should run the risk of being taunted with having no officers but colonels in the Army. The result of the inquiries which he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) instituted last year regarding the Volunteer Force had been most satisfactory, and the War Office was now in possession of the fullest particulars not only as to the individual corps, but with regard to the Force as a whole. It seemed to him the proposals of the Committee as to the Capitation Grant, modified by the right hon. Gentleman, fairly met the necessities of the case. He thought, in making the considerable concession which he proposed, the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly justified in the two conditions which he had laid down—in the first place, that there should be some guarantee of increased efficiency in musketry, and some check upon, and inquiry into, the irregular expenditure on the part of Volunteer corps not recognized by the War Office. If that were done, and the additional money was granted in the way suggested, he made no doubt it would satisfy the legitimate requirements of the Volunteers; and the very fact that they had been treated in this generous way—at the same time putting a pretty tight check upon their expenditure—would have the best effect upon the organization and efficiency of the corps.

COLONEL HUGHES-HALLETT (Rochester) said, it must be a great gratification to the Royal Artillery that their cause had been espoused by Members representing other arms of the Service. He considered the proposed reduction of the Royal Horse Artillery as a most dangerous step. It was proposed to strike out 12 guns from the Army, and to turn 18 guns from Horse into Field Artillery. In time of war practically a greater number would be struck out, as there would be ammunition columns wanted. In case of hostilities, the four guns of each battery were to become six; but were hon. Members aware of the great difficulty which would have to be met in making up the reduced batteries? He did not believe that those who had made the suggestion could know what it was they really proposed. They could not be aware of the trouble required to turn out a skilful driver. It took three or four years to make an efficient driver in the Horse Artillery. It would be very interesting to know where this idea of reducing the Horse Artillery had been started. He could not believe that His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief had suggested it, because he knew very well the value of the Horse Artillery. He did not believe that Lord Wolseley suggested it, for he had had practical experience of their value. He did not believe the Secretary of State for War had suggested it, for he had not had time to turn his mind in this direction; nor did he believe it originated with the Intelligence Department. He was constrained to the belief that some permanent official, perhaps anxious to win his spurs, first suggested the idea. The only grounds of justification for the reduction were, on the one hand, economy and expediency, and, on the other hand, the possibility of having more guns than the Army required. As to the first, he did not think that it would be true economy to reduce any branch of the Service; but it would be very bad economy to tamper with the Royal Artillery. There was a dark shadow hanging over

Eastern Europe; would it be wise at such a time to reduce any branch of the Service? So much, then, for expediency. If the Government wished to enforce economy, let them begin by very considerably reducing the very heavy staff of civilians at the War Office. It was also said that we had more guns than we required. We had 162,000 men in England and the Colonies, and 136,000 Native troops—a total of 298,000 men. That, on the principle of three guns per 1,000 men, meant 894 guns. We had only 492 field guns, and 144 Horse Artillery, or a total of 636 guns. In France they had 1,938 guns, or an excess of 882. In Germany the proper number of guns to her Army was 1,116, but there were 2,040. The proper proportion for Russia was 2,076, but she had 2,178; and Austria, which ought to have 678 guns, had 1,540. The duty of the Horse Artillery was supposed to be to accompany Cavalry in the field. Its movements were very rapid. It had to dash from one part of the field to the other. A skilful General would hold his Horse Artillery in hand in order to launch it, and check a charge of the enemy's Cavalry. There were numerous instances in which the Royal Horse Artillery had not only done gallant service, but had actually saved the Army. During the Peninsula War Norman Ramsay, when surrounded by the enemy, at the head of his six guns—the "Chestnut" troop—crashed through the masses of the French Cavalry, who thought to take him prisoner. Nothing could have been more gallant than the way in which Major Slade saved his Battery of Horse Artillery at the Battle of Maiwand. He had had the honour of serving in that branch of Her Majesty's Forces himself, and he was sure that in the observations he had made he was merely expressing the thoughts of the officers and men of the whole British Army. He hoped, therefore, that grave consideration would be given to the matter before this proposal to reduce the Royal Horse Artillery was adopted. He trusted that the Secretary for War, in conjunction with His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief, would, in consideration of the brilliant and faithful services of the Royal Horse Artillery, be able to give these five threatened batteries a fresh lease of life, and would thus furnish them with an opportunity of adding fresh laurels in the future to those which they had already won in the past.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, he wished to look at the Army Estimates, as a whole, from a civilian point of view. The first thing that struck the ordinary Member was that, although the Military Forces were reduced, the expenditure was increased. One of the most considerable items in the increase over the Estimates of last year was that of £46,000 under the head of Retired Pay. If there was one thing which had scandalized the public with regard to the Army Estimates more than another, it was the constant increase in the non-effective charges, and especially in the amount for Retired Pay. It must be recollected that these charges were incurred solely on account of the officers. This increase was the more marked as it was accompanied by a decreased charge for the men. It seemed almost as if everything in the Army was done for the benefit of the officers. Comparatively little was done for the men. The officer's widow received a pension; but the soldier's widow received nothing. There were many posts in the Civil Service which might well be filled by discharged soldiers, who found considerable difficulty in obtaining employment. In estimating the number of our Military Force very little reliance could be placed on Estimates, seeing that, although it was estimated last year that we were to have a Regular Army 177,000 strong, we had at no time more than 144,000. Again, as regarded the Militia, instead of having 141,000 men in training, we had only 108,000. He was glad to say that the story with regard to the Volunteers was a very different one. This country had every reason to be proud of its Volunteer Force, and he remembered that the more bitterly because his own people were not allowed to bear arms. He, however, could understand Englishmen taking an honest pride in the Volunteer movement, which formed one of the brightest pages in the history of their country. As to the Memorandum of the Secretary of State for War, the right hon. Gentleman had been so bold and so straightforward—not to say rash—in his admissions that he trusted there was a real reforming spirit behind them. At the same time, the right hon. Gentleman had had a very sorry tale to tell. Thus, he had stated that this country could not hope to mobilize more than two Army Corps, and that we had not sufficient Field Artillery even for that force. Had he (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) been the War Minister, he should have hesitated very much about reducing the Horse Artillery, and especially should he have refused to reduce the E Battery B Brigade, considering the antecedents of that battery. The Government should remember that it was more easy to reduce such a force than to re-establish it. He thought that an economy might be effected by causing riding practice to be done in camp. Arguments derived from the German and French Armies could not be considered applicable to our Army, the circumstances of which were wholly different. The German Army was completely territorialized. Every corps had its head-quarters, and knew exactly what it had to do. In France a similar system was carried out, though to a smaller extent. But the English Army was dispersed in India, abroad, and in our Colonies. There was one question which the right hon. Gentleman had boldly faced, and that was stores. Two or three years ago he complained that military stores were being depleted, in order to keep down the Vote. He had since heard that stores were sold for that purpose. The present War Minister had admitted the depletion of stores, and blamed indiscriminate reduction; but, besides depleted stores, he hoped the Secretary of State would tell them something about the quality of the stores. It was known that such things as picks and axes and other tools were very bad in quality, and it would be well that something should be said upon the subject. He had heard Lord Wolseley say that the axes issued to the troops serving under him in Canada were of no use except to amuse the inhabitants. Then the clothing of the men was made of material much inferior to that of the Italian, or French, or German Armies. The Transport Service also was in a most unsatisfactory condition, and had invariably broken down in every war in which we had been engaged since the days of Wellington. Regimental transport was particularly inefficient. Yet a great deal too much money was spent in this Department. It was a hobby of the War Office—of the civilian rather than the professional element there—that it was necessary to move every regiment every two or three years. If these movements were made less frequent, it would be possible to effect an economy of £40,000 or £50,000 a year. Then, with regard to mobilization, we were in a very backward condition. He would suggest that valuable practice might be afforded if notice were periodically given to the officers in command of military districts to mobilize within a given time the troops in their district to act against an imaginary enemy. In this way experience and facility might be obtained which would be of good service in case of war. He hoped, in conclusion, that the Secretary of State for War would persevere in a bold course; and, if he did so, the ideas of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Lord Randolph Churchill) with regard to expenditure might be realized, and the nation get value for its money.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The course of the debate has, I think, illustrated very well the extreme difficulty of an unfortunate Secretary of State who endeavours to effect economies in our Military Expenditure. It has been extremely refreshing to hear to-night from some hon. Members speeches encouraging one to persevere in an honest attempt to reduce the expenditure of the Army, because, during the greater part of the evening, we have had speeches directly tending towards an immediate increase of expenditure. But I do not think that, even as to the reductions that have been proposed, hon. Members are themselves agreed. Hon. Members really are only agreed on two reductions; they think you can get rid of the Secretary of State for War if a civilian, and that you might largely reduce the cost of the administration of the Army at the War Office. I will not dwell on the latter point, because, as hon. Members know, a Royal Commission has been appointed to investigate that very subject, and if economy can be effected upon the recommendation of the Commissioners, no one will be more glad than myself to give effect to their views, if I should have the honour of continuing in the Office I now hold. The hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) suggested, as another means of reducing expenditure, that we might more largely employ soldiers in civil situations. That suggestion has been frequently brought before this House, and has been accepted with the greatest cordiality by the War Office. Almost all the messengers at the War Office are at present old soldiers, and every exertion is being made by my hon. Friend the Financial Secretary (Mr. Brodrick) to extend the system outside the boundaries of the War Department. I hope the House will not suppose from these remarks that I disbelieve in the possibility of economy in the expenditure of the Army. On the contrary, my short experience at the War Office leads me to believe that economy can be effected, and that it can best be effected by this House arriving at a distinct knowledge of what it wants, and what it intends to keep as an Army. Let the House form a definite idea of the Army necessary for the defence of the country and of the Establishment necessary for the maintenance of that Army. Let it then vote liberally every shilling required to keep up that Establishment, and let it refuse to grant any demands that cannot be justified on that ground. The right hon. Member for Stirling (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), who spoke in very kind terms of some suggestions made in my Memorandum, alluded to the question of the reduction of stores. I ventured in the Memorandum to say that economy had often been effected by an undue reduction of stores; but I might have gone further and said that economy had been more than once produced by an absence of all stores. Military stores have been allowed to fall into a condition absolutely unjustifiable, and it has only been the fortunate accident of Votes of Credit that has enabled the War Office to get on at all. Now that is very unsatisfactory, and I hope the House will support me in the view expressed in my Memorandum, that it is essential that the necessary reserve of stores should be kept independently of every other consideration. In connection with the question of economy, the increase of charge for the retired pay of officers has been alluded to. That increase is certainly a very unfortunate fact; but the utmost has been done that could be done to reduce it. If the provisions of the Warrant issued when my right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith) was Secretary of State for War are carried into effect, it is to be hoped that, at least, a check will be put upon, if an absolute reduction is not ultimately effected in, that item. Now I will pass away from these minor points. I should like to thank the House for the reception that has been given to the Memorandum which I have put forward in explanation of the Army Estimates. It was produced under circumstances of considerable difficulty. I feel that if a Memorandum of this description is to be worth anything more than waste paper, the Secretary for War must be just as responsible for every word contained in it as if he had given utterance to it in his place in Parliament. In that spirit I endeavoured to approach its preparation, and I take the personal responsibility for every word it contains. It is not as complete as I would wish, I confess. But is almost impossible for any War Minister to say to the full extent what he should like to do. There are deficiencies which are obvious to himself, but which he is not in the present position to supply. My object in putting forward this Memorandum was threefold—to endeavour to let the country know what the available Forces of the country really are; to establish a standard towards which all our efforts from year to year ought to be directed, and which would assist Secretaries of State when proposing any necessary increase or preventing indiscriminate reduction; and it was my anxious desire that this House should endeavour to treat the defences of the country as a whole, looking at them from all points of view, and realizing that you cannot add to or take away from any portion of these defences without interfering with the general scheme. Unless you regard them as a whole you may spend a great deal of money without producing much efficiency, or you may effect some small economy which would be fatal to your general scheme. It is from that point of view that I desire the House to regard the Estimates now before it. I have no reason to complain of the comprehensive speech of the hon. and gallant Member for Birkenhead (Sir Edward Hamley), which dealt with the subject precisely in the spirit I should like to see. He was studiously moderate, and brought to bear upon all he said the education of a lifetime. My hon. and gallant Friend dwelt upon two branches of the defence of this country, one of which was the organization of the Forces at home in the event of invasion. He pointed out that they ought beforehand to be trained and organized upon some definite and consistent scheme. That is the intention of the Memorandum laid before the House, and of the organization scheme we have prepared. That scheme, for which the War Office is much indebted to the head of the Intelligence Department, General Brackenbury, organizes the available Forces for definite purposes and in definite ways; and in carrying it out every unit of our Forces—the Army, Militia, and Volunteers—has the precise functions pointed out that it would have to fulfil in the event of invasion, and arrangements are made for training them beforehand for the performance of their duties. We are now also prepared to say that we have arranged for our Army Corps places of concentration and places of embarkation. We hope before long that stores may be concentrated at these points. When that is done we believe we shall have put into order a complete system of concentration and of embarkation for our Army Corps under the shortest possible notice. I now pass to the other branch of the subject with which my hon. and gallant Friend dealt—the defences of our Coasts. I am free to confess that the picture he drew of the present state of things is not one that can be contemplated with perfect satisfaction. In one direction, however, progress has been made to a larger extent than anyone would gather from my hon. and gallant Friend's speech. I refer in particular to the defence of our Coasts by submarine mines. That has now been going on for many years, and I am glad to say that it has made great progress. We have already spent £416,000 on such mines, and we believe that this work is progressing rapidly towards completion. But this entails further expenditure, because you must have guns to defend these mines, and to defend the quick-firing guns you must have heavy artillery behind, and this has still to be provided. Therefore we are landed at this conclusion—that all the expenditure we have undergone requires further expenditure to make it effective and complete. No definite programme as to this expenditure has ever been laid before Parliament. Great delay has occurred, for which both Parties are to blame. Both Parties are also agreed that if we could get the House of Commons in the precise humour to give us what we want we should carry out the necessary plan with expedition. I believe that the works we have done have put the forts into a much more effective position for defence than they have ever been before; but much remains to be done. Hon. Members know what the provision of great guns means. We have expended great sums of money upon them which would have startled our fathers or statesmen of a generation ago. These guns cost an enormous sum of money. Our Vote for arms at the present time is one which, I am bound to say, is enormous, and which for many years has been increasing in amount. Something, no doubt, may be done by the development of the Brennan torpedo, upon which we had a discussion the other night, which can be installed at three stations for the cost of one really big gun. I take a deep interest in all these questions, and I feel the responsibility which rests upon me. I know that the defences of this country are not all they ought to be, and I am not inclined to shirk that responsibility. And I assure the House that the Government is fully sensible of its duty in this respect. We are considering most carefully how best to secure the fulfilment of the duty which devolves upon us, and if I can see my way to make any proposal for improving the condition in which those fortifications are placed I shall at once do so. Now, I pass to another subject, upon which there has been a good deal of discussion to-night, and on which I hope the House will look from the point of view of our general organization. I refer to the position of our Artillery, which was first introduced to our notice by the hon. and gallant Member for Winchester (Mr. Tottenham), who delivered a good rattling attack upon me, and who was followed by the hon. and gallant Member for Lambeth (General Fraser), who spoke with the authority of a Cavalry officer. They brought before the House what they believed to be the mistaken policy of the War Office in proposing the changes we have now put forward with regard to the Artillery. Let me ask the House to look at the whole question from a general point of view. Our Artillery is required for the defence of our Coast, for the defence of our coaling stations abroad, and for the purpose of furnishing the requisite amount of artillery for the two Army Corps, and the question we have to deal with is how to provide for these necessities without unduly adding to the burdens of the country. To provide for the adequate defence of our Coasts and our coaling stations a large increase is necessary in our Garrison Artillery, and there is also a deficiency in the batteries of Field Artillery. In order to furnish our two Army Corps properly equipped for the field it is necessary to provide ammunition columns for them, for which no provision has hitherto been made, except on the spur of the moment. How is all this to be done? In my opinion it is only to be done by cutting down any superabundance and supplying any deficiency. The only superabundance was in the Royal Horse Artillery. I do not know whether hon. Members realize the cost of this force in money, in horses, and in transport. We felt that we were gaining money and horses for the improvement of other branches of the Service. We have added also wherever we believed that there was a deficiency. We have added three Field Batteries which we believed essential for the two Army Corps. We propose to add 1,800 men to our Garrison Artillery, although the whole of this number will not be obtained this year; we hope, however, to add 900 men this year. Hon. Members who have spoken in the course of this debate have taken the view that if we wish to reduce expenditure the course we have taken is foolish. But we are not going to reduce expenditure, and Members will, perhaps, be surprised to learn that, taking into consideration the cost of horses used for other purposes, the actual increase of cost will amount to £23,000 a-year. We are not undertaking this conversion which we have proposed for the purpose of diminishing expenditure, but because we believe that it is absolutely necessary in order to make the Artillery Forces of this country adequate for our needs. With regard to this conversion, I may state that I very deeply regret any pain that has been caused to the very gallant force which it affects. The efficiency and smartness of the Royal Horse Artillery make such a task one of great pain, all the more that one of the batteries proposed to be reduced is one whose services are as such as have been mentioned to-night. More than one of the batteries whose reduction is proposed have a record of which the Army and the Royal Regiment of Artillery may well be proud. But I am not responsible in any way for the choice of a particular battery to be reduced. They have been chosen on grounds which I believe to be generally recognized as fair to all the interests concerned. But I have listened to the manner in which that reduction has been opposed in the course of the debate, and there are two or three observations which I may venture to make to the House on the subject. First of all it is spoken of as if this conversion of Horse Artillery into Field Artillery was an actual reduction of military strength. Now, that is not the opinion of the military advisers of the War Office. The actual reduction of guns caused by all this conversion is not the 72 guns of which my hon. and gallant Friend spoke, but only 12; and the result of the whole conversion, so far from involving a reduction of military strength, will be to add largely to the defensive forces of the country. Now, if this scheme is to be accepted at all, I hope the House will also accept the other part of our scheme. An hon. and gallant Member told us a story of the state of things two or three years ago when some batteries were sent to Egypt, the batteries remaining at home being left in a most attenuated condition. Very likely; but our object is to have no longer a large proportion of attenuated batteries, but to make those we have effective and valuable for service. Instead of many skeleton batteries we hope to have a few organized in the most effective manner, ready to be produced whenever they are wanted. I do not know if hon. Members have thoroughly grasped the perplexity of the situation in which we are placed by the great difficulty of horse supply in this country. That difficulty is a very great one, as has been so well pointed out, but it is especially difficult with regard to Horse Artillery; and I do not know if my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Lambeth has ever thought how he could possibly manage if all the batteries of Horse Artillery were to be called out on active service. I say there are no horses available in the country to man those horse batteries in any short time and to make them fit for active service. There is one remaining point. We have heard a great deal of discussion to-night, but nobody has ventured to contradict the fact that the number of Horse Artillery in this country is in excess of the proportion of Horse Artillery in foreign countries. Hon. Members have alluded, indeed, to the general proportion of Artillery to our other Forces, but nobody has said that the proportion of Horse Artillery is not in England larger than it is in any foreign country. It is for these reasons that we have arrived at the conclusion that we ought not to ask the House to maintain this expensive arm to a larger extent than is required for two Army Corps, and that we should not be justified in continuing a system for which we cannot find a sufficient justification; and I must therefore say, with great regret, that I am wholly unable to accede to the suggestions which my hon. and gallant Friends have made that we should continue those five batteries of Horse Artillery. Now, with regard to the Field Batteries, some hon. Members have spoken as if, when we had provided for the wants of two Army Corps, we should have no Field Batteries left. That is not the case. We should have 14 Field Batteries left, and it is intended, partly for purposes of economy, to utilize these for the purpose of forming ammunition columns in the event of the Army Corps being suddenly called upon service. I must honestly say that I should be glad to have more Field Batteries, which would be, of course, always available for the many small wars in which this country might be engaged; but, after carefully considering the subject in its various aspects, we have arrived at the conclusion that we are not justified in retaining a larger force of Field Artillery than is necessary for the defence of the country while we are asking Parliament to give us more money to increase the Artillery in other directions. I will now pass to one or two other questions which have been raised in the course of this discussion. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Winchester (Mr. Tottenham) has, in particular, called attention to the strength of our Home battalions, and he would like both these and the foreign service battalions kept at full strength. There can be no doubt that there would be great advantages in the policy which my hon. and gallant Friend recommends; but it would involve an addition of 10,000 or 20,000 men to the Army, and I do not think that the House would be prepared to support any War Minister who should ask for such a number of additional men. Then, my hon. and gallant Friend has referred to the number of men at the depôts, and it has sometimes been urged that we should not have so many men there. The subject is somewhat new to me, and I have not yet had an opportunity of looking into it; but I have always understood that the reason why young soldiers are kept at the depôts is very much the same as that for which you send boys to private schools before you send them to college. You do not wish to place them at once in the midst of all the difficulties that it is necessary for them to encounter as they advance in life. In the same way, you do not like a recruit to join his regiment until he is able to encounter the difficulties and hardships which he has to meet in the regiment and when sent on foreign service. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Hants (Sir Frederick Fitz-Wygram) has called attention to the deficient supply of horses, and the conditions on which they are retained in the Service with respect to age. I cannot follow my hon. and gallant Friend into the details which he has brought forward; but I can honestly say that I have listened with concern to the facts which he has brought before the House to-night, because I know the enormous difficulty which we experience with regard to our horses. It was, I must say, a very disheartening thing to hear him speaking of the great difficulty there is of getting horses either in this country or in Canada, and, after all, saying that he had no remedy to provide. That view, Sir, however, ought not to satisfy a War Minister, and it does not satisfy me. The subject of horses is one of the most important character, as I ventured to say earlier in the evening, and it is one which my noble Friend the Under Secretary for War and myself are taking up in earnest. We are examining all the suggestions put forward for the purpose of improving the supply of horses, and considering, with regard to the mode of purchase, whether we should not encourage home-breeding, by providing some means by which the farmers might know when horses were required, and by every means which we think practicable. I can assure the House that we do not intend to let this year pass by without doing our utmost to improve the supply, whether it be by following the suggestions of hon. and gallant Members, or by other means which may commend itself to the War Office. There is, I think, only one other subject that I have to deal with, and that is the subject of the new rifle which my right hon. Friend the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) has referred to. The right hon. Gentleman has spoken of his hesitation to allow the manufacture of the new rifle last year at a rapid rate. I do not at all complain of that decision. Although I admit that the Enfield-Martini is a very efficient arm, and an enormous improvement over that which the Infantry already possess, yet, since that weapon began to be constructed, my right hon. Friend is well aware that the question of the magazine rifle has come before us. In adopting a new rifle, it is necessary that we should be very careful to insure that we get hold of the very best weapon that is to be had, before we undertake the manufacture on a large scale. I assure my right hon. Friend that the matter has been under the consideration of the War Office, and the skilled officers in connection with it, since the year 1881; and we have had a Committee composed of officers not connected specially with the War Office, but officers of the Army and Volunteers, who are most thoroughly qualified to come to a decision on the magazine arm. Every magazine arm in Europe has been examined; the most exhaustive trials have been made, and we have now arrived at the point when we have submitted for trial a very considerable number of Lee and Lee-Burton rifles. Both these rifles have been recommended by the Committee, and we have decided that the best test to which they can be submitted is to issue a certain number to our Forces, in order that they may be tried under every conceivable conditions likely to arise in actual service. We hope and believe that many weeks will not elapse before the trials come to a close, and that the Committee will be able to tell us whether or not they have definitely selected one of these rifles. I am bound to say that if the Committee is able to recommend a rifle for use by the Army I shall not be inclined to hesitate any longer. I believe the time has come when the British Army ought to be armed with the magazine rifle, not alone because of the increased efficiency which the magazine rifle will give, but because the mere fact of the possession of that arm will give more confidence to the Army. We all know very well the confidence which the breech-loading rifle gave to the German Army, and the panic which its possession caused to the Austrian Army; but I go further, and say that I believe that either of these rifles, if they were adopted by our Army, would be a weapon far superior to that possessed by any Continental Army, and would place us, in this respect, far in advance of any other nation. There is a great deal of exaggeration abroad as to the extent to which magazine rifles have been adopted by foreign countries. There is no doubt that some magazine rifles have been adopted; but there is a great deal of doubt as to their efficiency. We shall certainly proceed with caution, and when we get the report of the thoroughly qualified Committee I have referred to, and believe that we have got a weapon thoroughly efficient, and better than is possessed by other Armies, we shall not hesitate to ask Parliament to give us the means of equipping our Army with that weapon. There are many points of detail on which I shall be glad to answer questions in Committee; but this I should like to say now:—We have discussed general principles affecting the organization of the Army, and I hope the House will allow us to go into Committee at once and take the first Vote. I need scarcely remind the House that it is absolutely necessary for the service of the country that we should get the first Vote to-night, and I ask to be allowed to go into Committee in order that any special question affecting the Vote for men and pay for the Army may be argued and discussed. I am aware that I am, in this, asking a great sacrifice of some hon. Members who wish to bring questions forward. But my hon. Friends will recollect that the point to which, I believe, they specially desire to refer—namely, the question of increased Capitation Grants—is one which will not affect the Volunteer

Force during the course of this year. I dwell upon that point, because it is one which I know very well hon. Members wish to raise; but there may be others to which my remarks also apply. We shall have other opportunities of discussing these matters; but the main reason why I ask that we may be allowed to go into Committee without further delay is because it is the intention of the Government to accede to the proposal, which seems to be acceptable to the House, that, to some extent, at any rate, the Army and Navy Estimates should be referred to a Committee upstairs. I hope, therefore, that the House will allow us to take the first Vote to-night, so that we may be enabled to constitute the Committee without delay.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) has made an appeal to hon. Members, who have particular points to refer to, to allow the first Vote to be taken at once. But I confess that, looking on the general question of the expenditure of the Army, and considering the very few opportunities which lie before us for general discussion as to the Army generally, and its proper strength, hon. Members on this side of the House, at any rate, are entitled to a few minutes respite; and I ask the forbearance of the House while I make a few remarks. At the outset, let me congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War on the very able, fair, and courageous statement which he has made, after the short time he has been in an Office where most of the items are new to him. I wish to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the very gallant way in which he has stood to his guns. He has to-night sustained the attack of every hon. and gallant Gentleman who has spoken on a single item in connection with which it has been imagined that it was a proposal to reduce expenditure and weaken the strength of one branch of the Army. I refer to the Horse Artillery. One hon. and gallant Gentleman has, however, shown that, in this matter, there will be no economy to the taxpayer, and that it will, in a certain sense, weaken the strength of the Army. We have had a regular field day on the present occasion; and I never remember one on which professional talk has been so universally indulged in. I almost regret that any civilian, who has simply the interest of the taxpayers of the country at heart, should venture, by a single observation, to destroy the harmony of those hon. and gallant Gentlemen who have had the whole evening to themselves. But I wish to draw attention to one remark which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War made at the outset of his speech. He said, first make up your mind as to the strength of the force required for the defence of the country, and then consent to the maintenance of this force at an efficient point. Well, Sir, I agree with that view as being thoroughly business-like; and I consider the suggestion one which ought to commend itself to every hon. Member of this House, and to the country at large. But what were his recommendations for the defence of the country? I take issue with the right hon. Gentleman there, and declare that this enormous military expenditure, which will be followed by a large naval expenditure, is wholly in excess of the requirements of the country. I cannot help thinking that the mind of the right hon. Gentleman and the utterances of those hon. and gallant Gentlemen who have spoken to-night are affected by the military frenzy which now exists on the Continent, and I think it would be as well if the right hon. Gentleman had turned aside for a moment and given us the views which the Government have with regard to the present state of Continental affairs. I do not hesitate to say that the Votes now asked for are far beyond the real necessities of the case; but, on the other hand, if there is any contemplation of the possibility or probability of a British Force being sent to the Continent to take part in any great military operations, that our Force is ridiculously inadequate to such an end. I think it is necessary that the country should make up its mind as to the course it will pursue with regard to Continental affairs. It is not long ago that a right hon. Gentleman, who is assumed to be entitled to express an opinion on the condition of Continental affairs, declared at the Mansion House in the most solemn terms that the condition of Europe, in respect to the relations of one nation to the other, was very grave indeed. I believe there is cause for the very gravest anxiety to those who are interested in the maintenance of the peace of Europe. But the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) has also given his opinion as to the immediate position of Continental affairs, and for one in his position I may say that he has used most singular terms. He spoke of the prospect having improved. I venture to protest against that mode of speech. But has the Government made up its mind that it can in any case be its duty to take part in any Continental quarrel, and undertake the sending of a considerable force to any part of the Continent? If that is the position, then I am obliged to say that I do not think that the preparations made by the Government are by any means adequate to such a view. But I believe that the people of this country are coming to the conclusion that there can be no quarrel fomented on the Continent in which it would be the duty of this country to take any part, either military or naval. The increasing taxation which the country has been called upon to bear during the last 12 years, the depression which has become chronic in many industries, and the outcry against the intolerable burden which rests upon the shoulders of the people, convinces me that there is a growing intention on the part of the people of this country to say "hands off" with regard to Continental affairs. I should like to read a few words of my right hon. Friend the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), who said—

> "I cannot help thinking that Europe is marching towards some great catastrophe; the crushing weight of their military systems cannot be supported with patience, and their effects may before long sweep away the personages who occupy Thrones, and the instruments who govern in their names."

I believe that an utterance of this sort which comes from the right hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Birmingham is one which must affect the mind of every thinking man in this country. It certainly looks now as if Continental nations were going towards some great catastrophe. I ask, is this country prepared to take a share in this great race, and to leap into this gulf? We are in a position so far unentangled with Continental affairs that we have the chance of holding back ourselves, and, at the same time, of exercising a wise and restraining influence in Europe; and we are the only European Power which is able to do so. I cannot help thinking that there must be many people in this country who would be very glad if our Government could see its way towards a prompt withdrawal from any position which might involve the entanglement of the British Forces in any quarrel, either with regard to Bulgaria or as between Germany and France. There is absolute silence on the other side of the House. I desire to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith). I know very well, from the kindliness of his nature, that he would willingly do all that lies in his power in order that the peace of the Continent may be maintained; but in order that we may have some security for that, I believe it is necessary for the Government to show far more courage and consistency than it has shown in its declarations on foreign policy. Once let it be known that this country will lend its best influence towards the settlement of International disputes, and then not alone would the Government consult the true interest of this country, but, instead of having to bear the humiliation which would follow the course of interference which I have indicated, its position would be raised in the minds of all right-thinking people at home and abroad. I come now, Sir, to the question whether this large Force is necessary for the defence of the Empire; and I say that I am convinced that the security of the Empire will be increased and its safety insured just in proportion as we withdraw from meddling in the affairs of Europe. If we do not meddle in those affairs we shall have the respect of Continental nations; and the more consistently we take up that position and maintain it, the more advantage will follow. What are the Forces available for the defence of the country? I shall say not one word about the Yeomanry, which everyone knows, for the purpose of defence, has been obsolete for generations; but I am about to offer a suggestion whereby the right hon. Gentleman may fulfil the demands proposed to be met next year. There is a proposal of a Capitation Grant for the Volunteers of 5*s*., which is to be postponed until next year. My suggestion is, that the right hon. Gentleman should give 10*s*., and this, I am convinced, would be for the advantage of the country at large. Let them suppress immediately this soldier-play of the Yeomanry, and give the money to the Volunteers. It will cause a small increase in the Vote, but it will be approved by the country. We have 500,000 soldiers available for defence—that is, 140,000 Regular Troops, including officers ; Militia, 120,000 ; Volunteers, 220,000 ; and at the back of that the Reserve Force, making a total of 500,000 men. I venture to say that, with a whole year's preparation on the part of Continental Powers, it would be impossible that they could land 300,000 men on these shores, and we have 500,000 men to meet them. Considering the security that our Fleet affords us, I venture to say that if 200,000 or 300,000 men were to embark for these shores, not one-third of them would ever reach the country. They would only be sport for our men-of-war, and the destruction would be terrific. Therefore, I say that the country would be justified in demanding a considerable reduction, both in the number of the soldiers and the expenditure which is incurred for the purpose of defence. We have never been able to get a cheap Army in this country; instead of its costing less per head, the tendency of late years has been to increase, and it will be so more and more in the Army, and especially in the Navy. As weapons become more scientific, they become more costly. I say there is no finality, either as to rifles or the armament of the Navy. There is a continuous advance made, one competitor going a step further than another, and, as competition increases, increased cost must necessarily follow. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) brought great credit to the Conservative Party by putting forward some professions of economy in respect to the two great spending Departments, and the noble Lord left the Government because he could not make an immediate impression upon the rest of his Colleagues; but, instead of there being any diminution of expenditure, we have had, I believe, Supplementary Estimates amounting to £750,000, and we have also had an increase in the Estimates submitted to us to-night. Not only the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), but the right hon. Gentleman opposite, put forward professions of economy, by which I understand that the Conservative Party gained considerable credit throughout the country last year; but I venture to say that we have not to-night any substantial prospect of a reduction upon the Army and Navy Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman admits that in regard to our Coast defences they are left in a very inefficient position, and that it is necessary to go on, year by year, spending much more money. The right hon. Gentleman did not hesitate to say that if he were War Minister he should be courageous enough to ask the House for a considerable increase in expenditure in connection with some branches of our defences. I only wish to say, in impressing the points I have dwelt on upon the House, that this country should either make up its mind to force every Government into an improved attitude in regard to this question of non-intervention, or it should be content to have an additional load year by year hung round its neck like Continental countries, which we see groaning under the increasing burdens they have to bear. On looking over the figures as to the proposition of annual expenditure on interest of war debts and the maintenance of armies and navies, I find it is calculated that half the taxation is disbursed in this way. But we in this country have gone far beyond that. We are spending nearer two-thirds of our taxation on the Army and Navy, interest on the National Debt, and on the small attempt we are making at reduction of Debt. This, I maintain, is an appalling state of affairs. When I remind the House that since the year 1870, or a little further back, the Civil expenditure has doubled itself — largely, of course, in consequence of that Act of true wisdom passed by this House, namely, the Education Act of 1870—when, I say, we remember that this enormous increase has taken place in the Civil expenditure, although what we are spending on education is productive, and will be remunerative, surely we ought to be making a grave attempt, on the other hand, to reduce our expenditure on an overgrown Army and Navy. I think the House of Commons will fail in its duty if over and over again this question is not raised and discussed —if we do not avail ourselves of every opportunity that offers itself of raising it in order to make some impression on the Government, and the policy they pursue in regard to foreign affairs. When we consider the Estimates put before us year by year, and observe the enormous total of £31,000,000 spent on the Army and Navy, we stand appalled; but we must remember that this by no means covers the expenditure. As year by year passes, we see Votes of Credit agreed to, now for £6,000,000, now for £11,000,000, for £2,000,000 or £3,000,000 on another occasion. If these are all totalled, it will be found that there is an addition of 10 to 20 per cent to be made in the ordinary Estimates presented to this House for Army and Navy Services. All I can say is, that I think the prospects of the country's industry are of a most gloomy character if, while we are subjected to increased competition, and to a denial of ordinary seasons at home, we are called upon to bear burdens that were unknown during very prosperous periods of our history. One of the first duties of the Representatives of the people—particularly when they know so well the suffering that almost universally prevails amongst almost all classes except those who enjoy the proceeds of public taxation—is to make an effort, it may be over and over again, to produce some permanent effect upon the Government in the way of bringing about a reduction of these swollen Estimates.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I had intended to bring before the notice of the House the question of the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) in regard to the Capitation Grant for the Volunteers, and more especially to his injurious proposition to make it entirely dependent upon getting out of the third class in musketry; but after the appeal the right hon. Gentleman has made to us, I will not prevent him from taking the Votes in Committee. I am the more induced to take this course because I understand the right hon. Gentleman to promise me that he will make no order effecting a change in the matter of the Capitation Grant until he has received a deputation of commanding officers of Volunteers, and has had time to consider the views which they will lay before him.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.): I think the hon. Member who has just sat down is quite right in refraining from making a long speech on this occasion; but the reason which should restrain him does not apply to me. We have had three or four very able and very long speeches from the other side of the House, so that the views of hon. Members in that quarter may be taken to be pretty well ventilated. It is unfortunate that they cannot state their opinions without doing it at considerable length; but, at any rate, after what they have said, we in this quarter have a right to be heard. I think I am quite right in asserting that hon. Members on the other side have spoken for by far the greater portion of the time to-night. I will, therefore, take the liberty to occupy a brief space. I can quite see that the central idea that has been in the minds of the advisers of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War is with regard to the formation of two *Corps d'Armée*; but I must point out that it will be a very dangerous idea if they let it go too far. The idea is to have a completely organized Army of about 70,000 men for two *Corps d'Armée*, and they are prepared to make sacrifices for that. No doubt it is a very good thing to have 70,000 men who can be mobilized at any time. It is a good thing from a War Office point of view, though from the point of view of the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) there should be no such idea as the formation of two *Corps d'Armée*, capable of rapid mobilization, as it would be a temptation to this country to interpose in foreign complications. I am not sure that the advisers of the right hon. Gentleman are not sacrificing too much for their idea, because it seems to me that a great country requires something more than 70,000 men for defensive purposes, or for use in the event of a large war. I do not think it should be left out of consideration altogether that some day or other this country may be invaded. The hon. Member for Bradford says that if 500,000 men were sent out to invade us only a very small proportion would be able to land on our shores—that probably two-thirds of them would be sunk on the way. For myself, I do not think that that would be the case; but let us suppose that the 500,000 men were enabled to reach our shores—what force would you have to meet them? The hon. Member for Bradford says that we should have 500,000 men to meet them—and he is not very far wrong. Taking into consideration the Volunteers and the Militia, and swelling the force of the garrisons we have in our fortresses, we might take it that we have a fair fighting force of 300,000 men. Still, does anyone think that the number of Horse Artillery we should find ourselves possessed of would be sufficient for a force of that size? They certainly would not be sufficient for such an Army, although they might be for two *Corps d' Armée* of 70,000 men. It must be remembered that it would take at least two years to turn a Field Battery into an efficient Horse Artillery. You cannot improvise Horse Artillery. You are now going to give up all our Horse Artillery except only so much as you require for 70,000 men. Our Horse Artillery must be ready to run away if need be, and to take rapid action in the field, and in order to bring about a proper state of efficiency in such a force you require the best men you can get, and the best training you can procure. The men must all be first-class riders as well as efficient in musketry practice. Horse Artillery, in fact, would be worse than useless on active service unless it is very good. It seems to me, therefore, that with a large and complete Field Artillery, including in that word Horse Artillery, you will be what commercial men call cutting it a great deal too fine. The Government in 1872 reduced the Volunteer Artillery, and I remember pointing out at the time that the course they were taking was a very dangerous one. The defence for the step at that time was that the Volunteer Artillery would not be effective as a Field Artillery; but now you are reducing our Horse Artillery because they are too good. You are cutting away at both ends. You have taken away from the number of our Field Force, and now you are taking away from the Force which is by far the most difficult to re-create; and I repeat emphatically that in this proceeding you are doing a very dangerous thing. I give you this advice just as I presumed to offer you advice in 1872. It will take two years before the present Horse Artillery cease to be Horse Artillery and become Field Artillery; and I would advise the right hon. Gentleman to make his conversion in such a manner that during the next two years the Horse Artillery which he is converting into a Field Artillery may be re-converted into a Horse Artillery. I think it is not at all unlikely that within this period of two years he may find it necessary to reverse the process he is now undertaking. I would press upon the right hon. Gentleman another point—namely, the pay of the men. The Force that he is going to convert into a Field Artillery have been getting higher pay as Horse Artillery, and they have come to look upon this higher pay just as the right hon. Gentleman looks upon his emoluments as a right. The amount the men have been receiving as extra Horse Artillery pay is only a sum of £1,500; but this is an amount that these men will miss, and that they ought not to be deprived of. You say you will bring the men back into the Horse Artillery. Well, you may bring some of them back—you will no doubt, with the exception of a few, bring them all back. You will bring the very best of them back, but there will be some inferior to others, and these will not be picked out, so that in the matter of pay you will be inflicting an injustice upon those few left behind. The item is only a small one, but I think, in justice to these men, the point I raise should be considered. There is another argument which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War made use of which I think on reflection, he, with his logical mind, will see is not a sound one. He says that one reason for not increasing the Horse Artillery is because there is not a sufficient number of good horses in the country. I contend that this matter of the supply of horses is simply a question of supply and demand. If you keep the number of horses down in peace time, you will not have a sufficient number to draw from in time of war. The question of the supply of food and the other points are only so many arguments brought in to support a preconceived idea, and I must say I think the right hon. Gentleman is pushing that idea altogether too far. You will have our Volunteers without any Field Artillery support—you take away from the Field Artillery and then you suppress the Horse Artillery, and you take away a number of horses from the Field Artillery for the purpose of putting them in an ammunition column. Supposing our two Army Corps lose a battle, and are taken prisoners, what will be our position? You will find that you have left our Volunteers with no guns at all, excepting a small force of Horse Artillery, and in the worst possible state for sustaining a fight—that is to say, with all their horses taken for the ammunition column. With regard to this other question connected with the Horse Artillery—namely, the question of horses—my contention is, that there is an ample supply of good animals in the country, which you could obtain if you would only pay a little more than you do for our supply. If you raised your contract price you would find very little difficulty, in the course of three or four years, in getting all the horses you want. I will tell you how you obtained your horses some 10 or 12 years ago, because I was acquainted with the officer who had to buy them. You had a large contractor in London, who arranged with the farmers in the North of England to buy all the horses that they could supply of four or five years of age. It was found that the farmers sent all their best horses to dealers to be sold for carriage purposes, and those that were not good enough for carriages were thrown into the Artillery. This was because the Army contractor was not able to compete with the private purchaser. If he had been prepared to give a little more money for his horses, your contractor would have been able to get the best animals. I hold that there are any number of good horses to be obtained in London alone. I am certain that if you sent men round to gather up all the horses that could be found in Hyde Park, and in other parts of London, you would get, in the course of a week, 20,000 of as good horses as you could possibly want. I repeat that you do not pay a sufficient price for your horses. There is another method, as has been pointed out by a Cavalry General, by which you could improve our supply of horses and the quality of the horses you obtain at the same time. I think this result would be effected by establishing sires in Ireland. I do not know that sires are so much wanted in England as they are in Ireland; but under present conditions in Ireland the horses run small, and are hardly of much use for Artillery. They are well-bred animals, but rather too light. I had intended to say something about the magazine rifles, but do not think it desirable to take up the time of the House at this late hour. I must say, however, that I do not think the late Secretary of State for War gave very good advice to the present occupant of that Office. I think if you keep waiting for the best magazine rifle which can be produced, it is very possible that you may bring about a condition of things similar to that which astonished the world during the short war between Germany and Austria not long ago. We all know the extraordinary result of the adoption of the needle-gun by Germany. The German needle-gun was by no means a good weapon; but, poor as it was, it had an enormous advantage over the weapon in use in the Austrian Army. It seems to me, therefore, that it would be advisable for the Army Authorities of this country to possess themselves now of 10,000 or 20,000 magazine rifles, although there may be a better pattern invented later on. If we had such a supply, we should be ready for any pressing emergency, and should still be in a position to reconsider the question of the adoption of an efficient pattern. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War could follow the advice of his Predecessor in regard to the magazine rifle without incurring a certain amount of risk.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness): Before you leave the Chair, Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) whether he would tell us why, in the new Royal Warrant, he has deprived medical officers of their relative rank? I would tell him that the course he is adopting is causing considerable dissatisfaction amongst the medical officers of the Service. Gentlemen who have occupied the position of the Secretary of State for War have recognized that with medical officers, as with many other people, rank is everything. By your new arrangement you are bringing about a most important change in the *status* of the medical officers—in fact, from their point of view, you are degrading them. That is their feeling—they feel that you are degrading them to a lower *status* than the Commissariat.

I think this branch of the Service does not deserve such treatment. If the right hon. Gentleman will glance over the list of casualties—if he will search among the records of the killed and wounded for the last few years, he will find the names of a large proportion of medical officers. If he will look into the records to see who have obtained the Victoria Cross of late years, he will find that medical officers have as much right as any other men in the Service to be called combatant officers. I contend that this is no mere matter of sentiment. The position and comfort of these officers is being affected by the proposal of the Government. They are combatant in position as well as rank, and I fail to see what the Medical Service has done to justify such treatment. I think they would understand your arrangement much better if you were giving them the same pay as combatants; but you are doing nothing of the kind—you are merely degrading them from their present positions. If this policy is carried out, I believe you will find great difficulty in getting medical men to join the Army. Instead of abolishing relative rank, you ought to have given medical officers actual rank, as is done in Continental Armies. That would be considered by medical officers as something better than even an increase in their salaries. I do not know of anything the members of the Medical Department have done to cause the War Office or the Horse Guards to deprive them of the very great privilege I have mentioned. During the time I speak of they have lost greatly in killed and wounded, many of them have gained the Victoria Cross, and they have done a great deal to reduce the death-rate in the Army—the death-rate has been reduced from 19 to 6 per 1,000 at home, and from 17 to 15 per 1,000 in India. I should like to hear from the right hon. Gentleman the reasons which have caused the Government to reduce the Medical Profession to its present position in the Army, and thus create great dissatisfaction amongst our Army medical officers.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I do not propose to engage the attention of the House for more than a very few minutes; but I wish to mention certain e ductions which might be very properly effected in the Estimates, and the saving applied to the benefit of the private soldier in the way of a free kit and rations, which he has always been promised, but never yet been able to get. The first item in which I suggest a reduction is that for the Staff—very nearly £200,000 is required for the General Staff. A reduction might also be very well made in the item—£90,000—for Commissariat and Transport. Our Army is the most over-stocked Army in Europe. We have the Quartermaster General's Staff and the Adjutant General's Staff—two Staffs which ought to have been amalgamated 16 years ago. We have the Medical Staff, the Commissariat Staff, and the Ordnance Staff, and I cannot help thinking that these Staffs might be amalgamated in peace time as they are amalgamated in war time. The Staff we keep at Aldershot, in order to supervise about half-a-dozen skeleton battalions, is equivalent to the entire German Staff in time of war. The next matter I wish to advert to is the increased expenditure on civilian clerks at the War Office. Last year the civilian clerks were increased to about 400, and their pay amounted to £118,000. We have about 85 military clerks receiving only £100 a-year each. The work is very easy and very quickly learnt. I cannot understand why we should not have more military clerks at £100 a-year each, and fewer civilian clerks drawing £290 a-year each. The worst of all is that these clerks have to justify their existence, and they do this by calling for Returns, the number of which increases every year. There is no reason why money should not be saved by cutting down the Returns made in the Service. For instance, the Returns which are now made monthly might be made half-yearly, and the Returns now made half-yearly might be made yearly. At present soldiers are turned into accountants, in order to produce Returns which are never wanted by anybody, which are no more good than the Blue Books which hon. Members get every morning. One word with regard to the expenditure on military law. The administration of military law costs £35,000 a-year. This expenditure is occasioned as much as anything by the number of desertions and courts martial. Last year there were 4,500 desertions, and about 10,000 courts martial. Now, if commanding officers were allowed to eliminate the bad characters from the ranks, the number of desertions and the amount of crime would diminish. Bad characters are turned out now, but as soon as they are turned away they enlist in another regiment. The only way to reduce crime in the Army, and to eliminate bad characters, is to mark every man, from the Commander-in-Chief downwards, who enters the Army. I should like to call attention to the question of transport. In England regiments are moved from one place to another two or three times a-year. Cavalry regiments move right across England once a-year, without the slightest rhyme or reason. It is said the practice has always been carried out, and it always must be. An enormous sum might be saved by a reduction in the expenses of transport. The sums saved might be expended in ameliorating the condition of the private soldier, in giving him a free kit and free rations, and 1*s.* a-day, which has been promised. A free kit he never gets; but at the end of every year he finds himself £1 in debt. As to free rations, he is supplied with 1 lb. of bread and three-quarters of a pound—very often only half-a-pound — of the worst possible meat, and his 1*s.* a-day which has been promised to him is brought down to about 8½*d.* I venture to think that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) and hon. Members who know anything of the subject will agree with me that nothing disgusts a soldier more than to find that he has been taken in—that, in fact, he was induced to enlist upon false pretences.

MR. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Mid): Mr. Speaker, it is with extreme reluctance I rise to interpose between the House and the Committee; but I consider I have a duty to perform. I wish to direct attention to a very important point in the Memorandum which has been supplied to hon. Members, and to remind the House that in that Memorandum an admission is made which reflects very seriously upon the conduct either of this or previous Parliaments. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) states in this Memorandum—

> "It will be observed that provision is made in the Estimates for carrying on the works of defence at our coaling stations, and for providing them with guns; beside the amount to be voted for the work of submarine mining. The sum taken is somewhat in excess of that which has for the last two years been included in the Estimates. It will enable the defences of Hong Kong, Sierra Leone, and, approximately, those of Singapore, to be completed."

It is to the word "approximately" I object. I shall show, in a very few words, that the use of that word "approximately" amounts to an admission that the House of Commons has been guilty, in the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War in the previous paragraph of the Memorandum, of "a breach of faith." At the same time, I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman upon the courage and candour which have enabled him to place before us the real state of things. We have made a bargain with Singapore to provide the necessary armaments, if the Government of the Straits Settlements would pay for the forts, and yet we have failed to fulfil the obligation we undertook. A more serious charge could not be made, and I would not have made it, especially at this late hour (1.15) of the Sitting, had I not been connected with the Colony of Singapore, and had some opportunity of learning something of the circumstances. Only the other day I received two letters upon this subject from Members of the Straits Settlements Legislative Council. I will not give the writers' names; this might be inconvenient; but I may be permitted to read passages from the letters. One of my correspondents says—

> "After the answer given by the Secretary of State for War to Sir William Crossman's inquiries on Tuesday, it is quite clear that much greater pressure than any that has yet been brought to bear is needed to make them ask for more money, which is what is required to enable the manufacture of guns to be expedited by holding out inducements to private firms to lay down machinery at once for manufacture of guns. It is nearly three years since the Imperial Authorities knew what they had to do, and they have so far given Singapore four new guns, and remounted a few obsolete inefficient ones; and they propose to give us the balance by driblets, to be completed in 1889. And, meantime, are they going to give us first-class modern ships till we get our guns—have they got them to spare for the purpose? The Secretary of State for War says on certain stations, including Singapore, the Government has spent £183,530, and expect to spend £206,555—*i.e.*, on the armaments of those stations; but he is very careful to avoid saying over what period that expenditure is extended."

I will now read an extract from the second letter I have received, the writer being a gentleman who is well up in everything which concerns the defences of Singapore—

> "I am very glad to see that you propose to call attention to the question of our coaling stations. Ever since I have come home, I have been representing how disgraceful it is that the Mother Country does not fulfil her obligations to her Colonies; and have been urging that we should not put off till to-morrow what should be done to-day. At Singapore we have rushed through what we were asked to do, only to find that a part of the ordnance has not even been ordered yet. People write and talk as if something colossal was involved. Why, if the recommendations of the Royal Commission had not been emasculated, it would have only meant the cost of construction of three first-class ironclads for all our coaling stations put together."

Now, the point I wish to impress upon the House is that until the armaments of any Colony are completed, the money spent is as good as thrown in the sea. Your capital is dead capital; it makes no return. Therefore, I say that, in the interests of this country as well as of the Colonies, it is the duty of the Government of the day to see that at all costs the armaments and fortifications which have been commenced are completed without any delay. We are informed that Singapore will not be armed for several more years to come, except "approximately." Singapore is the high road between the Eastern Seas and the Southern Seas; it commands the whole of the trade between England and China, and much of the trade with Australia; and, therefore, it is most important that this, at least, of our coaling stations should be adequately defended. If the Government are unable to get from this House a Vote of money sufficient to enable them to perform what is a most serious duty, they ought to raise a loan for the purpose. The point has already been well touched upon by the hon. and gallant Member for Birkenhead (Sir Edward Hamley). The sentence which follows the one I have quoted from the Memorandum shows there is a means of doing what is a matter of duty, and which, if not done, implies a breach of faith. It is said—

> "Some advance will be made in other cases also; but it cannot be denied that an acceleration of this work beyond the rate of progress laid down in 1884 would be eminently desirable, especially as it is well known to everyone who has looked into the subject that more than one station of primary importance still remains undefended."

I would venture to suggest that no advance need be made in the other cases until our obligations are satisfied with regard to Singapore. It is surely more prudent to have one place quite completed than half-a-dozen approximately complete. Besides, when you read these words you imagine the Government are going to act upon the lines laid down in 1884; but they are going to do no such thing. The fault lies between the Government and the House of Commons. In 1884 it was solemnly declared to the Government of Singapore that if they would spend a certain sum of money upon the fortifications, the guns should be completed and ready to be mounted on the fortifications in 1887. This Memorandum clearly shows that it is not intended that the armaments shall be completed until 1889. I maintain that if you are really in earnest in respect to the fortification of our coaling stations, you ought to set about the work at once. When I was at Singapore there was a fleet of eight Russian war vessels cruising about and surveying the harbours for nearly six months at a time. They could have seized upon the place in as many hours if war had been declared. Lest anybody should think I have been guilty of exaggeration in what I have said, I will call attention to the words of the Memorandum. My experience is a very short one; but I doubt whether any Minister of State has ever made such a candid confession which so seriously involves the credit of this House and the Government as the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War does in this Memorandum. The right hon. Gentleman says—

> "I am anxious to bring prominently forward the fact that the manufacturing and engineering departments necessarily enter into contract engagements extending over several years, and that a sudden curtailment of Estimates may often mean not only the stoppage of a particular work, but the loss of a large part of the money already expended, or it may involve a breach of faith. Take, for instance, the expenditure upon our coaling stations, which is, and ought to be, regulated by the general scheme laid down in 1884, accepted by the Treasury, and at that time submitted to Parliament. Upon the faith of that scheme we have induced some of our Colonies to vote, and to expend large sums of money on the understanding that, if they would undertake the cost of the works, the Imperial Parliament would find the armaments. In more than one case the Colony has kept its part of the bargain, while the Imperial Government has not obtained the necessary funds to do so.

In all these cases the faith of Parliament is deeply pledged, and, quite independently of the great interests involved, we are bound in honour to provide the necessary funds, at least upon the scale laid down in 1884."

If the House is not willing to vote the money this year, I ask it to authorize the Government to raise a loan with which to complete the armaments in a proper way. If such a proposition cannot be entertained; if the House is utterly careless of the engagements made by previous Houses of Commons; if the House is prepared to follow the example of a noble Lord and sacrifice its reputation upon the altar of thrift and economy, I can only hope that the authorities who are interesting themselves in the celebration of the Jubilee of Her Majesty will devote the funds they have collected to build a superfluous Imperial Institute Hall to discharge this most important and necessary duty of the country—namely, to fulfil its engagements in respect to the fortifications of our coaling stations, at least as far as Singapore is concerned.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): It is not my intention to deal at length with the question before the House. We have practically gone round the world in our discussion this evening, and I had intended to bring under consideration, and call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman who has this matter in hand to, the fitness of Seychelles as a coaling station. But, we having had a satisfactory answer from a right hon. Gentleman belonging to another Department connected with the subject, I shall not deal with it to-night. I think we have not received a satisfactory assurance from any hon. or right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench with regard to the Medical Department of the Army, which, by the statement made earlier in this discussion by the hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark), appears to be in a very unsatisfactory condition. I remember that not many years since, when that Department was as low as it could possibly be, we could not get young men at the various Medical Schools to enter for the Army Medical Department. Since that time you have had progress made in this Department, which has tended to allay the fears and satisfy the longings of men who entered the Service. I am not going to pursue that point, however. I wish to say that I have received five letters upon the subject of the Army Medical Department from different parts of the world. Some of them are from personal friends, and, if what I understand from them be true, the state of affairs is at present very serious. The last letter I received only yesterday afternoon, and I am told that, practically speaking, the medical men in the Army who are serving at Aldershot do not know whether they are entitled to wear the uniform at all, and if they are entitled to wear the uniform, whether the badges they hold in the Service are not to be altogether done away with. These gentlemen have to go through a long training, to undergo a good deal of trouble and self-denial, and they have to expose themselves to much danger—quite as much as any hon. and gallant Gentleman who has spoken in the debate of this evening. That being so, I say that the rights of these men must be recognized; and I maintain, unless something is done to improve their position in the Army, that you will be placing yourselves in a false and unwise position. I will quote a few figures taken out of the last Report which I have been able to lay my hands upon this evening in the Library. I find that of 187,786 men you have an enormous proportion admitted yearly into hospital. If you take these figures and lay them to heart, you will see that by doing anything which will militate against this most important branch of the Service, you will do great harm not merely to the Army, but to the various factors which compose it, and perhaps to that portion of the population from which you recruit the Army. You have 9,302 non-effectives, and you have 3,019 men discharged last year as invalids. I say that if you do not offer inducements for the best men to enter the Army, men who are able not only to deal with sickness when it crops up, but who can distinguish whether the recruits submitted to them are sound men, you will get into your Army a large number of cripples whom you will have to discharge, and also have to pay for. There are upon the Paper a number of Amendments to this Vote by some of the highest authorities in the House; among them the hon. Member for Hackney has a question upon this very point, and I am assured by my hon. Friends from Ireland that they are not satisfied with the answers which have emanated from the right hon. Gentleman and hon. Gentlemen opposite. I sincerely hope, Mr. Speaker, that before this debate closes some satisfactory assurance will be given to gentlemen who are already in the Service; and I also trust that some assurance will be given to the junior medical officers in the Army that they will not immediately be translated to a warm climate—India, for instance—in their first year of service. That has been the practice, and I have pointed out how it has happened again and again that numbers of these young men having joined the Medical Department have met their death in the first 12 months. Many of the men who enter the Service are young and unseasoned; and, therefore, I say you should give them a chance, and when they have become seasoned you can utilize them; but it is a great mistake to send out men to hot climates, as appears from the Reports presented by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope), which show the actual cost of each trained soldier. Practically speaking, if you pass them through a certain amount of training and pay a certain amount of money for them, and if they become invalided and die in the first year of service, you will be inflicting a great loss on the country. I trust that the suggestions which I have made will be taken in the sense in which I desire them to be received by the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Estimates; and I will, in conclusion, draw the attention of the House to the fact that the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland and other Medical Schools have practically endorsed this appeal on behalf of the Army Medical Service. I trust the right hon. Gentleman will give me some assurance that the grievance of this Department of the Army will be dealt with in a satisfactory way.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to*.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

## SUPPLY—ARMY ESTIMATES, 1887-8.

(1.) 149,391, Number of Land Forces.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid.): I should like to ask the Government whether there is any serious intention to ask for Votes in Supply to-night? We have been engaged during the whole evening in a very important and interesting discussion on the affairs of the Army, and I cannot think that the Government are serious in asking us to vote this money at 1 o'clock in the morning. I think such a proposal would be altogether unreasonable. There are hon. Members of the House who have given Notices of Amendments for the reduction of the Vote, and who, on the supposition that the Votes would not be taken at this hour, have gone away. I consider that it would be unreasonable to take Votes in the absence of hon. Members who are interested in those Votes, and therefore I think we ought to report Progress.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I have already pointed out that it is absolutely necessary that we should have the first Vote to-night. Hon. Members will be aware that we must comply with the law; and it was perfectly well understood that it was our intention to ask for the money to-night.

MR. M. J. KENNY: What will be done in connection with the Navy Votes?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): We do not propose to take the Navy Vote to-night; but it is essential that the first Army Vote should be taken.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I was asked a moment ago by a right hon. Gentleman if Members on these Benches were likely to oppose this Vote; and I am afraid that, without authority, I stated that I considered it as practically agreed that the Vote for the men would not be opposed.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): If the right hon. Gentleman will answer a question on this subject, I think it will remove the present difficulty. If we give the Government the first Vote, will they allow us an opportunity for a general discussion hereafter?

**Mr. W. H. SMITH**: There would be no disposition on the part of the Government to deprive hon. Members of the opportunity which the hon. and gallant Gentleman asks for; but I may remind him that it has been proposed to refer these Votes to a Select Committee; and I wish the hon. and gallant Gentleman to understand that if any delay should arise, it will not be because the Government desire to prevent the discussion which he is anxious to have.

**Dr. TANNER** (Cork Co., Mid): Throughout the long discussion which has taken place, there have been very few speeches from these Benches; on the other hand, the debate has been carried on entirely by right hon. Gentlemen and hon. Gentlemen opposite. I have spoken with several hon. Members to-night, who have since left the House in the belief that the Navy, and not the Army, Estimates were coming on. I know it was the intention of several hon. Members on this side of the House to oppose one portion of this Vote—that is to say, the portion of it relating to the Household Brigade. I cannot but think that it would be very injudicious to proceed with the Vote at this very late hour; and that, having regard to the circumstances I have referred to, it should be taken on Thursday next. I suggest that the Government should allow Progress to be reported.

**Mr. W. H. SMITH**: I am very sorry that it is not in my power to accede to the appeal which has been made to me. To-night was set apart for the discussion of the Army Estimates, and Thursday night for the discussion of the Navy Estimates, and it would be an interference with the legitimate discussion which might fairly take place on the Navy Estimates if the debate of this evening, in regard to Army matters, were carried over until Thursday. I should be charged with not having foreseen the desires of hon. Gentlemen to discuss naval questions. It is essential that these two Votes—namely, the Votes for men and money in the Army—should be taken to-night; it is necessary not only in the interests of discussion and Business in this House, but also in the interests of the Public Service.

**Mr. PULESTON** (Devonport): After what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, I think we all understand that these Votes should be taken, and taken at once. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War dwelt upon the necessity of having a variety of opinions expressed on any subject coming before the House of Commons, and of having measures such as those that have been before us to-night generally discussed. Well, most of the subjects which have been dealt with to-night could, I think, be very easily discussed in Committee; and the First Lord of the Treasury has foreshadowed the possibility of having them discussed upon a future Vote, or in some other way. But, as I understand it, there is one important measure which has occupied a large portion of the debate to-night, and upon which there has been as strong a consensus of opinion as the Secretary of State for War, during his long and distinguished career, has ever known. I refer to the proposed changes in regard to the Horse Artillery. I take it that we shall not be able to discuss that measure again if it is the fact that the Force, as it at present exists, will be broken up in April. My desire in mentioning the subject now is to ascertain if there is any possibility, in view of all that has been said here to-night, of the Secretary of State for War enabling the House of Commons to arrive at a conclusion on this subject by putting down the debate for some day prior to that on which the proposed change is to be effected?

**Dr. TANNER** [“Oh, oh!” *and cries of* “Divide!”] I am merely standing up for absent Friends, and I should be wrong if I did not. I cannot understand why the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War is in such a great hurry to get these Votes. Probably some money may be wanted; but certainly it cannot be necessary for the right hon. Gentleman to get the whole amount. If I may suggest a compromise, I would say that the right hon. Gentleman would effect his purpose, while at the same time allowing us the opportunity for debate which we require, if he takes, say, one-half of the money on account. I think that is a reasonable proposal, and should meet with his acceptance. If he does accept it, the subject may be debated by Friends of mine who usually sit on these Benches, but who have gone away to-night thinking that no Votes would be taken. I object to the Government springing

Votes like this upon the House, and attempting to rush them through at this hour of the night. It is not what the country would like or would endorse, nor is it fair to hon. Members who have gone away. I trust the right hon. Gentleman will see his way, at any rate, to meet us half-way. If he is not satisfied with what I have suggested, perhaps he will offer us some suggestion of his own which will enable hon. Gentlemen not present on this occasion to speak on this Vote.

Colonel DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn): I am sure the majority of hon. Members present are anxious to meet the wishes of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, and to pass these Votes at once. It would be a great gratification to hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House if he would give us an assurance that we shall be able to have a further discussion on the question of the reduction of the Horse Artillery before that reduction takes place. With regard to the point raised by the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan), I think we should be assured that such a question as this, and questions which interest many other Members—questions connected with the paymasters and quartermasters—should be fully discussed in the House. If an assurance is given to us on that point, I hope hon. Members will consent to allow these two Votes to pass at once.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I desire to express agreement with what has fallen from the hon. and gallant Gentleman who has just sat down. If these assurances are given to us by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, I am sure there will be no hesitation on the part of the House to agree to these Votes at once. There are many points we wish to discuss, and all we desire is an assurance that opportunities will be afforded us for discussing these matters.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: The Government will be extremely glad to give hon. and gallant Gentlemen, and other Members of the House, an opportunity to discuss the points which have been mentioned on succeeding Votes; but we are in this difficulty. We are more or less under a promise to send these matters to a Select Committee. We shall probably set that Committee to work as soon as possible; and I am sure no Committee investigating a question so large and comprehensive as the Army and Navy Estimates will be able to complete its work in the Session unless it is enabled to commence at once.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): If this Committee passes the Vote, it will be beyond the province of a Select Committee to go into the matter.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: There will be no difficulty in the world in the Committee going into this question. There will be no reason why it should not examine into expenditure.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.): We can have a discussion on the Report of the Clothing Vote.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: So far as we are concerned, the Government would afford full facilities for discussion. We will take care that the suggestion of my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Finsbury (Colonel Duncan) will be taken cognizance of.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I have no doubt that the intentions of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury are all that we could desire; but, as a point of Order, I would say it is clear that if these Votes are passed in Committee of the Whole House and are agreed to, as they will be by the House to-morrow on Report, the Votes will be passed by the House, and will be ready for incorporation in the Appropriation Bill, and no Select Committee will be able to abate one jot from that Vote. With regard to the other point, whatever may be the willingness of the Government to meet the wishes of hon. Gentlemen in any part of the House, it would be absurd to move the reduction of the Clothing Vote because we want to effect a reduction in the Brigade of Guards, or to prevent a reduction in the Horse Artillery. It cannot be done. Any hon. Member rising to Order would be able to stop the thing at once. It would be absurd to move the disallowance of £30,000 in regard to the Brigade of Guards, or £22,000 because we disapproved of certain allowances in the Clothing Vote.

Sir WILLIAM CROSSMAN (Portsmouth): Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us the nature of the instructions to be given to the Select Committee on the Army and Navy Estimates?

Mr. M. J. KENNY: What, may I ask, would be the value of any examination made by a Select Committee of a Vote already passed not only by the Committee of Ways and Means, but by the House—because the Report of Supply will be taken, I suppose, to-morrow? Such an examination, I contend, would be absolutely valueless. By the time the examination has concluded, goodness knows what change may not have taken place in the policy of the Government, which may make the recommendations of the Committee absolutely valueless for next year. I look upon the inquiry which it is proposed to hold as a mockery. We know that the Committee on Public Accounts discusses matters already debated, and we know that their inquiry is of very little use. I fail to see why the Government cannot allow the postponement of this Vote. Have the Government a reason for refusing it? Surely, if they have a reason, they can tell us what it is. Why do the Government require the whole of this money—why should they not take half of it? If they would do that it would enable us to raise discussions on questions in which we are interested, and the Government would be able to carry on the administration of the Army just as well as if they had the whole amount of the Vote.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: I will give the House full particulars as to the appointment of the Committee as soon as I can. Generally, I may say we shall follow the usual precedent in such matters, and allow the Committee to inquire into the whole of the Votes, and report their observations to the House. As to what has fallen from the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Kenny) opposite, who doubts of our proceeding, all I can say is that the Government are not especially anxious that the Votes should go to a Committee. We are prepared to take full responsibility for proposing the Estimates as they stand; but we conceive we are falling in with the general view of the House in assenting to the proposal for a Committee. We hope, therefore, that the House will assist us to pass the Vote.

Colonel BLUNDELL (Lancashire, S.W., Ince): I would suggest for the consideration of the Government that, instead of disbanding the Horse Artillery Batteries, they should be allowed to take their turn for dismounted duty to act as Field Batteries.

General GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith): At this early hour in the morning I must say the Government would do well to postpone the Vote, in order to give us a fair opportunity of discussing it. Could they not take it on some other occasion? Personally, I have endeavoured not to obstruct the Government in any way. I have not spoken on the Supplementary Estimates, because the money we were asked to vote had been expended; but I certainly think that when the regular Estimates are brought in we ought to have a fair opportunity of criticizing them, especially when large Votes like the present are under consideration. Military men in this House are anxious, I know, to discuss these subjects, and we are bound in duty to our constituents to see that the money of the taxpayers is not wasted nor spent without fair discussion.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I should like to know whether now, or at any future time, we shall have an opportunity of placing before hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite certain matters connected with the Army that some of us have been asked to bring under their notice? I myself have had several grievances entrusted to me to bring before the House. I do not wish to make myself obnoxious to the House now, but I do want opportunity of speech.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: I will undertake to give the hon. Member an opportunity of stating his views either in the House or to myself privately.

Mr. CONYBEARE: We are to be asked to-night to vote £4,000,000 or more for the payment of men. When we have voted the men and money, when will opportunity present itself for hon. Members to discuss other questions connected with the Service?

Mr. E. STANHOPE: He will be able to raise any point he likes before the Select Committee, and will also be able to do so in the House.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): He may not be a Member of the Select Committee.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): An hon. Member will not be able, on a future day, to do anything in the way of saving money. It seems to me that to raise subjects in the future will be a perfect farce.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.): I am sure that if the right hon. Gentleman can only see his way to the postponement of the consideration of this matter, such postponement will facilitate the passage of the remaining Army Estimates through the House. The Irish Members are in no way to blame for the state of things that prevails at the present time. The Government might have taken this Vote at any time during the past week or 10 days, or the past fortnight; but instead of doing so they have devoted their time and attention to the passage of Rules of Procedure which are altogether objectionable to hon. Gentlemen on these Benches. I will not further refer to that, however. What I want to impress upon hon. Members is that the Government really cannot want this Vote so much to-night. They could put it off until to-morrow or Thursday without the slightest inconvenience; and, that being the case, I would suggest, in the interest of Public Business and as tending to the more rapid discussion of the Army Estimates, that those Members who desire to express their own views and the views of their constituents on this Vote should have the opportunity for discussion which they desire. I may be told that they will have on the Report stage an opportunity of raising whatever objection they may have to certain sums contained in this Vote. But we know very well when the Report stage of these Votes will be taken—at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning, perhaps, when we have been discussing the Rules of Procedure, or some other subject, for the whole night, and when most of us will have become perfectly disinclined to discuss the subject in the spirit that it deserves to be discussed in. We have no desire to obstruct the Business of the House to-night; but I would suggest that it would be much better for the Government themselves, from their own point of view, that they should accede to the request that has been made by hon. Members on both sides of the House. If they do accede to this request, they will find that they are promoting the Business of the country.

Vote *agreed to.*

(2.) £4,522,000, Pay and Allowances.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

## *MOTIONS.*

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### COPYRIGHT (MUSICAL COMPOSITIONS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Addison, Bill to amend the Law relating to the recovery of penalties for the unauthorized performance of Copyright Musical Compositions, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Addison, Mr. Jennings, Mr. Howorth, and Mr. Powell.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 195.]

### COMMONS.

*Ordered,* That a Select Committee be appointed to consider every Report made by the Land Commissioners for England, certifying the expediency of any Provisional Order for the Enclosure or Regulation of a Common, and presented to the House during the last or present Sessions, before a Bill be brought in for the Confirmation of such Order.

*Ordered,* That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power, in respect of each such Provisional Order, to inquire and report to the House whether the same should be confirmed by Parliament, and, if so, whether with or without modification; and, in the event of their being of opinion that the same should be confirmed, except subject to modifications, to report such modifications accordingly, with a view to such Provisional Order being remitted to the Land Commissioners.

*Ordered,* That the Committee do consist of Twelve Members, Seven to be nominated by the House, and Five by the Committee of Selection:—Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson, Mr. Wroughton, Mr. Elton, Mr. Walter James, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Story-Maskelyne, and Mr. Richard Power, *nominated* Members of the said Committee.

*Ordered,* That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

### CRIMINAL LAW (SCOTLAND) PROCEDURE (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of The Lord Advocate, Bill to simplify and amend the Criminal Law of Scotland and its Procedure, and to alter the constitution of the Justiciary and Sheriff Courts in Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by The Lord Advocate, Mr. Secretary Matthews, and Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 196.]

### RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Mr. Houldsworth, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Whitley, Mr. Ewart, Mr. Mowbray, Sir Frederick Mappin, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Joseph Bolton, Mr. Donal Sullivan, Mr. Heneage, Mr. Staveley Hill, and Sir Bernhard Samuelson *nominated* Members of the Select Committee on Rating of Machinery Bill.

*Ordered* That Five be the quorum.—(*Sir Bernhard Samuelson.*)

FOYNES HARBOUR (TRANSFER) BILL.

Order [24th February] for committing the Foynes Harbour (Transfer) Bill to a Select Committee read, and *discharged.*

*Ordered,* That the Bill be withdrawn.—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

House adjourned at ten minutes before Two o'clock.

# HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Tuesday, 15th March,* 1887.

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MINUTES.] — PUBLIC BILLS — *Committee* — Church Patronage (26).
*Report*—Justices' Jurisdiction* (24).
PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL—*Committee—Report* —Local Government (Ireland) (Carrick-on-Suir)* (30).

## LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)— COURTHOUSES —ACCOMMODATION FOR PRISONERS AWAITING TRIAL.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON, in rising to ask, Whether Her Majesty's Government intend to lay before Parliament the Report of the Committee appointed by the Home Department to inquire into the state of the lock-ups and other places in which prisoners await trial in various parts of the country? said, they were now approaching Quarter Sessions, when the question to which the Report related could be considered by the County Authorities, and for many reasons it would be well for the Report to be circulated. In some cases the work required to set matters right would entail but a small outlay; though in other cases the expense would, no doubt, be considerable.

THE PAYMASTER GENERAL (Earl BEAUCHAMP): My Lords, the Paper referred to by the noble Marquess has been presented to Parliament, and was circulated among your Lordships on Friday. The Paper is a small one, and as a large number of Blue Books was circulated on the same day the small Paper possibly escaped the attention of the noble Marquess. The question was a grave one, and as soon as the Report reached the Home Secretary he took it into his consideration and addressed a Circular to all the County and Borough Authorities in England, inviting their consideration to the matter, as they were the parties with whom its settlement mainly rested. But those matters did not rest entirely with those authorities, as the sanction of the Treasury might be necessary before any expenditure was incurred.

## CHURCH PATRONAGE BILL.—(No. 26.)

(*The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.*)

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clause 1 *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Rights of alienation).

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY) said, that the object of the Amendment which he had put upon the Paper was to carry out the view which he ventured to express when the Bill was before their Lordships on the second reading, and that was altogether to get rid of the Council of Presentations. It appeared to him that the Council would be highly objectionable, as it introduced the principle of election into the management of Church patronage. He also objected to it because it would place a man on his trial as to his character before Judges who would be, in a great measure, elected Judges. But the greatest objection of all was, that it would remove from the Bishop that responsibility which he ought to exercise in this matter, which was partly his, and which he could discharge much better than a Council or anyone else. His desire was to remove the Council of Presentations altogether from the Bill. Such a Council as proposed would be placed in an anomalous position if deprived of its jurisdiction in regard to presentations, because it would be endowed with functions which it would rarely have to discharge. The first remaining function it was proposed to entrust to it was to decide whether the sale of an advowson should take place; and the second was to accept advowsons from those persons who should be willing to entrust them to it, when the sale of advowsons to agents and by auction had been destroyed. There would rarely be any adowsons sold, and it would be hardly necessary to bring such an elaborate elective

Council as that proposed by the Bill into existence to perform functions which it would seldom or never be called upon to perform. The Council was to be elected by a double kind of election, and if there was no work for the Council to do, they would hardly get people to go through so much trouble. The whole thing would become rusty and obsolete. If the duty of the Council, then, was only to say whether a sale of an advowson should take place, it had much better be appointed in a more simple manner. As to accepting advowsons from persons desirous of presenting them to the Council, the duty would be almost a sinecure. When did the most rev. Prelate ever hear of a person desirous of handing over his right of presentation to an elective body? Such an occurrence would not happen once in 100 years, and he urged that it would be rather a rash process to call into existence a Council for this purpose only. The best settlement, under the circumstances, would be to purge the Bill of this Council of Presentations; and in pursuance of that object he would move an Amendment constituting a Council of the Archdeacon, the Chancellor of the Diocese, the Rural Dean, and two laymen to be nominated by the Lord Chancellor. The object of placing the Archdeacon and Rural Dean on the Council was to insure that it possessed local knowledge. The duties which the Council he proposed to appoint would have to perform would be to determine whether, in case of the sale of an advowson, the purchaser was a person who ought to hold the patronage or not. The point he wished to press upon the House was, that the elective Council proposed by the Bill must be got rid of, as it was hardly worth while keeping such elaborate machinery in existence merely for the purpose of judging as to the character of the purchasers in the rare cases where advowsons were sold. He begged to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice:—

Amendment *moved*, page 1, line 8, leave out Sub-section (1.) and insert:—

"(1.) A right of patronage shall not after the commencement of this Act be sold until the proposed purchaser is certified under this section to be a fit person to possess such right of patronage.

"(2.) A person desiring to sell his right of patronage in any diocese shall apply in writing to the bishop of that diocese for the said certificate, and the bishop shall refer the application to a commission, consisting of the archdeacon as he may nominate, the chancellor of the diocese, the rural dean, and such two laymen as may, on the application of the bishop, be appointed by the Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain in each case.

"(3.) If any three members of such commission consider the proposed purchaser to be a fit person to possess the right of patronage proposed to be sold, they shall certify the same in writing under their hands, and cause such certificate to be sent to the applicant for the same.

"(4.) The commission may make such inquiry into the circumstances of the proposed sale, and the position and character of the proposed purchaser, as they may think necessary, and before refusing a certificate shall give the persons concerned, or any of them who desires it, an opportunity of attending before the commission and giving such explanations as they or he think fit.

"(5.) The acts and proceedings of the commission shall be conducted in accordance with the prescribed regulations.

"(6.) The bishop shall, as soon as practicable after receiving an application under this section, cause the commission to be formed and take into consideration the application, and shall, within *four* months at most after the application, inform the applicant of the result thereof.

"(7.) For the purposes of this section, 'sale' includes any transfer in consideration of money or money's worth."—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

THE BISHOP OF LONDON said, he considered it was of the greatest importance that the Bishop of the Diocese should be kept free from all sales of presentations. He, therefore, asked whether the noble Marquess would go a step further and keep the Bishop of the Diocese clear from all sales of patronage? He did not see any objection in principle to the proposed Amendment; but he should wish to see the Chancellor of the Diocese substituted for the Bishop in regard to taking cognizance of the sales of advowsons.

LORD GRIMTHORPE said, he saw no use in all this meddling with patrons, now that they had given the Bishops sufficient control over presentations—as he had himself proposed on the second reading—and seeing that Papists, Jews, Dissenters, and Atheists, who were all hostile to the Church, and trustees and executors, who might not care about it, or the parish, had full right to present. Surely people who bought advowsons were more likely to make good presentations than they were. Notwithstanding the most rev. Prelate's assurances that the Bishops had not the least intention to injure private patrons, two Bishops in the York Convocation had distinctly intimated in speeches, which he quoted, their wish to make it altogether unsaleable, and he had letters saying that some families would be ruined thereby. It was not desirable to make too many experiments at once. It would tend to lower the character of the clergymen if their patrons were subject to an examination as to their fitness to buy, and if a Council were to make inquiries behind their backs as to their qualifications, and were to listen to any gossip about them. It was to be presumed that purchasers of advowsons were fit men, and the proposed Council was quite unfit to try them.

THE BISHOP OF LICHFIELD said, he had placed upon the Paper an Amendment of the same scope and tendency as that of the noble Marquess. He thought that under the Bill the Bishop would be sufficiently powerful to do all that it was proposed should be done by a Council, and that he could do it in a better way. He thought that a Council would be a useless encumbrance, and that the machinery of the Bill was altogether out of proportion to the evils it was intended to remedy. This question was often regarded as a question of Church reform; it was, in reality, a question of Church defence. What the Church really asked for was protection against the scandals introduced into the Church by persons from without, and the great object of the Bill ought to be to hinder such transactions, but beyond that to allow the sale of advowsons and the transfer of livings to be sanctioned wherever they were *bonâ fide*. Up to the present time, the Church had no share in such transactions as the purchase or sale of livings; but if this Bill were passed in its present form they would have archdeacons and others going into the market to purchase alongside the jobbers. It would be really discreditable to the Church that a Council appointed at her suggestion should be entrusted with the power of going into the market to purchase livings. The Bishop had a Council —and he had made use of it for many years—his own Cathedral Chapter, by which he would be much better aided than by the Council proposed in the Bill.

THE EARL OF SELBORNE said, he had always thought the object to be aimed at was to cut off the direct purchase of next presentations, and to throw some safeguards around the sale of advowsons, for the purpose, and only for the purpose, of preventing that from being done indirectly which ought not to be done directly—namely, the purchase of the spiritual office, with cure of souls.

LORD HERSCHELL said, that the sub-section provided that the Bishop should, within four months after the application, inform the proposed purchaser of the result, but no penalty was attached to non-compliance. He would suggest that that objection might be met by providing that if within four months no answer was received the sale might proceed.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY hoped that the clause of the noble Marquess would be accepted. He could not see any religious objection to the law providing that some means should be taken to secure that the patron should be a fit person to possess such a right of patronage. He hoped, however, that, instead of the Bishop, the Chancellor or Vicar General would be named; because from time to time Bishops certainly would refuse to take any part whatever with respect to sales. He would ask whether the noble Lord behind him had not misunderstood the expression in the 2nd clause as to the application of the Bishop? He did not understand that the Bishop was to suggest two names to the Lord Chancellor, but to make application to the Lord Chancellor to appoint two such persons as he should think fit.

Amendment *amended.*

THE BISHOP OF LONDON said, there was a great anxiety felt that the Bishops should not be at all brought into this matter, and he would suggest to the noble Marquess that all through the sub-sections of his Amendment the "Chancellor of the diocese" should be called upon to act instead of "the Bishop."

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he would consent to the alteration desired by his right rev. Friend being made in his Amendment, the words "Chancellor of the diocese" being substituted for "the Bishop."

Amendment further *amended*, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 3 *amended,* and *agreed to.*

On the Motion of The Marquess of Salisbury, Clause 4 *struck out* of the Bill.

Clause 5 *amended,* and *agreed to.*

Clause 6 (Registration of transfers).

The Bishop of LICHFIELD said, the Amendment he was about to move had for its object the prevention of the traffic in the sale of livings. He therefore trusted their Lordships would give it their favourable consideration.

Amendment *moved,* in page 3, line 29, after ("prescribed") insert—

"No grant or assignment of any right of patronage in consideration of money or money's worth shall be valid within a period of five years from the date at which the said right of patronage shall previously have been so granted or assigned, unless on occasion of the death of the patron for the time being."—(*The Lord Bishop of Lichfield.*)

The LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Viscount Cranbrook) said, he did not think the adoption of the hard-and-fast line of the Amendment would be desirable, when the Bill provided an inquiry in the case of a sale.

Lord GRIMTHORPE opposed the Amendment.

The Archbishop of CANTERBURY said, he thought the better course would be to leave the consideration of this matter over until the Report, when it might be again proposed in an amended form.

Amendment *negatived.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Lord STANLEY of ALDERLEY moved, after Clause 6, to insert the following clause:—

(7.) "The provisions of the Lord Chancellor's Augmentation Act, 1863, shall extend to all benefices in Wales of a yearly value of less than two hundred and fifty pounds in the gift of the Lord Chancellor and which are not named in the schedule of the said Act."

The Earl of SELBORNE opposed the clause.

Clause *negatived.*

Lord STANLEY of ALDERLEY moved to insert the following clause:—

(8.) "It shall be lawful for the Archbishops and Bishops, if they think fit, to sell the patronage of benefices in their gift in accordance with the provisions of the Lord Chancellor's Augmentation Act, 1863."

Clause *negatived.*

On the Motion of The Marquess of Salisbury, Clauses 7 to 13, inclusive, *struck out* of the Bill.

Clause 14 *amended,* and *agreed to.*

Clause 15 (Letters testimonial).

Lord GRIMTHORPE, in moving, as an Amendment, in Sub-section 1, to leave out the words "in the form now usual, or if any form be prescribed," said, that clergymen desirous of giving testimonials in the usual form were sometimes in the difficulty that, although they were perfectly willing to testify to the presentee's good character, they were unable to say, in the words of the usual form, that they had never "heard" anything to the contrary, because they had heard it and found it to be utterly untrue. The present form had been decided in "Marshall *v.* Bishop of Exeter" not to be legally requirable.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 16 (Objections by parishioners).

On the Motion of The Marquess of Salisbury, the following Amendments made:—In page 8, line 3, leave out ("on the Council of Presentations to advise him to refuse"); leave out Sub-sections (4.), (5.), (6.), (7.)

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 17 (Grounds of Bishop's refusal to institute).

The Marquess of SALISBURY, in moving, as an Amendment, to leave out Sub-sections 1 and 2, in order to insert these words—

"The Bishop may refuse to institute any presentee who appears to the Bishop to be unfitted for the discharge of his pastoral duty by reason of physical infirmity, of pecuniary embarrassment, or of his evil life,"

said, they proposed to limit the grounds on which a Bishop might object to a presentee. The conditions in the Bill were rather wider than those in his Amendment. The Bishop's discretion ought not, in his opinion, to be extended so far as the Bill carried it. No doubt it was right to exclude aged clergymen, wherever age carried with it physical or mental infirmity; but there was nothing to create a presumption that every man of 70 was unfit to discharge important duties. It was often the case that the most important functions were performed by men over 70, and he saw no reason, therefore, why the attainment of that age should be a ground for the Bishop's refusing to institute, as proposed by the clause. Nor could he understand why it should be a ground of rejection, as proposed, that the presentee had not been in Priests' Orders two years. By a side-blow, in a Bill of this kind, it was proposed to introduce into the Church a new order of men capable of being curates, but not of being incumbents. Then, again, he could not agree with the third reason for non-institution, that some question ought to be further investigated with regard to a presentee. How could their Lordships tell what questions required further investigation? The Amendment which he now proposed recognized the responsibility of the Bishop within certain well-understood limits. The discretion of the Bishop to reject a presentee was made absolute by the Amendment in the case of physical infirmity, pecuniary embarrassment, or evil life.

Amendment *moved*, to leave out Sub-sections (1.), (2.); and in page 9, line 19, after ("section") insert as a separate sub-section—

> "The Bishop may refuse to institute any presentee who appears to the Bishop to be unfitted for the discharge of his pastoral duty by reason of physical infirmity, of pecuniary embarrassment, or of his evil life."—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

THE BISHOP OF CHICHESTER said, he thought that the provision of the Bill enabling Bishops to refuse to institute a presentee who had not been in Priests' Orders two years ought to be sustained. If it were struck out of the clause, the rectorship of a parish might be given to a young person ordained at 23 years of age. The important duties of a rector ought not to be given to a young man immediately on taking Priests' Orders, and after having only been in Deacons' Orders one year.

LORD BRABOURNE said, that the remarkable feature of the present Bill was the reluctance of the Bishops to take responsibility upon themselves. He was of opinion that it was better to give the Bishops a wider discretion than even that proposed by the Amendment, as otherwise some loophole would be offered through which improper presentees would slip. There might be valid causes for refusal of institution apart from those set forth in the Amendment of the noble Marquess. For instance, if a Bishop had reason to know that a particular individual was so obnoxious to a parish that his ministration therein was almost certain to be a failure, it might be well for both the parish and the clergyman that there should be discretion to refuse institution. If their Lordships had confidence in the Bishops this discretion might well be given.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON said, that he would not oppose the Amendment of the noble Marquess, but he thought it would be a great advantage to the Church if it were made requisite before a young man undertook the duties of an incumbent that he should spend some time, say at least two years, in learning them while acting as curate. He would be rather inclined to make it necessary that a man must be in Priests' Orders five years instead of two before being eligible for a living, as he looked upon the latter term as being too short a one, instead of being too long.

THE EARL OF SELBORNE said, he did not think two years' probation would be too much; and he was willing that the Bishop should have power to refuse institution to a man over 70 years of age, because he felt sure that such a power would not be in all cases arbitrarily exercised. He agreed with the noble Marquess that the attainment of 70 years of age was not of itself a disqualification, in all cases, for the duties of a rector, if unaccompanied by mental or physical infirmity.

LORD GRIMTHORPE said, he thought that the Church Discipline Act worked better than this Act would work, as this would enable a Bishop to be judge himself, without resorting to a Court for a decision. He was decidedly in favour of the Amendment of the noble Marquess.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, that one of the objects of the Amendment was to prevent what was known abroad by the term *chantage*—namely, the attempt to make people pay for silence.

THE EARL OF SELBORNE said, he thought the Amendment, as it stood, inadequate, so far as "evil life" was concerned. To condemn a man on the ground of evil life would be unjust, unless the charge of evil living were judicially investigated and regularly proved. But there might be scandal so grave and so notorious as to be, both in reason and on the principles of ecclesiastical law, as sound an objection to the presentee as if the justice of the charge were ever so clearly proved. He would propose, as an addition, after the words "evil life," the insertion of the words—

> "Or such grave scandal or evil report concerning his moral conduct that he ought not to be instituted to the benefice in question."

LORD GRIMTHORPE objected to the suggestion; because this ground might really have no foundation in fact.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, that the question raised by his noble and learned Friend (the Earl of Selborne) was a very difficult one; but, on the whole, he thought it would be better not to insert such a ground. They knew how easily scandal was raised, and great injustice might be done a presentee by such a provision.

THE EARL OF SELBORNE contended that, without the insertion of the provision he had mentioned, a Bishop might be unable to prevent the presentation of a man whose reputation was such that he could do no good in a new parish, and that the effect of the addition of the words would really be to prevent the few patrons who might be capable of presenting such men from ever doing so.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, that he had no objection to the alteration of his Amendment as proposed by the noble and learned Earl.

Amendment *amended*, and *agreed to.*

LORD GRIMTHORPE said, that he had put on the Paper three Amendments in succession, all of which raised the very important question to whom the appeal should be from the Bishop. Their Lordships had to consider in this matter what was likely to give satisfaction to the persons involved in those proceedings, the presentee, and the person presenting. It was very important that the appeal should not be, as proposed in the Bill, from the Bishop to the Archbishop of the Province. And, therefore, he proposed in page 9, lines 25 and 26, to leave out the words "Archbishop of the Province," in order to insert—

> "Three other bishops, of whom one shall be nominated by the bishop refusing institution, another by the presentee, and the third agreed on by the other two, and he shall preside, and those three shall be called the bishops of appeal; but none shall be bound to act without his own consent."

Nobody could read the newspapers without seeing that whatever was done by a Bishop or Archbishop of one way of thinking was sure to be found fault with by persons of a different school of thought. If the appeal was from a Bishop to an Archbishop whose leanings were known there would be great dissatisfaction. The matter was one which did not involve any great amount of argument; but he believed the effect of the Amendment would be to enable the public generally to see that what was done was done without prejudice. He thought it was extremely important that the public should believe that justice was done, and that none should be able to say that a refusal had been made because the principles of the presentee were disliked by the Bishop. Their Lordships would recollect how the late Bishop of Manchester was attacked by two or three Deans for exercising his discretion not to allow what he said would be anarchy in the diocese. Could there be any better mode invented for giving a satisfactory appeal than that proposed by his Amendment? If a better one could be brought forward he should be ready to adopt it. What he proposed was analogous to the practice adopted in many other cases where questions were referred to arbitration; and he believed it would give security to the public that the action taken was fair and impartial. The Bill itself gave an appeal from the Archbishop to three Bishops when the Archbishop had the primary jurisdiction, so that there was no question of dignity involved.

Amendment *moved*,

> In page 9, line 22, leave out ("in the prescribed form"); lines 25 and 26, leave out ("the archbishop of the province") and insert ("three other bishops, of whom one shall be nominated by the bishop refusing institution, another by the presentee, and the third agreed on by the other two, and he shall preside, and those three shall be called the bishops of appeal, but none shall be bound to act without his own consent"); line 29, leave out ("archbishop") and insert ("bishops of appeal"); line 31, leave out from ("The") to the end of the subsection and insert ("bishops shall hear the case both originally and on appeal in the presence of such persons only as they shall think necessary or for some special reason expedient, and not in public, and with such legal assistance as they

may think fit"); line 34, leave out subsection (6.) and insert ("The decision of the bishops of appeal, or any two of them, shall be given in writing to the presentee and the bishop who refused him, and if it is in favour of the presentee he shall have a right to be instituted as soon as possible by the bishop or his vicar-general"); line 38, leave out subsection (7.)."—(*The Lord Grimthorpe.*)

The Earl of SELBORNE said, he could not agree to displacing the Archbishop altogether; but if their Lordships thought that the whole responsibility should not be thrown on the Archbishop, they could direct that there should be episcopal assessors appointed to act with him.

Lord GRIMTHORPE said, that he had no objection to the alteration proposed by his noble and learned Friend. It would fully meet his view.

The Marquess of SALISBURY said, he thought it would be better to leave the responsibility wholly to the Archbishop; it would be placing the Bishops in an invidious position to make them act as arbitrators or assessors.

Amendment *negatived.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clauses 18 and 19 separately *agreed to*, with Amendments.

Clause 20 (Roman Catholic patron may nominate).

On the Motion of The Lord Grimthorpe, the following Amendments made:—In page 10, line 23, leave out from ("section") to end of line 34, and insert—

> ("Notwithstanding any existing Act, a Roman Catholic patron may present to a benefice on the same conditions as any other patron, but the Bishop may refuse the presentee unless he is satisfied that he is a *bonâ fide* member of the Church of England, and has duly had episcopal ordination as a priest.")

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 21 *agreed to.*

Clause 22 (Lunacy of incumbent).

Amendment *moved*, in line 24, to leave out from ("or") to ("the") in line 29, and insert—

> ("Where it shall be proved to the satisfaction of the Bishop that any incumbent has for two whole years been prevented by any infirmity of mind or body from performing the duties of his office.")—(*The Earl Cowper.*)

The Bishop of LICHFIELD said, that the Amendment would inflict a hardship in a large number of cases where two years' rest was required to restore an incumbent to health.

The Archbishop of CANTERBURY said, that if a clergyman were negligent, and were not quite unable to perform some duty, he might evade the operation of the Amendment by doing some duty just before the two years had been completed. At the same time that the Amendment would thus not enable a parish to get rid of a negligent incumbent, he agreed that it would inflict a hardship in many cases.

On the suggestion of The Marquess of Salisbury,

Earl COWPER said, he would bring up the Amendment on Report in a different form, by which provision should be made for the outgoing incumbent.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clauses 23 to 26, inclusive, *agreed to*, with Amendments.

Clause 27 (Order in Council).

Viscount CRANBROOK, in moving the following Amendments:—In page 13, line 23, leave out—

> ("Her Majesty may from time to time, by Order in Council, made upon the recommendation of");

line 25, after ("York") insert ("may"); line 31, leave out ("Order in Council") and insert ("rule made"); line 37, leave out ("or Order"); line 38, after ("Order") insert ("in Council"), and after ("same") insert ("and any rule so annulled shall thenceforth be of no effect"); and in line 40, leave out from ("rule") to end of clause and insert ("every such rule shall, while in force, have effect as if enacted in this Act"), said, he did so because it was thought better that these Rules should be laid before Parliament on the responsibility of those who made the Rules, and not as "Orders in Council."

Amendments *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Remaining Clauses *agreed to*, with Amendments.

The Report of the Amendments to be received on *Tuesday* next; and Bill to be *printed*, as amended. (No. 44.)

House adjourned at Eight o'clock,
to Thursday next, a quarter
past Ten o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Tuesday, 15th March,* 1887.

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MINUTES.]—Supply—*considered in Committee Resolutions* [March 14] *reported.*

Public Bills — *Ordered — First Reading* — Bankruptcy Offices (Sites) * [197].

*Second Reading*—Truck * [109].

## QUESTIONS.

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### ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY — DETECTIVE CONSTABLE P. MONOHAN.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Detective Constable Peter Monohan was taken in custody on Thursday, 3rd March, at Killarney, for being drunk and disorderly, and for having while in that condition assaulted a young man named Shea, breaking the bridge of his nose, and injuring his eye; whether the said constable was merely reprimanded, and ordered to resume his duty; and, whether he will see fit to order an inquiry into the circumstances of the case? I should like to supplement the Question by asking whether the young man Shea has lost the use of his eye since, and also whether any previous conviction has been recorded against Monohan?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The hon. Member must give me Notice of the latter Question. With reference to the Question on the Paper, it is not a fact that the constable named was taken into custody for being drunk and disorderly. When accused by his Head Constable, he admitted having been intoxicated, and for this breach of discipline he was fined by the Inspector General and reduced in position. He denied having assaulted Shea, and the latter refused to prosecute. Shea was not injured in the manner described.

Dr. TANNER: Will any further action be taken in the matter? Will Monohan continue to be employed as a detective after being drunk and disorderly?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The matter has been already dealt with.

### CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—MR. JAMES SIMMS, DRUMLANE, CO. DERRY.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a series of outrages perpetrated on an Ulster Protestant Nationalist, named Mr. James Simms, of Drumlane, near Maghera, County Derry, and reported in *The Belfast Morning News* of the 8th March instant; whether, as therein stated, Mr. Simms did, in consequence of having assisted to return Mr. Healy to Parliament as Member for South Derry at the November Election, 1885, suffer serious loss and injury by the damage done to his crops, which were, during the night time, maliciously dug up and scattered about or destroyed on several occasions; whether, since the last General Election (when Mr. Simms again supported Mr. Healy), a quantity of flax was taken from his store and maliciously burned in an adjoining field; whether, about a week ago, some persons maliciously set fire to and wholly destroyed "a splendid granary" belonging to Mr. Simms, and in which he had valuable property stored; whether any arrests have been made in connection with these outrages; and, what steps the authorities have taken in the matter?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I, of course, know nothing of what Mr. Simms may have done in respect of the Elections; but I understand that he states to the Constabulary that he did not, in 1885, take the part attributed to him in the Question. The injuries to his crops appear to be much exaggerated. For the burning of a barn which occurred about a fortnight ago he claims £100 compensation. This claim will be fully investigated in ordinary course. No arrests have been made as yet; but the police have the matter in hand, and meanwhile are affording protection to Mr. Simms's property by special patrolling.

Mr. M'CARTAN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if it be true that a quantity of flax was taken from his store and burned? That is a Question which has not been answered.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think, Sir, some flax was taken on the 18th of

January and burned in an adjoining field.

### COMMISSIONERS OF IRISH LIGHTS—CARLINGFORD LOUGH LIGHT-KEEPERS' HOUSES.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether he can state the cause of delay on the part of the Irish Lights Commissioners in building the dwelling houses for the keepers of the leading lights, Carlingford Lough; what was the amount of purchase-money paid for the building ground; the annual rent of the site; and the rent now paid for lodgings for the keepers; and, whether he can state definitely when the buildings will be commenced?

The SECRETARY (Baron Henry De Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The erection of these dwellings during the current financial year was, with the consent of the Commissioners of Irish Lights, postponed in favour of more urgent works. No purchase money has been paid for the building ground; but an annual rent of £7 1*s*. 9*d*. has been sanctioned for the site on a lease for 150 years, and £40 has been paid as compensation for disturbance of existing tenants; £48 is at present paid annually for lodgings for the keepers, and the estimated cost of erecting the dwellings is £1,876. The Board of Trade are prepared to sanction the expenditure for erecting these dwellings during the year 1887-8, and it will rest with the Commissioners of Irish Lights to carry out the work.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD—LOANS.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he can state the amount of the local loans sanctioned by the Local Government Board during the last financial year; whether there has been an increase or decrease in the amount as compared with the preceding year; and, whether loans have been contracted without the sanction of the Government; and, if so, to what amount?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The total amount of the loans sanctioned by the Local Government Board to be raised by Local Authorities during the year ended December 31, 1886, was £2,827,867, being a decrease of £459,054 as compared with the total amount so sanctioned during the preceding year. The Board have no information as to the amount of the local loans which were contracted during the year without the sanction of any Central Department; but it may be stated that the total amount of the specific sums which by local Acts passed during the year were authorized to be raised by Sanitary Authorities and Municipal Corporations without the sanction of any Central Department was £1,496,287.

### PARLIAMENT—PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he will state the number of Bills introduced into the House of Commons by Private Members during the last six years, and the number of such Bills which have been passed into law?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.), in reply, said, the total number of Private Members' Bills between 1881 and 1886, inclusive, was 825, while the number of those Bills which received the Royal Assent was 117.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON: In consequence of the answer just given, Mr. Speaker, I beg to give Notice on an early day to call attention to the increasing number of Bills introduced by Private Members for the purpose of ventilating their own particular crotchets, to the unscientific drafting of such Bills, and to the waste of the public money and time in printing and discussing them; and to move—

> "That provision ought no longer to be made in the Estimates for the printing and publication of Private Members' Bills."

### INDIA—MADRAS BOARD OF REVENUE—STATEMENT OF MR. THOMAS.

Mr. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been directed to the statement of Mr. Thomas, senior member of the Madras Board of Revenue, in his Report on the current Tanjore Remission Scandal, that a widespread conspiracy exists, and that the district officials are too much interested in land; and, whether uncovenanted officials are forbidden to hold land in their districts; and, if so, whether any collector has, during the past 10 years, brought to the notice of Government that the Tanjore officials habitually contravene the Regulations in the matter of land holding?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) Chatham): The Secretary of State's attention has been directed to the Report in question, and a despatch has been sent to the Governor of Madras on the subject. Uncovenanted officials who exercise independent judicial or revenue functions are forbidden to hold land in their districts; but I am not aware that any collector has, within the last 10 years, brought to the notice of the Governor of Madras that the Tanjore officials contravene this Regulation habitually.

## INLAND REVENUE—INCOME TAX ON AMERICAN FLOUR MILLS COMPANIES.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the Pittsbury's or Washburn Flour Mills Companies of America, who send large quantities of flour here on consignment, pay any Income Tax; and, if not, whether he will take steps to oblige them to do so, and thus remedy an injustice to our English millers?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Foreign Companies or persons sending goods or produce to this country are not assessable unless they carry on business in this country, either themselves, or through agents coming within the provisions of the Income Tax Act of 1842, 5 & 6 *Vict.* c. 35, s. 41. If the hon. Gentleman will give the Income Tax collectors any assistance in discovering such Companies as ought to, and do not, pay Income Tax, he will, I feel sure, find them most grateful and receive every encouragement.

## IRELAND—THE ORANGE ORGANIZATION—UNION OFFICIALS.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) (for Mr. T. M. HEALY) (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Are Union officials allowed by the Local Government Board to be members of the Orange organization; is it contrary to rule that they should deliver public speeches; will he invite the attention of the Local Government Board to the speech of Brother Hugh Johnson, Master of Orange Lodge 269, an officer of Magherafelt Union, reported in *The Belfast Weekly News* of 5th March, as follows:—

> "He then urged on all the brethren to be more united than ever, and to beware of all traitors, showing the possibility of there being in all societies Lundys and traitors; and, holding in his hand a Report of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, proved the truth of his assertion that even in their own locality they were under the painful necessity of expelling perjured 'traitors' from their ranks;"

and, whether he has any reason to believe that the persons so named as traitors on the list of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland are in danger of outrage; and, if so, will he afford them police protection?

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked, before the right hon. Gentleman answered the Question, if he was not aware that this charge was a pure fabrication; and whether there was in the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland such number as that of the Lodge specified in the Question, and therefore if there was any necessity for affording police protection to parties as suggested in the Question?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of the statement made by my hon. Friend (Mr. Johnston), though all I know about the matter is derived from half-a-minute's inspection of one of the Rules of the Orange Society shown to me by my hon. Friend. With regard to the Question on the Paper, there is no rule of the Local Government Board on the subject of Union officials being members of the Orange Organization. The only officer of the Magherafelt Union who bears the name of Hugh Johnston is the shoemaker of the workhouse. If the hon. and learned Member will give me the names of any persons whom he thinks might be endangered by anything in the speech referred to, I shall communicate with the Local Authorities. I think myself his fears are unfounded.

## RIVER THAMES—THE WATER COMPANIES—THE SEWAGE SYSTEM.

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, in view of the large profits derived by the Metropolitan Water Companies and the Conservators of the River Thames from the sale of the water of that river, it is possible for the Local Government Board to oblige those Bodies to devote some part of the sums received to help to defray the cost of diverting the sewage from the river; and, if not, whether, in the case of the town of Staines, which while deprived of its ancient outlet for sewage derives no profit or advantage from such sale of its water, and where the sewage system required by the Board, as proved by Mr. Hawksley's Report, will involve the financial ruin of the town, he will promote any scheme to defray part of the necessary cost of her own requisitions?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The sums to be paid to the Conservators of the River Thames by the Metropolitan Water Companies are fixed by statute, and the Local Government Board have no powers in the matter. With regard to the Staines Local Board, I regret to state that they have long evaded their statutory duty, with the result that the Thames has been polluted with the sewage of the district. It devolves on the Staines Local Board, as is the case with every other Sanitary Authority, to defray the cost of any sewerage works which are required for their district. No doubt, the cost to Staines will be heavy; but it is impossible for me to promote any scheme for the purpose of relieving the Staines district of the burden which it must undertake.

## LAW AND JUSTICE — COURT HOUSES —ACCOMMODATION OF UNTRIED PRISONERS.

LORD ELCHO (Ipswich) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in all cases when, in consequence of the Report of the Committee on the Accommodation of Untried Prisoners, it is proposed to rebuild, extend, or otherwise alter the proposed accommodation, Her Majesty's Government are prepared to examine the plans before the proposed works are carried out, in order to see that the intended alterations comply with the recommendation of the Committee, and are in every respect suited to the requirements of the case?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): In the Circular which I have lately issued, I have invited the Local Authorities to communicate with me what works they propose to undertake. Such communications I shall refer to the Surveyor General of Prisons, and, acting on his advice, shall inform the Local Authorities of my own opinion on their proposals; and by these means I hope, not only that the accommodation may be brought up to a proper standard, but also that any useless expense may be avoided.

## THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON BI-METALLISM.

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, as the Chairman of the Royal Commission on Bi-metallism, If, in view of the great interest taken in the subject by the mercantile community, it would be possible to publish a weekly *précis* or abstract of the evidence?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, that to his great regret he was no longer Chairman of the Currency Commission, and the Question should be addressed to his successor, or his Representative in the House of Commons. When, however, an analogous Question came under his notice, when he was Chairman of the Commission, he replied that he felt it to be very unusual and inexpedient to publish evidence in the manner proposed.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) inquired who was now the Chairman of the Commission?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR believed that his successor was not yet appointed. The Question had better be addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

## WAR OFFICE—SIGHT TEST FOR CANDIDATES FOR COMMISSIONS.

SIR GUYER HUNTER (Hackney, Central) asked the Secretary of State for War, Where the Regulations which have recently been laid down for testing the sight of candidates for commissions, stated to be now in force, are to be found, and when they were published?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The Regulations referred to are in

Clause 53 of the Army Circular, dated the 1st of March, 1887, and are to be found at page 807 of the Army List.

### ILLEGAL MEETINGS (IRELAND)—STREET BANDS.

**MR. CHANCE** (Kilkenny, S.) asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether, by statute or otherwise, Resident Magistrates in Ireland are entitled to prevent bands playing in the public streets, on the grounds that the persons forming such bands are about to attend a meeting in another town or place; and, whether the possibility of such persons attending an illegal meeting at a future time renders their conduct illegal, and entitles the police to disperse them?

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND** (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University): The hon. Gentleman asks me for an abstract legal opinion, which it is impossible for anyone to give. Magistrates, by the Common Law, would, under certain circumstances, be entitled to disperse a band playing in the public streets, and such a right has often been exercised by them to the great advantage of the public peace. The fact that the porsons composing the band are proceeding to attend a meeting in another place may afford legal grounds for the magistrate causing them to disperse; but each case must be judged of by its own circumstances.

### GREENWICH HOSPITAL — THEIR NORTHERN ESTATES.

**SIR SAMUEL WILSON** (Portsmouth) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, The estimated present capital value of the Northern Estates belonging to the Greenwich Hospital, the outlay on them each year for the last five years, and the annual net return each year for the same period?

**MR. ASHMEAD BARTLETT** (A LORD of the ADMIRALTY) (Sheffield, Ecclesall) (who replied) said: The present gross farm rental from the Northern Estates of Greenwich Hospital is estimated at £8,260; and if the farm property were sold on the same terms as were obtained at the last sales in 1882 and 1884 (about 30 years' purchase on the average) it would produce a capital sum of £247,800. It is not possible to arrive at the capital value of the minerals. The outlay on the Northern Estates, and the net return of income (including minerals) for the last five years, are as follows:—1881-2, outlay £10,734, net return £13,156; 1882-3, outlay £6,988, net return £15,773; 1883-4, outlay £6,393, net return £12,349; 1884-5, outlay £6,229, net return £6,645; 1885-6, outlay £4,618, net return £7,418. For 1883-4 and 1884-5 the net returns are given less on account of sales of portions of the estate in these years.

In reply to Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.),

**MR. ASHMEAD BARTLETT** said that the return for minerals alone for the year 1886 was £3,700.

### ZANZIBAR—BOMBARDMENT OF MINENGANI BY THE PORTUGUESE.

**DR. CAMERON** (Glasgow, College) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that, on February 16th, after a few hours' notice, the Portuguese bombarded Minengani, the British quarter on the Bay of Tungi, in Zanzibar, and that, after the bombardment, a party of Portuguese sailors landed, and burnt and destroyed all the private property which British subjects had been obliged to leave behind; whether a protest and application for redress has been lodged by the sufferers with the British Consul at Zanzibar; whether anything has resulted from the representations which the British Foreign Office addressed to the Portuguese Government on the subject of the rupture between Portugal and Zanzibar; and, whether, if the report as to the bombardment of Minengani be correct, any steps have been taken effectively to protect British subjects and interests?

**THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE** (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Some British-Indian subjects have arrived at Zanzibar from Minengani, and have informed the Acting Consul General that their property has been destroyed by the Portuguese; but no further particulars have yet been reported. Her Majesty's ship *Reindeer* left for Tungi Bay on the 13th, with instructions to ascertain and report what had taken place. The Portuguese Government have assented, on the representations of England and Germany, to stop hostilities, restore to the Sultan the captured vessel, and enter upon negotiations with His Highness with regard to the territory in dispute. Her Majesty's Government will take such steps on behalf of British subjects and interests as may be required when the facts of the case have been properly ascertained. In the meantime, Her Majesty's Acting Consul General at Zanzibar has been affording relief to those British subjects who have been rendered necessitous by the events at Tungi Bay.

### POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—"BOARDING OUT" OF PAUPER CHILDREN.

Mr. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Why the principle of "boarding out" of pauper children is not more generally adopted; if his attention has been called to that part of the Report of the Local Government Board that whilst, in one case, the average weekly cost of children in the workhouse was found to be 3*s.* 7½*d.*, as against 2*s.* 7¾*d.* in a "Home," and in another 4*s.* 0¼*d.* per child, as against 3*s.* 0¼*d.*, he will recommend its further adoption where possible; and, whether the number of 56,291 children in the workhouses under 16 years of age, as given in the Report of the Local Government Board, as against 1,022 in the "Homes," provides opportunity for extending of the system of "boarding out" with advantage to the children themselves, and with a great saving on the local rates?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The figures which are quoted in the Question will be found in a Report of one of the Inspectors of the Local Government Board. They do not refer to the relative cost of children maintained in a workhouse and of those "boarded out"; but to the cost of the maintenance of the adult inmates of a workhouse as compared with the cost of the maintenance of children in an establishment provided by the Guardians on the "cottage-home" principle. The cost of a child boarded out beyond the limits of the union is usually 4*s.* per week, exclusive of the cost of clothing, school fees, and medical attendance. The initiative as regards the adoption of the "boarding-out" system rests with the Boards of Guardians, and not with the Local Government Board. The Board are always ready to entertain applications from Guardians for the adoption of the system where the circumstances of the union appear to be such as to render that system appropriate, and provision has been made for complying with the requirements prescribed by the order of the Board. I believe the figures given by my hon. Friend in the latter portion of his Question are correct; but I may say that a very large proportion of these children are only temporary inmates of the workhouse with their parents, whereas the "boarding-out" system is limited to orphan and deserted children.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) asked, whether the Local Government Board could not do something to promote the "boarding-out" system?

Mr. RITCHIE said that the Local Government Board were always ready and willing to consider any applications made by Boards of Guardians; but the right hon. Gentleman knew that the initiative must rest with Boards of Guardians. So far as he was concerned, he would do his utmost to assent to any proposition in that direction.

Mr. MUNDELLA: Could not the right hon. Gentleman send out a Circular urging Boards of Guardians to adopt the system?

Mr. RITCHIE: I think the Local Government Board have already made their opinion known to Boards of Guardians; but I will look into the question.

### INDIA (RAILWAYS)—THE RAILWAY TO QUETTA.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is a fact that orders have been given for surveying a prolongation of the Quetta Railway in the direction of Candahar across the Khora Amran Range, and have such orders been issued with the assent of the Secretary of State; what is the length of the proposed extension from Shebo, and what is its estimated cost; will it pass beyond the limits of British territory; and, if so, has the consent of the Ameer of Afghanistan been obtained to the survey; and, what has been the total cost to the Indian Exchequer since 1884 of the Quetta and Bolan Railways?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): Some inquiry has been made in India as to the engineering questions involved in the extension of the Quetta Railway towards Candahar; but no formal proposal to carry the line across the Khora Amran Range has been submitted to the Government of India by the Secretary of State. It is, therefore, impossible to give the detailed information asked for. The actual outlay on the Quetta and Bolan Railways from 1884-5 to the end of the current financial year is put at Rs.3,85,50,000.

Mr. BUCHANAN asked whether it was intended to extend the railway beyond the limits of British territory?

Sir JOHN GORST replied, that the hon. Member must see that the Question was premature, as nothing had yet been settled. Until it was settled, he could not make any announcement on the subject.

## INLAND REVENUE—WITHDRAWAL OF THE COLLECTOR FROM SLIGO.

Mr. O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the Resolution passed at a meeting of the inhabitants of Sligo, condemning the proposed withdrawal of the Collector of Inland Revenue and his staff from Sligo; whether Sligo is one of the most important ports in the West of Ireland, and conveniently situated to serve several neighbouring counties; and, whether, should the proposed change be made, there will be no Collector between Londonderry and Galway?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): This Question should be addressed to my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury, and I am under the impression that he has answered it more than once already.

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.) said, he had answered the Question on two separate occasions within the past week or two. The whole matter would be carefully considered before any action was taken.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Is this reduction in Sligo a proportion of a large scheme of reduction extending over every portion of Ireland?

Mr. JACKSON: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to give Notice of that Question.

## INDIA—VACCINATION LAWS IN BRITISH INDIA—PENALTIES.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, What is the highest amount of fine that can be legally imposed on a parent or guardian in British India for a refusal or neglect to cause his child to be vaccinated; and, what is the longest term of imprisonment that can be legally inflicted in a case of breach of the Vaccination Laws in British India?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): In British India vaccination is compulsory in certain selected areas only. No penalty is imposed for simple refusal or neglect to vaccinate a child. For mere disobedience to a magistrate's order to vaccinate the maximum penalty is 50 rupees. Contumacious and persistent disobedience may in certain cases entail a fine of 1,000 rupees and six months' imprisonment.

## CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—DISTURBANCES AT YOUGHAL.

Mr. LANE (Cork Co., E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the following statements, which appeared in *The Times* of last Friday, are true:—That a determined effort was made on the previous night to burn the house of Inspector Kerin at Youghal; that the crowd broke the windows of the Protestant Schools and the Methodist Church at Youghal; and that children of 12 to 14 years of age were found drunk in the doorways, early on Thursday morning, in the streets of Youghal?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): This Question is on the Paper without Notice, and as local inquiry is necessary it cannot be answered for a few days.

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): Would the right hon. Gentleman also discover the source from which these statements have been made?

[No reply.]

## ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—THE DISTURBANCES AT YOUGHAL—TELEGRAM FROM CAPTAIN PLUNKETT, DIVISIONAL MAGISTRATE.

Mr. LANE (Cork Co., E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he had an interview in Dublin on last Thursday with Captain Plunkett, Divisional Magistrate for Cork District; whether it was with his knowledge or by his instructions that Captain Plunkett sent the following telegram to the officer in command of the police at Youghal from the General Post Office in Dublin—

> "To District Inspector,
> "Youghal.
>
> "Message received. Deal very summarily if any organized resistance to lawful authority. If necessary, do not hesitate to shoot them.
>
> "Plunkett,
> "Dublin;"

whether the police force that went to Youghal on the previous Tuesday evening, and caused the death of a fisherman named O'Hanlon by a bayonet charge, were acting under orders from Captain Plunkett; whether the last Return of agrarian crimes for quarter ended 31st December, 1887, shows a total of only five offences reported by the Constabulary for the whole Division of East Cork, which contains the three large towns of Queenstown, Midleton, and Youghal; whether three of those cases so reported were threatening letters, another a case of alleged intimidation, and the fifth a case of trivial assault; and, whether he can give any explanation of those special instructions being given to the police to use their bayonets and rifles on the unarmed inhabitants of this district without either reading the Riot Act or calling upon them to disperse?

Mr. SEAGER HUNT (Marylebone, W.) also had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If there is any truth in the paragraph in *The Pall Mall Gazette* of March 14th, which attributes to Captain Plunkett a telegram sent to the District Inspector at Youghal, in the following words—

> "Message received. Deal very summarily if any organized resistance to lawful authority. If necessary, do not hesitate to shoot them.
>
> "Plunkett,
> Dublin;"

and, if so, is Her Majesty's Government determined to support their officers in such action?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I will answer at the same time the Question which stands in the name of my hon.

Friend the Member for West Marylebone (Mr. Seager Hunt). I rather think that the interview alluded to in the Question was on Wednesday, and not on Thursday. My conversation dealt solely with the general state of Captain Plunkett's district. The circumstances under which O'Hanlon met his death are at present the subject of investigation. I do not question the accuracy of the hon. Member's statistics; but they do not appear relevant to the question raised by Captain Plunkett's action. The explanation which the hon. Member requires seems to lie on the face of the telegram itself. The Divisional Magistrate received information that an organized attack on the police force was intended. He gave directions that such an attack was to be energetically met, and that, if it should prove necessary, recourse must be had to fire-arms. In doing so, he appears to me to have not only acted according to his duty, but in the manner which is best calculated to support the authority of the law; and, in the long run, to prevent the injuries and loss of life which must ensue if it is supposed that the police, in the execution of their duty, may be attacked and maltreated with impunity. The Government approve Captain Plunkett's action, though they greatly regret the necessity which gave rise to it.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman why it was that only 30 policemen were sent to Youghal on the occasion in question; and also whether, if danger was apprehended, it would not have been advisable to send 100 or 200, as the authorities are in the habit of doing on critical occasions? It is assassination. ["Order!"]

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): Might I be permitted to ask whether the police force referred to in the Question and the commanding officer were in Youghal to assist in serving a warrant on the Rev. Father Keller, which warrant has since been found to be illegal?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The warrant in question was withdrawn, not because it was illegal, but because the name was mis-spelt.

Mr. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.) asked the Chief Secretary if he would communicate to the House the message which led to the despatch by Captain

Plunkett of the telegram quoted in the Question of the hon. Member?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Subsequently,

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I do not know whether, from the answer of the Chief Secretary with reference to the telegram of Captain Plunkett, I correctly understood him to say that the Irish Government approve of the language of Captain Plunkett in ordering the police to shoot without delay and without hesitation; and I wish to ask whether the Irish Government do not think it necessary to give instructions to that gentleman that the police should not fire without exhausting every means to avoid the shedding of blood?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think that the hon. Gentleman cannot have read the telegram to which he refers. He asks whether the Irish Government approve of a telegram ordering the police to fire "without delay and without hesitation." That is not the language of Captain Plunkett. I have already told hon. Gentlemen opposite that the Government approve of Captain Plunkett's action; and I do not conceive that an order given to the police, couched in the language which the hon. Member suggests, would in any way alter the conduct of the police, which appears to me, as far as I know, to be conduct of the greatest patience under very great provocation. I am given to understand, though I do not guarantee the authenticity of the fact, that on the occasion when O'Hanlon was unfortunately killed —[Several Irish Members: Murdered!]—21 out of 22 policemen were severely injured.

Mr. FOX (King's Co., Tullamore): I would ask the Chief Secretary if a private telegram was received stating that they expected organized resistance, why they treated it thus by sending only 20 or 30 men?

[No reply.]

## THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—JEREMIAH HEGARTY, MILLSTREET.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If Jeremiah Hegarty, late of the Macroom Workhouse, now of Millstreet, has been appointed to the Commission of the Peace in the County of Cork; whether the said Hegarty is owner of a public-house in the town of Millstreet, and is also bailiff to the Landlord Defence League in Cork; whether he has been for some time past, and still continues, under police protection; if it is true that his police guard have objected to the treatment they have received at his hands; what reasons have been given for granting police protection to Hegarty; on how many occasions this year has a supplementary police patrol been sent to survey the route by which Hegarty was travelling; whether such police were supplied on Hegarty's application; whether the only people who frequent his public-house are policemen and emergency men; whether, in view of these facts, it is his intention to bring the appointment under the notice of the Lord Chancellor; and, by whom was Hegarty recommended for the said magisterial position?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): This Question appears on the Paper without Notice, and as some local inquiry is necessary, it cannot be answered for a few days. Perhaps the hon. Member will be good enough to postpone it for a week.

## CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS — IMPORTATION OF CATTLE FROM IRELAND INTO SCOTLAND.

Mr. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the action of certain Local Authorities in Scotland with regard to forbidding the importation of cattle from Ireland generally; whether any distinction is made by these Authorities either as to the locality or port from which cattle are sent or as to the sort of cattle, whether store or dairy cattle; whether any disease has been traced to any, and what, Irish port, and what class of cattle was affected; whether he will call the attention of the Scottish Authorities to page 22 of the last Report of the Agricultural Department of the English Privy Council, where it is shown that 69 per cent of the cases of pleuro-pneumonia in Scotland are shown to be in the dairy stock of Glasgow and Edinburgh; whether he will make representation in the proper quarter in Scotland, so as to prevent these powers of sanitary regulations from being an injury to the export trade of Ireland; whether it is a fact that two years ago some similar action was taken, but afterwards modified, so far as the ports of Derry and Belfast were concerned, on the protest of the Irish Authorities; and, whether he will take similar energetic action to have the same modifications made immediately?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I fully recognize the importance of the subject to which this Question refers, but it appears on the Paper without Notice; and it is impossible for me to be in a position to answer it without previous communication with the Departments concerned both in London and Dublin.

MR. O'DOHERTY: Will the right hon. Gentleman endeavour to do so at once, if possible?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, I will.

### THE ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS AND THE PADDINGTON TRUSTEES—SALE OF LAND.

MR. LIONEL COHEN (Paddington, N.) asked the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Epping Division of Essex (as one of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners), Whether the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have informed the representatives of the parish of Paddington that a difficulty exists in carrying into effect a sale of vacant land in Paddington, the joint property of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and the Paddington Trustees, which land is required by the parish authorities for a recreation ground, the scheme for that purpose being promoted as the Jubilee scheme for the parish; whether the difficulty arises from a difference of opinion between the joint owners as to the share of the proceeds of the land to which they would respectively be entitled, and not from any question as to the price to be obtained, which has practically been mutually agreed upon; and, whether, considering the public object for which the land is required—namely, that of securing for public purposes of recreation the only vacant land in the densely populated parish, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners will endeavour to take such means as may remove the obstacle now apparently existing?

SIR HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON (Essex, Epping): My answer to the first and second paragraphs is, yes. In replying to the third paragraph, I would say that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners would be prepared to concur in the sale of the land for the Paddington Park at the price per acre suggested, provided that the money be placed in the hands of Trustees, who should invest the amount and pay to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and the Paddington Trustees respectively so much of the income as represents what they at present receive from the land to be sold, any excess of income being allowed to accumulate and being invested until the whole question at issue between the Commissioners and the Paddington Trustees be settled. I may say the Ecclesiastical Commissioners have offered and are willing to refer the question at issue between them and the Paddington Trustees at once to arbitration, the arbitrator suggested by them being Lord Selborne, Lord Herschell, or Lord Bramwell.

### POST OFFICE — POSTAGE TO AUSTRALIA AND NEW CALEDONIA.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Is he aware that letters from England for New Caledonia, *viâ* Australia are charged 4*d.* each, while letters also from this country for Australia, 1,000 miles nearer, and carried by the same steamers, cost 6*d.* each; and, will he consent to the appointment of a Select Committee of the House, with a view to remedy these and other anomalies?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): Yes; I am quite aware that letters can be forwarded by French packet to New Caledonia for a postage of 4*d.* each, while 6*d.* is charged for a letter to Australia by any route, and whether by British or by French packet. The explanation is that New Caledonia (a French Colony) is in the Postal Union, and enjoys its advantages, while the Australian Colonies are not in the Union. The question of the Australian Colonies joining the Postal Union is one entirely for the consideration of the Colonies themselves. Hitherto they have not thought it expedient to do so. As the Conference of Colonial Representatives about to meet in London is expressly invited to consider this and other questions, I should think it scarcely courteous to the Colonial Governments to anticipate any recommendations which that Conference may make by instituting an inquiry by a Committee of this House at this moment.

## POST OFFICE—CHARGES FOR POSTAL ORDERS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Is he aware that postal orders for 10*s*. 6*d*. cost 1*d*., while postal orders for 9*s*. cost 1½*d*.; and that postal orders for 20*s*. cost 1½*d*., while the 19*s*. 6*d*. postal orders cost 2½*d*.; and, will he take steps to remedy this grievance, or call for suggestions from his officers, with a view to overcome these anomalies?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that there are no 9*s*. or 19*s*. 6*d*. postal orders in existence; and that it would be impossible, without increasing the poundage to meet the heavy expense, to issue a multitude of orders so as to include every conceivable sum between 1*s*. and 20*s*. It is necessary, in order to send the amounts quoted, to use more than one order; and in such cases the commissions payable for the two orders may not unreasonably exceed the amount payable for only one.

## EDUCATION (IRELAND)—NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When he will bring forward the Government measure for improving the position of the Irish National School Teachers, which there is reason to believe was under the consideration of the late Chief Secretary?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): This subject is under my consideration; but, having regard to the present state of Public Business, I can give no promise at present with reference to it.

MR. TUITE asked, Whether the First Lord of the Treasury would give him facilities for moving the second reading of the Bill on this subject standing in his name?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Until the Rules of Procedure are through, it will not be in my power to give any promise to the hon. Member.

MR. TUITE: During the present Session will you afford us any opportunity?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

## SOUTH AFRICA—GERMAN OCCUPATION OF PONDOLAND.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, If his attention has been called to a statement in *The Pall Mall Gazette* of 14th March, that Dr. Karl Peters is about to start from Berlin in command of an expedition to take possession of a portion of Pondoland; and if there is any Treaty by which Germany has acquired possession of territory in South Africa, between 21 and 32 degrees south and 29 and 30 degrees east?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): My attention has been called to the paragraph mentioned by the hon. Member. We have no knowledge of the alleged Karl Peters' Expedition. No such Treaty as that referred to exists between this country and Germany, nor have we ever heard of such Treaty between Germany and the Pondo Chief. I may add that in August, 1885, certain proposals, apparently arising out of an agreement made by Herr Nagel with the Chief of Pondoland, were made with a view of placing Pondoland under the protection of the German Empire; but the German Government replied that they were not in a position to entertain the Petition in question, as they had already been informed that Her Majesty's Government exercises a protectorate over the whole coast of Pondoland, in pursuance of Sir Bartle Frere's Proclamation of September 4, 1878, and Sir Peregrine Maitland's Treaty of October 7, 1844.

## CEYLON—THE COLOMBO AND KANDY RAILWAY.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Colombo and Kandy Railway in Ceylon was constructed on funds provided by a tax levied on the agricultural produce of the Uva Province; whether a considerable revenue is at the present moment enjoyed by Government from the profits of that railway; whether the Nanu-oya extension of that railway was constructed on the understanding that the line should ultimately be carried on into the Uva Province, and can only become a profitable line when the Uva extension has been carried out; and, whether Her Majesty's Government, considering the unanimous wish of the Governor, the Council, and the planters of Ceylon to be permitted to carry out that extension, will re-consider its recent veto?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): The Colombo and Kandy Railway was constructed by funds provided by a loan secured on the general revenue and assets of the Colony. In addition to this, between 1856 and 1870, an export duty was levied on the produce and manufactures of the whole Island, not of Uva only. No separate profit and loss account of that particular section of the Ceylon Government Railway is kept. But while the profit earned by it is, no doubt, considerable, it is largely diminished by the less profitable extensions of the original main line. The Nanu-oya extension was sanctioned exclusively on its own merits. The anticipation of profit has not been realized; and the question of the further extension of the line, and whether such extension would render it remunerative, has engaged the careful consideration of my Predecessors. My right hon. Friend the present Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) declined to give his sanction to the Uva extension, because the estimates of net earnings proved an examination to be untrustworthy. Public opinion in Ceylon is divided on the matter; and the Legislative Council were not unanimous, as the gentleman representing the Native community protested against the measure, and divided against it, on the ground that, should the line be unremunerative, the country would be burdened with a very large increase of debt. The amount required for the immediate extension of 25 miles to Haputella is nearly 7,000,000 rupees; and no settlement will be accepted by the Uva planters as satisfactory which does not provide for a further extension of about 30 miles beyond Badulla. My Predecessor, however, expressed his readiness to permit the extension to be constructed by a Company, should capitalists take a different view of the figures placed before him.

## STATE OF IRELAND — THE NORTH RIDING OF TIPPERARY.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the address of the Right Honourable Baron Dowse to the Grand Jury of the North Riding of Tipperary County, at the recent Spring Assizes at Nenagh, in which the following passages occurred:—

> "Gentlemen, I am very glad to tell you that the business to go before you is very light.
>
> "The number of cases is not more than eight.
>
> "Of the cases reported to me by the County Inspector, numbering 28, with the exception of the eight I have mentioned, they do not show any tendency to crime in this part of the county.
>
> "The contrast between these 28 cases and the 41 cases brought under the notice of the Judge on Circuit last year, is, on the whole, very satisfactory. In fact, so far as overt acts of crime are concerned, the North Riding of Tipperary was never in a better state.
>
> "You must remember, Gentlemen, this is not the first time I was on Circuit here; and, as far as I can judge or form an opinion, the state of the North Riding of Tipperary is very satisfactory.
>
> "There has been a decrease of crime in all cases, and a decrease of 49 in cases of intoxication.
>
> "So far as I know, you have every reason to be satisfied with the state of the county;"

whether, at said Assizes, there was a presentment for £505 for extra police, referring to which the Judge, in reply to a traverse, said "it was imperative on him to pass it;" and, whether, in view of this address of Baron Dowse, the Government will take steps to relieve the ratepayers of Tipperary from the burden of this amount for extra police?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I believe the report to be substantially accurate. The question of extra police has been very recently under the consideration of the Irish Government; and, in their opinion, the number cannot be safely diminished. They are chiefly required for the protection of individuals; and it is satisfactory to learn, from the learned Judge's remarks, that they have so efficiently performed their duty.

## POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) —THE HAMPSTEAD POST OFFICE.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Whether a principal clerk in the Secretary's Office of the General Post Office has recently made a complaint, at the instigation of his own daughter, of incivility on the part of certain female clerks in a local post office at Hampstead; whether, on the reference of this principal clerk, these female clerks were reprimanded for their alleged incivility; whether an impartial inquiry will be made, so as to ascertain the real facts of the case; and, whether, in the event of the Postmaster General being satisfied that the complaint was unjustifiable, the censure on the female clerks in question will be officially withdrawn?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): A complaint, such as that to which the hon. Member refers, has been recently made by a lady residing in Hampstead, and this lady happens to be the daughter of one of the principal clerks in the Secretary's Office. Having myself inquired into the matter, I feel constrained to state that, in my judgment, the matter is a very trumpery one; and I should much regret if, from the attention—the undeserved attention—it has received, the public were led to suppose that the relatives of Post Office servants claimed a greater amount of attention than other people. To judge from the testimony which the complaint has evoked in their favour, the two female clerks in question would seem to bear a high character for civility and attention in the discharge of their official duties, and to have conducted themselves generally to the satisfaction of the public. No official censure has been passed upon them, and they will receive none.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD — THE ILKLEY LOCAL BOARD—REDUCTION OF THE QUOTA OF MEMBERS.

Mr. BARRAN (York, W.R., Otley) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is true that the Board have decided to reduce the number of members on the Ilkley Local Board from 18 to 12 against the unanimous decision of a public meeting (called by the churchwarden and overseer) against such reduction; and, whether, in view of that decision, they will postpone the reduction till after the ratepayers have had an opportunity, by their votes, of expressing their opinion on the question at the next election?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Local Government Board were applied to by the Ilkley Local Board to issue an Order reducing the number of the members of the Local Board from 12 to 9. They were subsequently informed of the resolution passed at the meeting referred to; and, before arriving at any decision, they directed a local inquiry by one of their Inspectors. After full consideration of the matter the Board deemed it desirable to comply with the request of the Local Board, on the ground that the arrangement was one likely to conduce to the satisfactory conduct of the business of the Board; and an Order was issued accordingly on the 8th of this month. The number of members as now fixed is fully equal to that which is now usually assigned to a district with a population such as that of the Ilkley District. If the Order of the Local Government Board had been deferred, there could have been no reduction in the number of members to be elected at the coming election.

## POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—DISTRICT SURVEYORS.

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is aware that postal surveyors and their assistants in the different postal districts in Ireland are in the habit of notifying to the Postmasters of some of the principal Head Offices in their districts the date upon which they will make a survey of the offices of these Postmasters; whether the survey of an office includes a check of the various accounts, as also of the stock of stamps and money held in reserve; whether a notification of this kind is in accordance with surveyors' duties; and, whether it might enable Postmasters, who may happen to be defaulters in their accounts, to make good the amount from other sources preparatory to the survey of their offices taking place?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): I am assured by the surveyors that they and their assistants are not in the habit of notifying to any Postmaster the date upon which a survey will be commenced; but secrecy on the point has not been observed, unless there has been in any particular case a special object in doing so. The accounts of Post Offices are checked at certain times, independently of surveys, and the check at a survey is made in connection with the general scrutiny which is then effected into the whole system of keeping the accounts, and is not merely directed to the testing of the balances.

## THE IMPERIAL INSTITUTE—THE SITE AT SOUTH KENSINGTON.

Sir SAMUEL WILSON (Portsmouth) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the site at South Kensington which is proposed for the Imperial Institute will be given free of cost and incumbrance to that Institution; or whether it will be liable for the whole, or any portion, of the sum of £143,119 15*s*. 11*d*., due by the Commissioners of the Exhibition of 1851 to the Greenwich Hospital Fund, as shown in the Accounts of Greenwich Hospital furnished to Parliament on the 18th February last?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) Strand, Westminster): I am informed that the terms on which the Commissioners of the Exhibition of 1851 propose to grant the site for the Imperial Institute are not yet arranged; and the Commissioners tell me that they have no intention of asking the Lords of the Admiralty to release the site from the mortgage debt except upon payment of the amount due.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked, whether the accounts connected with the Imperial Institute would be published?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I think I mentioned the other day that the Government have no connection whatever, as a Government, with the Imperial Institute; and, therefore, it would be quite out of the question for them to enter into any engagement on the subject.

## THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881, AND THE PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACT, 1885 — "ANONYMOUS WITNESSES."

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) (for Mr. T. M. Healy) (Longford, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he can explain why the evidence of the Royal Commission on the Irish Land Question, presided over by Lord Cowper, contains, as if from four witnesses, a series of statements headed "Anonymous;" and, is there any precedent for evidence to be received, or published, by a Royal Commission from witnesses unwilling to give their names?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I think the House and the hon. Gentleman must be aware that the Government have no control over the proceedings or arrangement of the business of a Royal Commission; but I am informed that there have been instances in other Commissions in which evidence has been given in the manner indicated by the Question. The reluctance of the witnesses to append their names to the evidence may be accounted for by the present state of affairs in Ireland.

## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE ESTIMATES.

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): May I ask when Her Majesty's Government propose to take the Vote on Account for the Civil Service?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): On Thursday next.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I thought there was an understanding that the Navy Estimates were to be taken on Thursday.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: The Navy Estimates, the Supplementary Navy Estimates, and the Vote on Account for the Civil Service will all be down on Thursday. On the Motion that the Speaker do leave the Chair to go into Committee on the Navy Estimates, it will be competent for hon. Members to bring forward Amendments relating to such Estimates; but we shall be able to proceed with the Supplementary Navy Estimates and the Vote on Account for the Civil Service without any further Motion that the Speaker do leave the Chair.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): As a point of Order, may I ask you, Sir, if it is practicable for the Government to take a Vote on Account without first moving that you leave the Chair?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes; it has been repeatedly done.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Has it not invariably been in reference to Supplementary Estimates as distinct from Votes on Account? Is it not competent for any hon. Member to move an

Amendment to the Question that you leave the Chair for the purpose of considering a Vote on Account?

MR. SPEAKER: No; it is not competent for an hon. Member to move an Amendment to the Motion that the Speaker leave the Chair for the purpose of considering a Vote on Account. The distinction which the hon. Member draws is incorrect, and it would be my duty to leave the Chair at once on the Motion being made, on Monday or Thurday that the House go into Committee for the purpose of considering either Supplementary Estimates or a Vote on Account.

## SUPPLY—ARMY ESTIMATES—DISCUSSION OF VOTE 1.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked, Whether any further opportunity would be given for discussion of the first, and most important, Army Vote, which had been passed at a late hour without discussion? He also wished to know when it was expected that the Select Committee on the Estimates would make its Report?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. Member must be aware that an engagement was entered into for the renewal of the general discussion on Army Votes upon the Vote for Clothing. I hope that the Select Committee on the Estimates will report their observations to the House at an early period.

MR. WOODALL (Hanley) asked, Whether the Army Estimates would be referred directly to the Committee, or laid upon the Table of the House?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I have had no opportunity of discussing this question with my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War; but the intention of the Government was to carry out the undertaking given to the House, to refer the Estimates after the first Vote to the Committee for inquiry, and the Committee will report its observations to the House. It is not intended to proceed to the further Votes, unless any absolute necessity should occur, until the Committee has had the opportunity of reporting its decision. But, as the hon. Member knows, the necessities of the Public Service make it necessary sometimes to take a Vote on Account. At all events, no time will be lost on the part of the Government.

## POST OFFICE—PILLAR BOXES—MARKING WITH THE POINTS OF THE COMPASS.

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether his attention had been drawn to the great advantage to be derived from marking the points of the compass on the tops of street pillar-boxes, in order to assist strangers to find their way in dark and foggy weather?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The suggestion of the hon. Member seems to be interesting and ingenious; and I shall be happy to take the advice of my Department on the subject.

## HIGHER AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION.

MR. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government would give him an opportunity after Easter to discuss the important question, upon which he had a Motion on the Paper, of higher agricultural education, and the desirability of carrying out a series of experiments, in order to ascertain on what points the British agriculturist could most successfully compete with the foreign producer?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I wish to express my great regret that the prolonged discussion on the Rules of Procedure renders it impossible for the House to discuss the important question of which my hon. Friend has given Notice, and many other questions and Bills on the Notice Paper. I can enter into no engagement with my hon. Friend as to Public Business after Easter. It must be for the House itself to make such progress with the necessary Business of the country as to enable questions of this great importance to be adequately discussed.

## SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES —THE VOTE ON ACCOUNT.

In reply to Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton),

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, that, without consultation with his Colleagues, he was unable to state the amount of the Vote on Account of the Civil Service Estimates, or the length of time which it was intended to cover.

## *ORDER OF THE DAY.*

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### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE)—RULE 1 (CLOSURE OF DEBATE).—RESOLUTION.

ADJOURNED DEBATE. [TWELFTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Main Question, as amended,

> "That, after a Question has been proposed, a Member rising in his place may claim to move, 'That the Question be now put,' and, unless it shall appear to the Chair that such Motion is an abuse of the Rules of the House, or an infringement of the rights of the minority, the Question, 'That the Question be now put,' shall be put forthwith, and decided without Amendment or Debate:
>
> "When the Motion 'That the Question be now put,' has been carried, and the Question consequent thereon has been decided, any further Motion may be made (the assent of the Chair as aforesaid not having been withheld) which may be requisite to bring to a decision any Question already proposed from the Chair; and also if a Clause be then under consideration, a Motion may be made (the assent of the Chair as aforesaid not having been withheld) That the Question, That certain words of the Clause defined in the Motion stand part of the Clause, or That the Clause stand part of, or be added to the Bill, be now put. Such Motions shall be put forthwith, and decided without Amendment or Debate:
>
> "Provided always, That Questions for the Closure of Debate shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear by the numbers declared from the Chair, that such Motion was supported by more than Two Hundred Members, or was opposed by less than Forty Members, and supported by more than One Hundred Members." —(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

**Mr. E. R. RUSSELL** (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to move to insert, after the words "decided without Amendment or Debate," the following words:—

> "Provided, That whenever the Chair does not withhold its assent to a Motion of Closure which, if carried, would withdraw from consideration any Amendment of which Notice has been given, the Chair shall declare whether such an Amendment is an abuse of the Rules of the House or has been sufficiently discussed under some other form."

I deprecate the idea that the passing of this Amendment will have any prejudicial effect upon the legitimate action of the closure. For some years I have been an advocate of the closure, although I am anxious to see such a measure of closure as could be legitimately applied and which might reasonably be believed to be successful. The discussion which took place on Friday night turned on the possibility of the closure being applied to a debate on a clause of a Bill, and the consequent exclusion from discussion of certain *bonâ fide* Amendments to such clause. Several suggestions had been made for meeting the case in point, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) moved an Amendment which, however, he subsequently withdrew in order to allow further time for consideration. It is that same Amendment which I am now again submitting to the judgment of the House. In the discussion on Friday night the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) said that those who supported this proposal were seeking the right of unlimited Amendment. That, I can assure the House, is not our intention, and we do not believe that such a result can possibly ensue from the provisions which we propose. At the same time, the right of very free Amendment is essential to the usefulness of Parliament, and has tended very materially in the past to the improvement of legislation. I have noticed with much satisfaction that a number of eminent Members on both sides of the House have expressed great tenderness for the right of moving Amendments. I refer especially to the views which have been put forward on the subject by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Basingstoke Division of Hants (Mr. Sclater-Booth), the hon. and learned Member for the Kingswinford Division of Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill), the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Leeds (Sir Lyon Playfair), and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Whitehaven (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck). By means of Amendments persistently pressed great improvements were introduced into the Prisons Act and the Army Discipline Act. There was a time, I believe, when my hon. Friend the present Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney), in the debates on the South African Bill, found it necessary to press his right of moving Amendments to an extent which, at the time, was considered to be vexatious. If it is said that the right of moving of Amendments to clauses in Bills will, if preserved in an unlimited form, be liable to abuse, I would reply that the two points placed in my proposal for the guidance of the Chair, and on which the Chair is required to pronounce an opinion, are a quite sufficient safeguard against any such danger. The Chairman, under this process, will only exclude such Amendments as are an abuse of the Rules of the House, or else have been sufficiently discussed under some other form. If the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) is willing to concede some safeguard, but prefers to give it in more general terms, then I will suggest that instead of this Amendment, the right hon. Gentleman should accept one which stands on the Paper in the name of my hon. Friend (Mr. John Ellis), and which requires that, when the closure is permitted by the Chair in a form that will shut out Amendments, the Chair shall declare generally the reasons why each such Amendment shall be so withdrawn from consideration. The right hon. Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), who in all these discussions on Procedure has shown a fair spirit, and spoken in the tone of a statesman, has confessed the possible dangers of this new Closure Rule, and the difficulties that may arise under it; but he urged us not to attend to such alarms, because the outlook was full of evil portent. I consider that, if the House keeps its head, we need not be afraid of evil portents. We can always manage our own Business, if we direct our efforts to that end. We accept the contention of the Government that, on a Motion of Closure, the Speaker shall have a right to veto; but as the Rule stands at present, the Chair will be placed in an extraordinary and novel position in regard to Amendments to clauses, as distinguished from the application of the closure on a single question which has been adequately debated. If, however, the Proviso which I propose were adopted, the Chair would be able on its own responsibility, and as the fit channel of the general good sense of the House, to discriminate as to what Amendments should, and what should not, be withdrawn from consideration. It may be said that this Proviso is inconsistent with the former contention of the Opposition—that the Chair should not exercise any discretion; but I would point out, in the first place, that the principle of the Chair exercising discretion has been accepted by the House, and is finally determined on; in the second place, surely the machinery to deal with such Amendments to a clause as are liable to be swept away without reference to their reasonableness, is very different to the machinery which we should wish to have employed when the Chair has to consider the stoppage of discussion on a distinct question under debate. The First Lord of the Treasury has urged that only bogus Amendments will be shut out by the Rule as it stands; but we have only the right hon. Gentleman's word for that, and he may not hereafter be in a position to give us that security which his occupancy of his present Office may fairly be said to afford us. The noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) has admitted that the Rule, as proposed by the Government, will unduly preclude the discussion of Amendments, and the noble Marquess has himself introduced an alteration with the view of meeting that defect. The alteration, however, does not go far enough, although as far as it does go it is a distinct improvement, and I think we ought to have his Lordship's support for the Proviso that I have moved, as it will secure the object we have in view without being open to any objection, and without being liable to abuse. I cannot imagine that, under any circumstances, it can be abused, and that is a strong argument in favour of the Proviso. We cannot have a worse "portent" than for this House to reject an Amendment that cannot be abused, in favour of a Regulation which is admitted by many of our most eminent and, so to speak, most Parliamentary Members to be not only absolutely novel, but open to grave objections. It has been a matter of satisfaction to hear Gentlemen in various parts of the House speaking, not from a Party point of view, nor even from the point of view of desiring to press Business forward with greater speed, but with a genuine sense of the noble traditions of this Assembly as a place of political debate and for the discussion of everything which concerns the welfare of the nation. In conclusion, I move the insertion of my Proviso, believing that it is not liable to any abuse, that it will not weaken the legitimate use of the closure, and that it will furnish an automatic and satisfactory method of securing that every substantial and reasonable Amendment to a clause shall be brought before the House for examination and decision.

Amendment proposed,

In line 12, after the word "Debate," to insert the words "Provided, That whenever the Chair does not withhold its assent to a Motion of Closure which, if carried, would withdraw from consideration any Amendment of which Notice has been given, the Chair shall declare whether such an Amendment is an abuse of the Rules of the House, or has been sufficiently discussed under some other form."—(*Mr. E. R. Russell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I regret that the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Mr. E. R. Russell) has thought it necessary to raise this evening a question that was debated on Friday evening at considerable length and ultimately withdrawn.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Not at considerable length.

MR. W. H. SMITH: The hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool says that it was not debated at considerable length; but my impression is that my right hon. Friend opposite the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) spoke three times upon it in the course of the evening, and referred to the question frequently in a debate which lasted for some hours. It is unusual that a question of this character should be raised in almost precisely the same terms at the next Sitting after it had been distinctly withdrawn. At the same time, I believe that the Motion of the hon. Gentleman is perfectly in Order. I have only referred to that matter incidentally as an illustration of the extreme difficulty we have in making progress in the discussion of these Rules which are of vital importance to the House, and are intended to save the time of the House so that important questions may receive the consideration which ought to be given to them. The hon. Gentleman asks the House in his Amendment to lay down a Rule which is absolutely novel in the practice of the House. It is altogether novel that the Speaker or Chairman of Committees should, by order of the House, give a reason for any decision on any duty imposed on him by the House in the discharge of his duties. I regret to say that almost every night now the Speaker has to interpose on Questions of Order, and it frequently happens that reasons are given; but it has never occurred to the House before that the Chair should be called upon to state the grounds upon which its decision has been given. It is important, I think, to see that under the terms of this Rule we do not impose a new duty upon the Chair; and hitherto it has never occurred to any hon. Member to require the Chair to state the grounds on which a particular decision has been arrived at. It, therefore, seems to me that it would be an unfortunate departure for this House to take if they make it imperative to say—"Such a duty shall be imposed upon the Chair under all circumstances." It seems to me to open the way for the raising of questions as to the validity of the grounds on which the Chair may have taken a decision; and I can quite see how it is calculated seriously to impair the efficiency of the Chair. It would expose the Chair to question as to whether a right and sound judgment had been exercised; and hon. Members will readily conceive what a large amount of inconvenience would be created by an absolutely universal compliance with such a stipulation. If we are to adopt Rules of this nature we are bound uniformly to adhere to certain principles, and we must place responsibility and trust in the Chair. The traditions which surround the Chair are such as give the House and the country absolute confidence in the impartiality of the Speaker. The House has already passed Rules which may be enforced in case of emergency, and I cannot see any ground whatever for this new departure which the hon. Gentleman is endeavouring to induce the House to accept. We are told that we can always manage our own Business with accuracy and success. I entirely disagree with that statement. As a matter of fact, if we had not entirely broken down in the management of our Business it would not have been necessary to ask the House for this increased power. The hon. Member has alluded to the right of free Amendment, and free discussion; but, for my own part, I think the right of moving Amendments, and the right of free discussion, will be greatly forwarded and assisted and not hindered by the restraint which the House is about to put on itself in the absolute waste of time in Amendments which must be acknowledged to be frivolous and mere repetition. More than that, they have the effect of depriving the House of the opportunity of giving a real consideration to important questions that are presented for decision. On these grounds I cannot accept the Amendment of the hon. Member, and I trust that the time which the House has already devoted to this matter on Friday last may be allowed to count in the more rapid disposal of the question now.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) has alluded to the course which I took on Friday last in reference to this matter; but I think he has entirely forgotten what really occurred on that occasion. What happened was this. We were discussing, late at night, several Amendments to the latter part of Rule I. We had arrived at the Amendment of my noble Friend the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) and an Amendment to that Amendment. In the early part of the evening, somewhere about 8 or 9 o'clock, I stated what I had urged on the previous Tuesday—namely, that the Rule as drafted would be dangerous unless some Proviso were introduced into it to prevent safe, sound, and proper Amendments from being blocked out by the operation of the Rule in its original shape, which allowed one Member to propose the closure on an early Amendment and the Chair to sanction it as against all subsequent Amendments. I said then that after the Amendments had been disposed of I thought the Government might propose certain words which would meet that difficulty; and I added that if the Government did not do so I would try and draft an Amendment myself. What happened was this. I think we arrived at the point whether these words should be introduced at about half-past 12, and, having explained what I proposed to do, I move the words I suggested. How was my suggestion received? I was answered by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, not having in his hand the words on the Paper, attributed to me in regard to the latter part of the Amendment a precisely opposite intention to that which I really had. He said—"How can the House ascertain whether an Amendment has been sufficiently discussed if that Amendment has not been before the House?" quite forgetting that the Amendment assumed that it would have been discussed in some other form. The House then got into a wrangle, which lasted for some time, and I thought that the best way out of it was to ask the House for leave to withdraw the Motion with a view to its being brought up afterwards and really discussed. That is the history of the matter. This Amendment is an important one, and I will now endeavour to say one or two words in order to show that the right hon. Gentleman has not appreciated our present position in approaching this subject. He said that it would be a new duty to impose on the Speaker or the Chairman that he should have to give reasons for any action which might be taken in connection with questions of closure. He laid great stress on that argument. But, Sir, what happens now? The existing Rule as to closure says that—

> "When it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of Ways and Means, in a Committee of the Whole House, during any debate, that the subject has been adequately discussed, and that it is the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the question be now put, he may inform the House or the Committee."

That is to say, that under our present Rules neither the Speaker nor the Chairman of Committees can apply the closure except by assigning a reason that "it is the evident sense of the House or of the Committee that the Question be now put." I think that the First Lord of the Treasury must have forgotten that the Speaker or Chairman is bound to assign a reason, and, therefore, that there is nothing novel in requiring the Speaker or the Chairman under this Rule to give a specific reason for any course of action he may think fit to pursue. Let me remind the House, as it has been extremely well put by the hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Mr. E. R. Russell), that we are dealing in this matter not with closure simply, but with exclusion. Closure means that when we have devoted adequate time to the discussion of a particular question the debate should be brought to a close at once; whereas exclusion means that the House refuses to allow a question to be debated at all, and not even to be put to the vote. Therefore, the two questions are totally different, and I think that we are bound, if the power of excluding any question from debate and division is given, to surround that power with certain obligations on the part of the Chair to state clearly why a particular Amendment is not to be put. This question is one which came up before; and I would remind the House of what took place in 1881, when the Urgency Rules, which were very stringent, were laid down, and when a question precisely analogous to the proposal now made arose. In regard to the Urgency Rules of 1881, in the first instance, Mr. Speaker Brand did not make any rule about clauses in Committee on a Bill. But on the 17th of February he laid on the Table a number of additional Rules, one of which provided—I think it was the third—that Amendments and new clauses not yet disposed of in Committee on a Bill might be put forthwith, and if the proceedings of the Committee were not concluded, then the Chairman might leave the Chair and Report the Bill to the House. Therefore, under the Rule of Urgency it was laid down most carefully on the part of Mr. Speaker Brand that every question must be put before the Committee had concluded its labours. But on the following day Sir Stafford Northcote, who appeared not to have been quite satisfied with that Rule, believing that it did not give sufficient security for the consideration of all Amendments, came down to the House and used these words at the beginning of Business. He said that he hoped the Speaker would alter the Rule of Urgency, because, as he pointed out—

> "They understood from the Rules that, in the event of their adopting the Motion that it was intended to propose, it would be impossible for the House, after the hour of 12, not only to discuss, but even to vote upon any Amendments that had not before that been reached, even though such an Amendment might have been long on the Paper, might be in itself of importance, and might involve matters that had not been touched by any previous Amendment."—(3 *Hansard*, [258] 1236.)

Sir Stafford Northcote, in spite of what at first sight were the clear words laid down by Mr. Speaker Brand, considered it necessary on behalf of his Party to provide, as an absolute necessity, that all Amendments, whether they had been reached or not, should be dealt with before the Urgency Rule was applied. Mr. Speaker Brand on the same day substituted a new Rule of Urgency, in which it was provided that Amendments and new clauses standing on the Paper should, after a stated hour, be put. That modification was satisfactory to the House, and under these circumstances all the clauses of a Bill and substantial Amendments under the Urgency Rules were put. What I would ask the House now is this. Were not the Rules of Urgency satisfactory as to Amendments to clauses on the Paper, and why do the Government propose to introduce a much more drastic closure than that which was so provided for? In March, 1881, I find instances of a great number of Amendments being put without debate under the Rules of Urgency; but I cannot find any indication that such Amendments were either frivolous or vexatious, or more in number than would be natural as Amendments to the clauses of a Bill. I know that in one case there were two, and in another three, Amendments to a particular clause; but the operation of the Rules of Urgency protected hon. Members in insisting that all Amendments should be put, and that provision was absolutely satisfactory. I do not care about the exact words of the Amendment; but I had hoped that the House would introduce into the present Rule a safeguard something like that which is now proposed, and, as I have shown, they will be acting in accordance with the decision arrived at under Rules of Urgency. I trust that the hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow will persevere in his Amendment.

Mr. MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr.): I wish to express my astonishment at the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), that it would be a novel practice for the Speaker of the House to give a reason for enforcing the clôture. Let me recall to the recollection of the House what occurred three or four nights ago when you applied the clôture to a Motion proposed by the hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark) for the adjournment of the House. On that occasion you distinctly stated that you did so because you considered the Motion to be an abuse of the Rules of the House. The right hon. Gentleman and his supporters loudly cheered that announcement on the part of the Speaker. The right hon. Gentleman also referred to the judicial action of the Chair in stopping speeches of hon. Members of the House on various occasions. Certainly that has occurred, and in doing so, Sir, you have distinctly declared from the Chair the reason why you have done so. For instance, you have said, "I have warned the hon. Member that he was wandering from the subject, and as he is continuing the same irrelevancy I call upon him to resume his seat." Personally, I cannot recall a single instance from my own experience in which the Chair has intervened in order to enforce the closure without expressing the reason why such extraordinary action was taken by the Chair. I am afraid that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury does not understand the full meaning of this Amendment. As a matter of fact, it carries out the object which the right hon. Gentleman professes to devise —namely, it stops unreasonable Amendments, while permitting substantial and reasonable Amendments to be proposed.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH (Hants, Basingstoke): I wish to point out that the Amendment is rather inconsistent with what the House has already decided—namely, that the intervention of the Speaker or the Chairman should be changed from giving assent or being a party to the Motion for the closure into a mere veto. The Amendment would practically bring back the Speaker or the Chairman into the arena, and make him a party to the whole proceeding in regard to the closure; and, after the decision which the House has already arrived at on that point, I cannot consistently vote for the Amendment.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON (Lancashire, Rossendale): I think that the adoption of the Amendment would introduce a most unfortunate confusion into the language of the Rule, which ought to be, above all things, clear, simple, and intelligible. It would introduce into the Rule the term "abuse of the Rules of the House" twice, and in different senses; and, further, I do not think that the Amendment would effect what its advocates desire. It would not really give any protection to hon. Members who might wish to move Amendments. I cannot admit that the Rule as it now stands is more drastic than the Urgency Rule of 1881. The operation of the Urgency Rule of 1881 was that at a certain date and hour we should practically conclude the consideration of a Bill in Committee, and then all Amendments on the Bill, whether important or trivial, are to be put and decided upon, but without debate—that is to say, that discussion on what might be most important Amendments is excluded. It has been said that the operation of that Rule is perfectly satisfactory; but I ask hon. Members below the Gangway whether they think it is a satisfactory Rule, and whether it would afford them any substantial satisfaction to be able to vote upon Amendments that are put without any discussion? That appears to me to be a far more drastic Rule than the one we are now considering. What I think the Mover of the Amendment really means is that the Chairman should prohibit the closure Motion unless he is able to make the declaration proposed to be required of him. Now, I cannot admit that there is on the part of hon. Members an inherent right of moving an indefinite number of Amendments any more than there is an inherent right of the indefinite prolongation of discussion. The House has a right to the disposal of its own time and to the conduct of its own Business, and the majority, with certain safeguards, not only have a right to stop discussion, but to state the conditions on which Amendments should be proposed. Whether the right of the House to dispose of its own time and to manage its Business in its own way is more struck at by the undue prolongation of debate or by undue Amendments to a Bill is rather a question of degree than of principle; but, I think that we are not likely to obtain the results we are endeavouring to secure by this Rule if we allow its operation to be limited as the Amendment proposes. That Amendment goes in the opposite direction to the line taken in the discussion up to the present time by my right hon. Friends on this Bench. Their object up till now has been to make the closure more simple and more effective, and at the same time to relieve the Chair from any unnecessary new responsibility. But that

Amendment would render the closure less effective and less simple, and would cast upon the Chair a new responsibility in having to make a declaration which the Chair is not now called on to make. Instructions have already been given to the Chair as to the mode in which it is to exercise the veto conferred on it; and I do not believe that either greater protection would be afforded to the minority or greater power given to the House for the due conduct of its Business if we seek further to fetter the Chair by requiring it to make the declaration contemplated by this Amendment.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I understand the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale to argue that the House and the Speaker together may prevent the House from discussing an Amendment, although that Amendment may not be an abuse of the Forms of the House, and although it raises a perfectly new question, which has not been discussed. But then, says the noble Marquess, the object of the New Rule is to relieve the Speaker of responsibility; and you are now proposing to give him a new responsibility. Upon that basis, I contend that the noble Marquess is bound to vote for the Amendment, because, as a matter of fact, it relieves the Speaker of an immense responsibility. What is the Speaker to do? He is now made the sole authority, whether the Amendment proposed is reasonable or unreasonable, frivolous or not frivolous, and he may expose himself to unpopularity and dislike; and it is impossible to say whether that unpopularity and dislike may, or may not, be justified. The logical consequence of the doctrine laid down by the noble Marquess would be the millennium that is looked forward to by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who thinks that when a question has been thoroughly discussed in the country, half-an-hour would suffice for its discussion in the House. I should be much surprised to find that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury is prepared to accept the doctrine put forward by the noble Marquess. I cannot say that I assent to the description which has been given of this Amendment by the First Lord of the Treasury. He has said that in principle it was fully discussed on Friday night. Now, I never heard an important Amendment discussed with more brevity. The attention of the House was entirely taken up with the question of adjournment; and the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) took part in the discussion, without understanding the terms of the Amendment, and succeeded in entirely misrepresenting its character. As a matter of fact, no discussion at all took place upon the Amendment, except the few words with which the right hon. Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) prefaced his observations. I am certainly surprised at the way in which the Amendment has been received by the noble Marquess. I look upon it as a perfectly reasonable Amendment; and I should have expected that it would have received the support of the Government. My contention is that no Amendment ought to be excluded from discussion if it raises any new question of principle. It is intended to make the Speaker the sole authority to decide whether an Amendment is reasonable or frivolous. Thus, without assigning any reason, he might sweep a number of Amendments off the Paper. No Speaker can discharge such duties without incurring the dislike, and even the hatred, of a section of the Members of the House.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): As the Rule now stands, important Amendments may never be put at all; and the object of the proposal of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. E. R. Russell) is to secure that all Amendments, as far as possible, shall be submitted to the judgment of the House, and not be excluded altogether from discussion without the House having had an opportunity of arriving at a definite decision in regard to them. If we had an undertaking from the Government that Amendments would not be choked off, I might be satisfied to allow the Rule to go through as it is; but, as I have no such assurance, I think I am entitled to press for the acceptance of the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow, and I believe, further, that it would have been a great misfortune if it had not been moved to-night. When the Amendment was under discussion the other evening, only two speeches were made; and it was withdrawn not on account of the unwillingness of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) to put it, but on account of the impossibility of getting a fair discussion at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning. The position of the Chair having been reduced to the mere imposition of a veto is one reason why the Chairman refuses to interpose his veto, and to give his reason for doing so. But the whole system of closure is altered by these Rules; because, instead of the initiation of the closure resting with the Chair, the initiation is now placed in the hands of any Member of the House, who may not happen to be a Member of the Goment, but simply an irresponsible private Member. Under such circumstances, it is only fair and just that the Speaker, or the Chairman, should have the opportunity of stating whether his assent is withheld or not, and of assigning the reason. At present, there is no obligation on the part of the Chair to assign a reason for giving or withholding his sanction; and the consequence would be that, in the event of any misunderstanding, the conduct of the Chair would be constantly exposed to misconstruction. I think my hon. Friend the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) has shown that the Rule might be applied with drastic effect, and that there would be no safety for any Amendment, however important. The noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) combatted that theory. He stated that under this Rule there are undoubtedly great theoretical powers. We know that, and we also know that they will be used to the fullest extent whenever it suits the object of the Government to put them in force. Therefore, what we want is some safeguard against the misuse of these theoretical powers, and we desire to impose a legitimate limitation upon them. Let every Member understand thoroughly that individual Members will not be allowed to push the Rules to their theoretical extreme, and that they will never be used in any emergency in a way that would be palpably contrary to their real spirit. I think the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow is admirably adapted to secure that end.

MR. GEDGE (Stockport): Notwithstanding the discussion which has taken place, I remain of the same opinion as that which I expressed the other night. The Amendment itself is inconsistent with what the House is doing. It requires the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees to explain his reasons for the course he proposes to take, and he is not to be allowed to put the Question unless he goes out of his way to say something about the Amendment. The answer to the objections of the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) is this—we must assume that the whole of these Rules will have brought to bear upon them the common sense of the Chair. The case has been mentioned of a clause with a considerable number of sub-sections. In such a case is it to be supposed that the Speaker or Chairman would allow a decision upon the 1st sub-section to rule out Amendments on the 2nd and 3rd sub-sections and the whole of those which followed, even when, as is suggested, they relate to different matters? We have hitherto been careful to render it unnecessary for the Speaker or the Chairman to do anything except in the case of withholding his consent. The Amendment would oblige the Speaker or Chairman to explain his reasons for doing nothing, and, therefore, I hope that the Amendment will be negatived.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 146; Noes 215: Majority 69.—(Div. List, No. 62.)

MR. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town): The next Amendment stands in my name—namely, to insert at the end of line 12, the words—

> "Provided always, That, in Committee of Supply, when a Vote is under consideration, and to the particular items of which more than one Notice of Amendment has been given, if, after discussion on one of such items, the Rule for closing that discussion is put in force, the fact of its adoption shall not be held to apply to Amendments to the other sub-items of that Vote."

I may explain that my object is to prevent the application of the closure in Committee of Supply from excluding all discussion upon items in a Vote which were not reached until after the application of the Rule on an Amendment to a preceding item. If there is one part of our duty as Members of Parliament which is more essential than another, it is that of considering questions relating to the expenditure of the country in Committee of Supply. Hon. Members are aware that in Committee of Supply a certain Vote is brought forward—it may be for £100,000, but it is made up of some 10 or 12 items, and what I want to guard against is that the machinery of these Rules shall be applied to the closure of the discussion upon one item, and shall act as a closure upon the discussion of every remaining item.

Amendment proposed,

In line 12, at end, to insert the words, "Provided always, That, in Committee of Supply, when a Vote is under consideration, and to the particular items of which more than one Notice of Amendment has been given, if, after discussion on one of such items, the Rule for closing that discussion is put in force, the fact of its adoption shall not be held to apply to Amendments to the other sub-items of that Vote."—(*Mr. Dillwyn.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I wish that the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) had expressed a little more fully the object he has in view in proposing this Amendment, seeing that the actual words which constitute the Amendment are somewhat vague. I presume that his object is simply to prevent the Rule from being applied, so as to exclude the discussion of all the items contained in any Vote which may be submitted in Committee of Supply. Now, I think it would be a very regrettable incident if substantial Amendments to a Vote were to be shut out in consequence of the application of the clôture to a preceding item; but I wish to point out that in regard to the first Vote of the Army Estimates, which was under consideration last night, it contains no less that 164 items. The hon. Member, as far as I understand his Amendment, desires that after an Amendment has been disposed of to the first of these items, it shall be competent to move Amendments upon the subsequent 163 items. It is quite possible, as Lord Beaconsfield once observed, that two determined men might render the whole work of Committee of Supply hopeless, and really exclude, for an almost indefinite period, the possibility of getting more than the first item of the Vote. Not only so, but two Amendments might be moved on each item; one to reduce the amount, and the other to omit the item altogether; and, consequently, we might have 326 Amendments discussed upon the first Vote in the Army Estimates alone. Is it not better to trust to the common sense of the Chairman of Ways and Means to protect us against an interminable and useless discussion, which might otherwise take place? We have been told that exclusion is a novelty; but, as a matter of principle, exclusion is no novelty. It is an old and well known practice, to which frequent recourse has been had, by submitting to the judgment of the House the Previous Question. If the Previous Question is carried, it is impossible for any subsequent Amendment to be moved. Therefore, the principle of exclusion is one of the recognized practices of the House.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I am surprised to find that the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) objects to the principle of this Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) has already accepted the Amendment of the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), which places restrictions upon the application of the closure to the clauses of a Bill, and which provides against all the subsequent Amendments to a clause being closured by the fact of the closure being applied to a previous Amendment. The effect of the Rule as it now stands would be to leave it open to the Chair to shut out discussion on any item in Supply, however important it might be, when there are a great many Amendments which hon. Members wish to move. If that is so, it is important that there should be some restriction on the closure in the case of items discussed in Committee of Supply. The right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General says that if we adopt this Amendment we shall practically do away with closure altogether. I entirely dispute that statement of the right hon. Gentleman. The adoption of the closure in the first place would prevent bogus Amendments on the particular item under discussion, and it would shut out any discussion upon items of the Vote to which no notice of Amendment had been given. I do not see how it is possible that we can consent to shut out discussion on the items of Supply to which notice of Amendment has been given, and which are *boná fide*. I hope after the Division which has taken place, which shows how substantial a feeling there is in the House on this subject, that the right hon. Gentleman will give way, and that if the present Amendment is unsatisfactory as to form, that he will move an Amendment of his own which goes in the same direction. I think I may appeal to my noble Friend below me (the Marquess of Hartington) to use his influence, which I know is paramount with the Government, in favour of the Amendment of my hon. Friend. The noble Marquess has already obtained a relaxation of the Rule in respect of the clauses of Bills, and I trust he will also secure for the House similar relaxation with regard to Amendments to Votes in Supply.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): The admission that has come from the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) is one which justifies every word that was said in favour of the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Childers); and I say that it also justifies everything that will be said on these Benches, even if the discussion now going on is continued until 12 o'clock. The Committee of Supply affords to private Members the only chance they have of bringing forward grievances, and there is a clear distinction in that respect as between Committee of Supply and Committee on a Bill. It is not open to hon. Members on other occasions to direct attention to the grievances of which their constituents complain; but this one chance of private Members is now to be swept away by a Rule which is now admitted to be nothing else than the power to exclude any Amendments which private Members have to propose. It seems to be assumed that there has been too much discussion on Votes in Supply. But I venture to say, Mr. Speaker, that there has never yet been sufficient discussion on any branch of Government Business in this House. Take the figures given by the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General himself; in the Vote discussed last night, he said there were 25 sub-heads and 164 items. And one night is considered sufficient for that! If that is the idea of sufficient discussion which exists in the Government mind, I will say no more on the point than that it differs very greatly from the ideas of other hon. Members of the House. I regard the present Amendment as the most important of any that have yet been brought forward to this Rule, and I say that it demands the most serious attention of every hon. Member of the House, who cannot be too much impressed with the fact that, if it is not carried, they cannot hope for any opportunity hereafter of bringing forward the grievances of their constituents. I say that the admission of the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General is most important. It is clear that this Rule is equivalent to moving the Previous Question, and I say it is giving the power to a Minister at the head of a majority in this House to exclude Amendments in Supply from discussion. The Government have dealt, up to the present stage of the discussion, chiefly in assumptions. It is assumed that the Chairman and the majority of the House in Committee of Supply can do no wrong; but I must congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury on the change which has come over his opinion since 1882, when he held that a Chairman of Committees might possibly commit all sorts of irregularities.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I do not see that any difference can be maintained as between Amendments to clauses of Bills and Amendment in Committee of Supply. In the case of Bills there is a logical connection between the clause and the Amendments; but there is no such logical connection between Amendments and the Vote in Supply; and, therefore, to say that because the closure should apply to one item in Supply it should also apply to another, is a connection which I fail to see. Take the Vote for the Transport Department of the Army Service; Sub-head G is an item of £10,000 for police at Woolwich; but the last item in the list is a charge on account of Cyprus of £80. Now, it might happen that, although it might be reasonable that discussion on the Woolwich Vote should come to an end, it would be perfectly monstrous to say that no discussion should take place with regard to the Cyprus Vote, which might involve a question of the utmost importance. The Rule, as proposed by the Government, is, as I understand, not to limit debate, but to prevent discussion on whatever question may be disagreeable to the majority. A more ingenious way of preventing discussion could not possibly be devised. For private Members this kind of closure simply means annihilation, for it is only upon Votes in Supply that they can bring their grievances before the House. I agree with the principle of closure; I think that the House ought to have the most stringent powers for managing its own Business; and that, however unreasonable it may seem, the majority should have power to put an end to debate. But I regard this principle of exclusion of discussion as a very dangerous one. After all, the great function of this House is not so much legislation as the control of the Government, and in this respect this House differs from similar assemblies in other parts of the world; and I am convinced that if we do not watch with the greatest jealousy the proposals of the Government, we may find that the power of discussing items of Supply has been seriously endangered. Another point is, that if there is to be any advance in the direction of economy, it can only be made by the discussion of details; and that in itself is an argument which ought to commend this Amendment to the approval of the House.

Mr. MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr): The Government, in my opinion, ought logically to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn). We have already decided by the acceptance of the Amendment of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) that the closure shall be limited to a single clause in a single Bill. The clause of a Bill is a very different thing from a Vote in Supply. Take the case of a Minister asking for a Vote of £500,000 on account of the Civil Service. Each of the items in the Vote are in themselves infinitely of more importance than nine-tenths of the Bills which pass through the House in the Session; and yet, while limiting the closure to clauses of Bills, the Government refuse to limit it in the case of Supply. I certainly expected that the Government would make the same concession with regard to Supply as they have made with regard to clauses of the smallest Bill that may come before the House, and I shall, of course, vote with the hon. Member for Swansea when we go to a Division.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I support this Amendment in the spirit in which I have always supported Amendments tending to preserve the rights and privileges of hon. Members of this House. It has been pointed out, and it is an unanswerable argument, that no matter how important may be the power of moving a clause to a Bill, or of moving an Amendment to a clause of a Bill, the right of every hon. Member of the House of Commons to move Amendments in Committee of Supply is of far more importance. It is one of the great historical rights belonging to the Members of this House, and if the House of Commons at the present day occupies a proud position, it is because Members of the House have insisted on exercising this power in dark and troublesome times. In view of the high position which this House has always taken up with regard to Supply, we have a right to expect that Her Majesty's Government should give some support to this very important Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General says that by accepting the Amendment of the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) we should practically exclude Committee of Supply from the operation of the Rule, and the right hon. Gentleman tried to prove his point by quoting a saying of Lord Beaconsfield, to the effect that two determined men could put a stop to Constitutional Government by debating every item of Supply. But can it be supposed that any two Members, or 20 Members, would so degrade the Committee of the House in the eyes of the country by pursuing so ridiculous and senseless a course? The idea is one which no man of business habits would entertain. To my great surprise, the Postmaster General, in reply to the hon. Member for Swansea, says, with an air of nonchalance, delightful to see—"We do not intend any encroachment on the liberty of the House by applying the closure in Committee of Supply." But, Sir, he contradicts his own statement when he refuses to accept the Amendment before the Committee. If we have not the protection which is afforded by the Amendment of the hon. Member for Swansea, it will be practically in the power of the Government of the day, after a few items have been taken in Supply, to bring the whole discussion to an end by pressing for this Rule of Closure, and, having got it, shut out every Member who may have wished to speak upon another portion of the Vote. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) made a stand for economy in the expenditure of the public funds. Time alone will show whether he was justified in resigning his position in the Government on the ground that he could not get that economy carried out; but it is quite as essential that private Members of the House, sent here, as the great Radical Party are, to represent constituencies of working men, should exercise their right to examine the details under the subheads of all the Votes that come before the Committee of Supply. I cannot see that the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General has given us any satisfactory answer to the case put forward in behalf of this Amendment, so very briefly and, at the same time, so ably proposed by the hon. Member for Swansea.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): It has occurred to me, having listened to this discussion, to put it to the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) that his Amendment is quite unnecessary. I understand the Proviso to mean that if the closure be moved upon a particular item in the Vote, the decision come to by the House upon Division shall not be held to apply to subsequent Amendments. But, Sir, it does not do so. If the hon. Member looks at the Rule on the Paper he will find it stated on the first page that the House has already decided that—

> "When the Motion 'That the Question be now put,' has been carried, and the Question cousequent thereon has been decided, any further Motion may be made (the assent of the Chair as aforesaid not having been withheld) which may be requisite to bring to a decision any Question already proposed from the Chair."

Suppose that an Amendment that a reduced sum shall be granted instead of the amount asked for was the Question before the Committee. If it seemed to any hon. Member that the discussion has been adequate, and that the House ought to be allowed to come to a decision, he would rise and move that the closure shall be applied. It is perfectly true, after the closure has been applied, that a Minister or any hon. Member can move the closure to the Original Question; but unless some such Motion is made and carried, the next Question, as will be evident to the House, would be the following Amendment on the Paper. If that be so, it is clear that the object which the hon. Member desires to secure is secured by the present Rule. If it is desired to apply the closure to the Original Question, which would be the Vote itself, then the consent of the Chairman will have to be obtained, and the Chairman will have to consider whether such Motion is an infringement of the rights of minorities or an abuse of the Rules of the House. If this be so, I submit that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Swansea is not quite in Order, because that what it provides has already been agreed to by the House.

MR. DIXON (Birmingham, Edgbaston): It seems to me that the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) is in conflict with that of the right hon. Gentlemen the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie). The right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General said that there might be 163 Amendments upon a particular Vote. I assume that those Amendments would have been already on the Paper; and, if so, are we to understand that they may be moved and debated?

MR. RITCHIE: Unless the closure was moved and the consent of the Chair obtained that the closure should be put to the Committee with reference to the whole Vote.

MR. DIXON: I do not know how that would be; but, according to the language of the Postmaster General, there may be a large number of Amendments, many of which he, of course, assumes are put on the Paper for the purpose of delay. But the right hon. Gentleman must admit that a certain number of them would be justifiable, and therefore deserving discussion. Now, the difficulty is this. How are we to be assured that justifiable Amendments are not to be excluded? If the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury would assure the House, as the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board has assured us, that there is no intention to exclude those allowable and justifiable Amendments, then I shall be disposed to do what I have hitherto done, that is to vote with the Government. I confess, however, I do not see my way to do so at present.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): My right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) has explained to the House exactly what the situation is with reference to the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), and his remarks, I believe, were entirely in accordance with what has been stated by my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes). The Amendment of the hon. Member assumes that the fact of the closure having been applied to one Amendment would exclude all the other Amendments, and to that my right hon. Friend replied that the application of the closure to one Amendment would not be held to extend to other Amendments. It is not the intention of the Government that it should be so extended to other Amendments on a Vote in Committee of Supply. The intention of the Government is that the question should remain open, and that further Amendments should be discussed; but the power is undoubtedly given, if—as my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General suggests—there are 163 Amendments on the Paper, a large number of which are frivolous, to make a further Motion with the consent of the Chair, when, if the Motion is not withdrawn, the closure would apply. The point is that there is no intention of any kind on the part of the Government that the discussion on one Amendment should exclude discussion on another; but the closure may, of course, be put unless the Chairman withholds his consent, on the ground that the Motion is either an infringement of the rights of the minority or an abuse of the Rules of the House.

MR. PARNELL (Cork): I have always thought that the precautions to be adopted with reference to Amendments to a clause should be in excess of the precautions and safeguards to be adopted with reference to proceedings in the Whole House, where there is only one Main Question and one Secondary Question in the nature of an Amendment to the Main Question. We are now considering the case of a Vote in Committee of Supply, and endeavouring to guard against cutting off *bonâ fide* Motions for the reduction of the Vote, or *bonâ fide* discussions on the items of which the Vote may be composed. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) says that it is not the intention of the Rule to prevent such Motions being put. But he says that we may have 163 Amendments put down to a Vote in Supply for the purpose of Obstruction, and that, therefore, we are bound to meet the case in some way so as to prevent Obstruction arising out of such proceedings. I submit that, in endeavouring to closure such anticipated Obstruction, the right hon. Gentleman does a great deal more. By the method he has devised he cannot meet Obstruction of that kind without killing out *bonâ fide* discussors of the Vote. It necessarily follows that, if such Obstruction be resorted to of putting down, say, 20 Amendments against different items of a Vote, the result would be that, if you proceeded to closure the first of these Obstructive Amendments, the *bonâ fide* Motions further on against the same Vote would be clôtured also. I ask the Government whether that is not a fair representation of the case? The result would simply be that, by closing debate on the first or succeeding Motion for the reduction of a Vote, you will be preventing debate altogether on subsequent *bonâ fide* Motions for reduction. You fail in this case in your endeavours to prevent obstructive proceedings; you fail to give fair play or freedom of debate on clauses of a Bill or on a Vote in Committee of Supply; and this will show the Government that some additional protection is necessary in reference to Committee of Supply. May it not be better to give the Chairman power to sort out Amendments, supposing that the Chair considers there are obstructive Amendments on the Paper? What is the objection to giving to the Chair power to refuse to put Amendments? In that way you would safeguard the rights of *bonâ fide* debaters who are desirous of moving, later on, Amendments to a Vote. Again, it will be possible, under this Rule, for a series of Obstructionist Members to place a number of Amendments on the Paper to a Vote in Supply before a *bonâ fide* Motion can come on later, and by that means prevent its being discussed by forcing the Government, or those in charge of the Business of the House, to move the closure. In that way a *bonâ fide* Motion for the reduction of the Vote would be killed out. I think, Sir, that this is a very important question. You have not provided, with reference to a clause, to give any extra power to the Chair to sort out and discriminate between obstructive and other Amendments, so as to allow those which are not obstructive to come on; and I must say that this is a very serious blot on your new Rule, and which will, in my opinion, have very injurious effects as regards freedom of debate. I think the picture of Obstruction which the Government have presented to the House is very much overdrawn. There is no foundation for it with regard to this section of Members of the House. Take our action with regard to this first Rule —we have only moved up to the present time 16 Amendments, of which only 14 have been taken to a Division, and I say that in providing safeguards against such action as that, you practically provide safeguards against dangers which have no existence. I believe the Government will some day bitterly regret the course which they are taking. In their eagerness to obtain the means of excluding *bonâ fide* discussion on their contemplated Irish Coercion Bill, they are fashioning a weapon which, although it will strike down innocent Amendments, cannot possibly forward the Business of the country.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): I venture to say that the speeches of the right hon. Gentlemen the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) and the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) are totally inconsistent. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board declares that there is no such power in the Rule as that against which the Amendment of the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) is aimed, whereas the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer says that the power may be made to apply; but that it exists theoretically in the Chair. The power against which my hon. Friend moved his Amendment does undoubtedly exist, and the question is whether the Amendment of my hon. Friend would have the precise effect which he himself desires. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board is incorrect in saying that there is not such power in the Rule as it stands. The words are—

> "When the Motion 'that the Question be now put,' has been carried, and the Question consequent thereon has been decided, any further Motion may be made (the assent of the Chair, as aforesaid, not having been withheld) which may be requisite to bring to a decision any Question already proposed from the Chair."

Now, the only two Questions which can be proposed at all are the Vote on the Paper or that a reduced sum be granted to Her Majesty's Government. One of these Amendments being disposed of—the closure—the next Motion would be that the Main Question be put. If that is carried, the remainder of the Amendments are clôtured, and therefore I say that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Swansea is directed at what is already in the Rule. I do not think the Amendment would necessarily have the effect of insuring a discussion on each item brought before the House or the Committee. The Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) is directed to Votes in Supply, and I need not remind the House of the great importance of considering questions of detail in Committee, and of regarding them with much greater scrutiny than ordinary Questions in Committee, or than ordinary Questions which arise on measures in other stages. Questions in Committee of Supply really constitute the only necessary Business of Parliament. After voting Supply, the Government may close up the Parliament, or rather postpone its sitting, and there is no law to compel them to bring forward legislation, which is only a secondary concern. Everyone knows that the country could get on very well without legislation. Questions brought forward in Committee, and questions brought forward at other times, stand on totally different grounds, and this is the reason why the consideration of details in Committee of Supply should be more carefully guarded than the consideration of the ordinary stages of Bills. That is the reason why I am anxious to safeguard our proceedings in Committee of Supply against unfair application of the Clôture Rule. If the Rule is allowed to stand as it is proposed, a Government will be able, practically, to close the discussion upon the Estimates, and press forward enormous Votes hurriedly, and without giving time for discussion. On this very point Ministers display a most astonishing inconsistency, because this was a point they insisted upon in 1882 with great vehemence and skill; and I have no doubt that if hon. Gentlemen opposite happened to sit in Opposition, they would hold similar views to mine to-night. It is merely because hon. Members opposite sit where they do, and consider themselves bound to bring forward some measure to facilitate the progress of Business, that they consider they ought to adopt the line of action of the Government of 1882. I would point out that it is impossible in Committee to bring forward an Amendment similar to one which has been already disposed of. There is no inherent right of moving an interminable number of Amendments in Committee. The Chairman already possesses power to limit the number of Amendments proposed, and he can rule out Amendments which he considers frivolous. I submit, therefore, that if a Member were to come forward and put down an enormous number of Amendments to a single Vote—say, 100 or 130—probably more than half, or even four-fifths, of those Amendments would be ruled out of Order, as clashing with each other. Therefore, to talk about the possibility of an hon. Member putting down an enormous number of Amendments is simply begging the question. The right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) is a high authority on Procedure, having filled the position of Chairman of Ways and Means for many years, and he must know that we are right on the present occasion. He must acknowledge to himself that he is endeavouring to evade the issue by imagining a state of facts which cannot arise. The fact of his assuming that an enormous number of Amendments will be put down in Committee is the clearest possible proof that we are right and that he is wrong. We know that the Government voted over £4,000,000 last night in the course of a very few minutes; and, as a matter of fact, it is very seldom that we have protracted discussions in Committee of Supply. During the whole time I have been here, I remember very few occasions on which such a thing has happened. I do, however, remember on one occasion a protracted debate taking place upon a small item, at the instance, I believe, of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill). The question raised was with reference to the execution of a certain Egyptian, accused of incendiarism in Alexandria. The life of this man depended upon the decision of the Committee, and the question was a critical one, inasmuch as the execution was fixed to take place within 24 hours of the night on which the discussion occurred. The debate was continued for a considerable time, although without particular advantage to the person principally interested. There may be occasions in the future, however, when the extension of debates on similar questions would be attended with different results, and we have here a clear reason why debates of this kind should not be unduly restricted. No doubt it is to the interest of the Government to limit discussions in Committee of Supply. Every Government is anxious to do that; but we recognize the fact that the Opposition has certain rights, and that if we allow a Government to get Votes too easily, once they get the money they will do as they like, and care nothing for what we may say. It is because we claim our right to discuss Votes in Committee of Supply with full freedom—although we do not wish to exercise that right to any excess—that we shall vote for the Amendment. It will not secure us the full measure of freedom that we desire; but it will, no doubt, have some effect in that direction.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): I labour under some difficulty as I have not heard the speech in which the Amendment now before the House was proposed, nor the arguments of the Government in opposition to the Amendment—although these latter have been represented to me as meagre enough. I find in this Amendment one word which is objectionable — namely, the word "Notice" of Amendment. Speaking with very little knowledge of Parliamentary practice, I may say I think that "Notice" means "put down in the ordinary way." To my mind, Amendments of very far-reaching consequence have frequently been proposed to this House without Notice. If the hon. Member had eliminated the word "Notice" from the Amendment, it would have been possible for me to have given his proposal a more thorough support. I do not suppose the hon. Member attaches much importance to the word, his desire being to prevent Amendments being disposed of in a blind and informal manner. To show the necessity of this Amendment, I would ask the House to consider what the effect of the Rule as it is proposed might be in relation to the passing of the Vote for the Royal Irish Constabulary. The Main Question would be that a sum of £1,412,315 be voted for the Irish Constabulary. There are a number of sub-heads under this Vote. There is, for instance, item "A" which relates to salaries. Well, I do not suppose anyone in this House, Irish or otherwise, would ever raise the point that the salaries of the Royal Irish Constabulary are either inadequate or superfluous. I do not remember anyone in this House ever saying that the Irish Constabulary are paid too much, nor do I remember any advocate of the Constabulary alleging that they are paid too little. During my experience here, I have been very intimately interested—at any rate as a listener—in this Vote, and I do not remember anyone, on either side of the House, ever having raised a point as to the salaries of the Irish Constabulary. No one can say they are paid too much. If we want such a Force, the men must be paid fair salaries——

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not entitled to discuss the question of the Irish Constabulary on this Amendment.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: I will not discuss that matter, Sir; but if you will allow me, I will suppose, by way of illustration, that the Vote relating to the Irish Constabulary was under discussion. No one would object to the item for salaries, but later on, under sub-head "R" for Transport Service, some hon. Member might have an important discussion to raise, and I wish to know from the Government what opportunity he would have of raising such a discussion under the Rule as it is proposed to pass it? One of the first formal items of the Vote may have been discussed by some English, Scotch, or Welsh Member, who has chosen to take advantage of his privilege as a Member of this House and as a guardian of the public revenues. A discussion of inordinate length may have occurred, and under such circumstances, I ask now will it be possible for us to reach the vital parts of the Vote? In referring to this particular Vote, Sir, I did not wish to enter into the merits or demerits of the Irish Constabulary Vote, or the merits or demerits of any of its items. I should be sorry to cross such an important discussion as the present with lengthy reference to any particular Vote relating to Ireland; but my strongest point is this—how can we have any guarantee that after a tedious discussion upon an unimportant item to which the clôture has been applied, the points we desire to raise and upon which we desire to hear the opinion of the Committee expressed, will not be blotted out by the application of the clôture? I would ask the Chairman of Committees, whether it is not his experience that the practical discussion of a Vote takes place upon the sub-items? Last time I spoke in this House, I was incorrectly reported upon this very point. I was represented to have said that the clauses of the Bill are sometimes more important than the Bill itself. I did not say that; what I said was—and I say it again, though it looks like a paradox—the discussion on a particular clause of a Bill may often be a more important discussion than that on the Bill itself. In the same way a discussion on a sub-item of a Vote may frequently be of more importance than what is called "the general discussion" of the Vote itself. I believe sub-heads "A," "B," "C," of the Irish Constabulary Vote would be carried *nem. con.*, and yet there are many subsequent items in the Vote—for instance, that of £200 for Police Escort and Conveyance of Children to Industrial Schools—upon which really important and serious discussions might be raised. I assert that more than three-fourths of the items in the Irish Constabulary Vote would be passed without demur by both sides of the House. Under the circumstances I do not think we are going too far in again and again impressing on the Government the necessity of making some provision by which, though a Vote may be substantially given to them without discussion or demur, we should have some power and privilege of discussing items in which we may be especially interested. The Government so arrange these Votes in Committee of Supply, that they really get the money they require under the first two or three sub-heads, and leave us to discuss their policy upon remaining items; and what we object to is, that in giving them the money, we should also give up all grasp and grip upon them. I do not expect the Government will assent to the Amendment of my hon. Friend. They have not assented to any Amendment which has come from this side. ["Yes!"] If anyone can show me the contrary, I will sit down at once. No doubt they did yield to the noble Marquess on this side (the Marquess of Hartington); but it strikes me that their's was the sort of obedience that a child yields to its father. The noble Marquess leads in the same way that a person may be said to lead by having hold of the rope that is attached to the ring that passes through the nose of a bull. The rope is in the hands of the noble Marquess; it is tied to the ring, and the ring is in the nose of the Government, and the Government must come whenever the noble Marquess pulls the rope. Why, I would ask, do not the Government find it worth their while to yield to the hon. Member for Swansea? The hon. Member does not occupy the position of the noble Marquess, or any position of authority; but he presents to the House a concrete and substantial Amendment which, if we could know the real minds of right hon. Gentlemen opposite, we should find they are thoroughly in harmony with. I am afraid that whatever I say to Her Majesty's Government will have but a very transitory effect upon them, and will pass off like water dropping from a duck's back. But I would venture to suggest to them that they should realize—and I am sure they have realized it already—the position in which we shall stand, when this Rule is passed, in relation to a Vote the sub-heads of which may be represented by the 26 letters of the alphabet, if a Member can be got to discuss one of the least important of them to the pitch of weariness. A Member on either side of the House may be prompted to do that by the Government themselves; for we do not know where their Supporters are not to be found. Their Supporters may be amongst hon. Members below the Gangway opposite, or amongst right hon. or hon. Members above the Gangway on this side of the House; it may be the Leader of the Irish Temperance Party above the Gangway on this side, or the Leader of the Catholic Tory Party below the Gangway opposite; but, from whatever quarter it may proceed, they will not find it difficult to get someone to bring about the application of clôture to an unimportant item of a Vote, and then they will be in a position to shut out discussion on all the remaining items. It must be remembered that the reason why a Member will rise and propose that a Vote shall be put to the House, will be because to his mind the subject has been adequately discussed, and because he wishes the House to pronounce upon that which he thinks there has been sufficient debate. The question is whether hon. Members should not have present to their minds the interest of the people who pay the taxes. One hon. Member may be satisfied that there has been sufficient debate, but we must remember that it is not that one hon. Member whose interests are at stake. We must remember that we represent people who cannot come into this House, or even into Palace Yard to make a demonstration, in order to show you that they are dissatisfied with the way in which you are dealing with the Votes in Supply. We are tired of this discussion; and complaints have been made that some hon. Members are rendering it wearisome. Some hon. Members opposite may think that I am wearisome. [*Cries of* "Hear, hear!" *and counter cries of* "No, no!"] There seems to be a divided opinion upon the matter. Who is to be the judge?

Mr. SPEAKER: For the second time, I must ask the hon. Gentleman to speak more relatively to the subject before the House.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON: Very well, Sir. Granted that the discussion has taken a wearisome turn, and that, as the result of that weariness, the clôture has been applied to a discussion, on an early part of the Vote, although there may be important Amendments on the Paper to remaining sub-heads, it will be within the competence of any Member to rise and propose that the whole Vote should be put. I do not know that I should be in Order in discussing the question of the constituted authority in the House at the moment that that Vote would be put from the Chair. It must never be forgotten that the question is to be put by the Chairman of Committees, and it must never be forgotten that the Chairman of Committees is an official elected by the majority of the day, or, in other words, the Government. It must not be forgotten, therefore, that the Chairman is imbued with the spirit of the Government, which spirit is, to show as much work as possible to the nation.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): In supporting the Amendment of the hon. Member for Swansea, I wish to say that I cannot help thinking that the Government have conceded something to the spirit of my hon. Friend's Amendment. It is strange, then, that we cannot come to a form of words to carry out what the Government and my hon. Friend mean. What perplexes my hon. Friend is the fear lest this Rule, as it stands, will prevent the House from discussing the various items of the Votes in Committee of Supply. Impressed as I am with the importance of leaving the House entire power over the expenditure of the country, I am anxious that on this point there should be no doubt; and I think it would be wise of the Government to meet my hon. Friend by adopting, at least, a portion of his words. I think they would find it easy to adopt words which would secure that the object he has in view should not be misunderstood. I understood the right hon. Gentleman the head of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) to say that the Government desire that there should be no misunderstanding with regard to this part of the Rule. If the Chairman has power to strike out all irrelevant Amendments, surely the Government, not desiring to strike out all the substantial Amendments, should have no hesitation in adopting words to make that perfectly clear. My experience in this House is that the House has not sufficient control over the expenditure of the country at present; and I think that any curtailment of the control they at present possess will be a great loss to the country and to the power of the House. The greatest function that this House has to fill is the guardianship of the expenditure of the country; and I, therefore, think that we should have the greatest facility for the discussion of questions of finance, so that the House may fulfil its highest function in regard to the protection of the national purse. My great fear in regard to the application of this principle of clôture is that it will be brought into play in Committee of Supply in a way that will prevent the House from safeguarding the expenditure of the country. We are called upon, at half-past 1 o'clock in the morning, to Vote millions of money. That is not a proper way of doing Business; and I think that, if we are to have the clôture applied, the House will drift away from that control of expenditure which it ought to possess. On that ground, I shall support the Amendment of my hon. Friend, and I shall do so in the hope that, before it is put, the Government will meet us, and so alter the Rule as to make it clear that it shall not be obstructive to discussion.

MR. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.): There are one or two matters which I wish to call attention to in Committee of Supply; and one of them, I feel certain, will be squashed if this Rule is allowed to stand in its present shape—I refer to an item which comes on at a very strange place —namely, at the end of the Stationery Office Vote. I refer to the item for the translation of the Brehon Laws of Ireland. Last year, I called attention to the matter, but the discussion of the Stationery Vote had gone so far, and had been continued to such a late hour, that I was precluded from bringing the subject forward. I feel perfectly certain that that item which appears in the Estimate under the letter "Q" at the very end of the Stationery Office Vote will be held to be a frivolous matter when it is reached—seeing that under the Vote, many matters of general importance will have been discussed. I feel satisfied that if the attention of the Chairman is directed to any Amendment I may move, he will hold it to come under the head of frivolous Amendments. But the item is one of great interest, and has reference to a matter on which there is a great deal to be said, and on which I sincerely hope I shall be able to make some suggestions which the Government will be ready to accept. As I say, last year I had to drop the subject in Committee, and was obliged to refer to it on the Report stage. There is another matter in connection with the Vote—namely, the Royal Irish Academy—to which I should like to call attention; but, any Amendment with regard to which, I am afraid, would be looked upon as frivolous, and would be shut out by some Clôture Motion. I mention these things as examples of what the House generally may consider small matters, but which certain hon. Members may take a very deep interest in. I am afraid that the Government with the assent of the Chairman of Committees would be able to treat such discussion as frivolous. I believe that if the Amendment before the House were adopted, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury would find that the efficiency of his Rule would remain unimpaired. What is the use of taking away from the House the privilege of discussing such items as I have mentioned? And yet you propose to leave the power of taking away that privilege from hon. Members in the hands of the Chairman. You leave the Chairman a discretionary power that under this Rule, as framed, you will strike this privilege out of our hands without power of recovery, once the clôture is applied. The only argument urged by the Government against the Amendment was that, if it were adopted, every item in a vote would be used as a peg on which to hang an obstructive debate. I protest against that argument. The experience of the House is against such an assumption. The House has got along for a very long period, indeed, without a Rule of Procedure like this affecting Committee of Supply, yet, practically speaking, there has been no such thing as protracted discussion on any item. Members have had, up to the present moment, the power of raising obstructive discussions on Votes in Supply; how is it, then, that such obstructive discussion has never taken place? What right has the Government to use that argument, when the experience of the House is against them? Therefore, I say that the argument of the Government is a perfectly illusory one, and, if I may say so, amounts to an impertinent one.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.): The Conservative Party have taken refuge in silence on this Amendment. ["Hear, hear!"] They shout "Hear, hear!" and I believe that they are quite right in doing so. They have never been the advocates of economy, and have never tried to lower taxation. ["Hear, hear!"] One Conservative Member again cries "Hear, hear!" He and his Friends are right to do what they can to fetter our discussion in Committee, because, under this Rule, they will be able to swell the Estimates. It is true that Conservative Members sometimes occupy a great deal of time in Committee. We had four excellent speeches from them last night; but they were not in favour of economy—on the contrary, every one of them was in favour of increasing the Estimates. But the object of this Amendment is to retain to the House the facilities we have for diminishing expenditure; and, no doubt, the Government, from their point of view, are right in not only refusing to answer our arguments, but in sitting in silence under the furore that reigns outside, and taking that which will enable them to pass over Amendments with a minimum of discussion. This new Rule will give a Conservative Government every opportunity for increasing the Expenditure of the country. It seems to me a remarkable thing that we should be, at the present moment, passing a Rule to stifle discussion on the items of the Estimates, seeing that only six weeks ago a Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer resigned his position because he considered the Estimates were unduly swelled. We have it from that late Chancellor of the Exchequer that he was the only Member of the Government in favour of economy. Well, is it not strange that immediately after his resignation we find the Government proposing the clôture, and saying, when an Amendment is proposed, "We will take very good care to limit debate on the Estimates?" Who is it who has brought in this Amendment? It is not one of the Irish Members. Had it been an Irish Member, you would have said we bring it in because we want to obstruct. Who has ever accused the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) of obstructing? He has always been a great authority on the Rules of the House, and has sat here patiently, Session after Session, doing his best in Committee of Supply to keep down the Expenditure of the country. I do not think any Conservative Member can say the same. The hon. Member has had a seat here for a very long time, and has made the best use of it, and I defy the Conservative Party to point out on their side of the House any Member who has attended so constantly, and whose opinion deserves so much consideration as that of my hon. Friend. Then, I think the Government choose a very singular day for the refusal of our appeal. We voted yesterday no less a sum than £4,000,000, and yet they are going to pass a Rule which will prevent us from discussing the items of Votes in Supply. No doubt it would be well to limit discussion upon many Votes—say, to two or three minutes, just to enable questions to be asked and answers to be returned by the Government. I approve of the limitation of speeches; but, at the same time, I think you ought never to stop the question in Supply—you ought never to stop any discussion upon any particular item. I admit that it is quite possible to call attention to any matter on Report; but I am persuaded that if we are clôtured in Committee, we shall be clôtured on the Report stage next day. It is a most dangerous and novel principle to introduce into the proceedings of the House of Commons, that a Minister can rise in his place, and after there has been debate, say, upon an item of £50,000, insist upon £1,000,000 or £2,000,000 sterling being voted without any discussion whatsoever. By the adoption of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Swansea we shall be saved from that danger. I have known a great deal of difficulty in getting Supply; but I never knew the Committee to discuss a Vote item by item. Personally, I am of opinion that we do not pay sufficient attention to the Estimates. Instead of spending too much time in Committee of Supply we do not spend enough time. By the rejectien of this Amendment the Government take upon themselves the entire responsibility for the Estimates. The Estimates are never impeached; but the Government are now taking power to shut the mouths of Members, and in doing so it seems to me they are incurring a responsibility which no Ministers have ever ventured to undertake in the previous history of England.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.): It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that we really do not know where we are. We have had most conflicting opinions from right hon. Gentlemen opposite regarding this Amendment, and, therefore, it is not unreasonable that we should now ask for some authoritative expression of opinion on behalf of the Government upon this question. Now, it is quite true that, upon occasions, certain contentious Votes have been discussed at some length; but I am not aware of a single instance in which an obstructive Motion has been put down to the Estimates. As a rule, there are not more than three or four, or half-a-dozen, items in an Estimate which are contested, and yet hon. Members tell us that it is because it is quite possible to have 120 or 130, or even 300, obstructive Motions on one Estimate, that this Rule is considered necessary by the Government, in order to enable them to carry on the Business of the country. Now, desirous as hon. Members may have been in past times to retard the progress of Business in this House, I do not know a single instance where Members have put down any large number of Motions against any item in the Estimates with a view to Obstruction. But, after all, if we are not to be permitted to have the privilege we now enjoy, of discussing each item in itself, there is nothing to prevent Ministers moving Votes in a few general phrases. It is a most convenient plan, and it would have the effect of effectually preventing an answer being given by the Treasury Bench to any question to which they are disinclined to give an answer. Now, inasmuch as for the last six years there has been nothing in the shape of Obstruction directed at the Estimates, I fail to see on what ground the Government propose to carry this Rule into operation. This portion of the Rule does not merely provide for the clôture; but it puts an end altogether to the discussion in the House of grievances. It also puts an end to the privileges of private Members, because, judging from the manner in which the Government has been acting of late, it is perfectly evident that private Members will not have an opportunity of moving Motions they have given Notice of for Tuesdays and Fridays, or for Wednesdays. I, as an Irish Member, must protest against this curtailment of the rights and privileges of Members. Had we, the Irish Members, not had an opportunity of exposing many grievances during the last five years, I feel certain that we should not have been able to have brought about so salutary a change in the public opinion of this country in regard to Irish affairs as that which has taken place.

Nor would we have been able to induce the Government to make alterations of considerable importance in the administration of justice in Ireland. There are many other questions which we have still to bring forward; but I am afraid this Rule will be put into operation much more frequently against Irish Members than against any other Members of the House. I am afraid the Government will use the powers which Parliament is now about to give them, for the purpose of suppressing the voice of the Irish Representatives, and it is mainly for this reason that I take exception to the Rule and support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn).

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I cannot congratulate the Government on its obstinacy in declining to accept any Amendment that comes from this side of the House, except it proceeds from the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), who, with perhaps some questionable taste, sits on the Front Bench above the Gangway. I consider that this Rule will have a disastrous effect upon all future legislation; and I cannot but regret the adoption of such a Rule as this, if, as we fear, the effect of it will be that a vote is to be taken after a discussion upon the first item upon the whole Vote. Now, let me give one or two instances of the ill-effect this Rule will have. If this Rule had been in operation last year, one or two very important changes would have been prevented on one Vote. My hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) brought under the notice of the Committee the state of things that existed in regard to the equipment of the Army in Egypt—a state of things which was a disgrace to the country and dangerous to the men engaged in carrying on the military operations in Egypt. It will be remembered that my hon. Friend brought under the notice of the Committee the fact that the harness and saddlery and other portions of the equipment were absolutely rotten and totally unserviceable. The exposure resulted in an inquiry, and in this terrible and disgraceful state of things being rectified. Now, during the discussion on the question of Army clothing, I brought forward the fact that a certain firm in Ireland did not get its due share of the work that was put out to contract; but I was met with a blank refusal by the Government. I was driven to a Division, and though I was ignominiously defeated, so impressed were the Government with the statements that were made on behalf of the Limerick Factory that, in the course of a few days or weeks, they entered into negotiations with the managers of that establishment, and a contract was given that was most beneficial to the people of the locality, and certainly most advantageous to the Public Service at large. Now, if this Rule had been in force, it would have been impossible for my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton to have brought these matters before the attention of the Government. What is desired is that we should have, in black and white, what really is the position. We have at present the word of the Government, through the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), that this Rule will not be put in force. I am not inclined to put my trust in any Government. Members on this side of the House have been so often misled, if not deceived, by the Government that I decline to place reliance in any Government whatever. It is quite clear that if the Rules of the House provide certain procedure, any assurances of right hon. Gentlemen, in a direction contrary to the spirit of the Rules, is of no value whatever. I hold that, as the Rule stands at present, it is very vague, and that we are entitled to ask that the Rules of this House shall be made as plain as the most ordinary understanding can comprehend. It is at present in the power of the Government and the Speaker to shut off all discussions upon various items that may be put forward in Committee.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman has not yet spoken at all relevantly to the subject before the House. I must warn him to be more relevant.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: I bow to your ruling, Mr. Speaker; but I thought I would be in Order in referring to its being made clear to the Committee——

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is confusing between the items of a Vote and the clauses of a Bill.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: Well, Mr. Speaker, I support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr.

Dillwyn), because I believe it to be necessary that this House, and the Committee of the Whole House, shall have ample opportunity for the discussion of every item that comes before them. I have taken some part in the discussion of items in reference to the Army and Navy Estimates, and grievances I have brought forward still remain unredressed; and it is my intention to bring them forward again when an opportunity presents itself. If this Rule be passed in its present state, I fear greatly that I shall be precluded from the privilege and the right we have hitherto enjoyed of discussing these items and bringing forward grievances. For these reasons, I appeal to the Government to reconsider their determination—their obstinate determination—to reject, not only the Amendment of the hon. Member for Swansea, but every Amendment that comes from this side of the House.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): This discussion has certainly not tended to encourage the hope that any Amendment, however well grounded, is likely to be received with even reasonable favour by any Gentleman sitting on the other side of the House. Now, if I were a Supporter of the Government, instead of an opponent, I should certainly be disposed strongly to urge upon the Government to reconsider their decision in regard to this particular Amendment. I am afraid many hon. Gentlemen opposite do not realize the practical effect of this Rule, if this Amendment, or something like it, be not accepted. The Rule would not work very much mischief if each particular Vote related exclusively to one subject only; but such is not the case. The majority of the Votes submitted to the House and to Committee of Supply include a great variety of matters under one head. Take, for instance, the Home Office Vote; you will find in that a considerable number of different services, with regard to each one of which a Member of the House might reasonably be expected, when in Committee of Supply, to offer substantial observations likely to prove of use in the administration of the Home Office. The same is the case with the Vote for the Local Government Board and the Board of Trade. Now, if the closure were put in force upon the first item of the Vote, the result would be that all Amendments relating to subsequent items would be summarily excluded. I do not believe that the Government can intend anything of the kind; but I am perfectly certain of this, that when closure is in the air, when hon. Gentlemen who sit below the Gangway opposite, and are not vested with responsibility, become restive, it will be difficult for the Government to resist the clamour for the closure. A few nights ago, when the Supplementary Army Estimates were in Committee, the first item related to the contribution paid on account of Army Services by Egypt, the next item related to the Commissariat Staff, the third item related to the manufacture and custody of Stores, and the last item related to the Special Grant of £110,000 to an inventor on account of the marine torpedo. Each of these particular items was a fair subject for separate discussion in the House; but if this Rule, without such an Amendment as is now moved, had been in force, the result would have been that, after a discussion, more or less prolonged, upon the question of the contribution of Egypt to the Military Expenditure of this country, your questions relating to the manufacture or custody of stores, to the Commissariat Staff, and to the remuneration of an inventor for a real or a pretended discovery or patent, would have been summarily ruled out. That is a possibility against which this House ought carefully to guard.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): I should like to point out, in the first place, that the House will be acting unwisely and unreasonably if it rejects the Amendment of the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn). The House has already accepted the spirit of this Amendment, so far as the clauses of a Bill are concerned, and there is no conceivable reason why it should not be accepted in the case of Votes in Committee of Supply. The importance of the discussions which take place in Committee of Supply cannot be overestimated. It is within the recollection of every Member of the House that Her Majesty's Government recently suffered a very severe loss, owing to the fact that the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) found it inconsistent with his sense of duty to retain his Office as Chancellor of the Exchequer when extravagant demands were being made by the Government for money. In spite of the outcry which has been raised in the country, we know that last night, so far from the Committee being desirous unreasonably to protract debate, it voted £4,500,000 in one half-hour. It has been pointed out, in opposition to the Amendment, that it would be possible to raise a discussion upon every item in the Vote. Now, in the case of one of the Votes passed last night, there were no less than seven pages of items, and, if you divide the Vote into sub-heads, you will find that there are, instead of 200 or 250 items, only 25 sub-heads, each of which makes provision, on an average, for £100,000. Now, I intend to propose an Amendment upon the Amendment of my hon. Friend (Mr. Dillwyn) which will enable any person to move the closure to each sub-head, and in doing so, I need not point out that the different items of the Army and Navy Votes and other Votes are very clearly set out under separate sub-heads. My proposition will necessitate the application of a separate closure to each sub-head of a Vote, and I hope the Government will see their way to accept it.

Amendment proposed to the said proposed Amendment,

To leave out from the word "consideration," to the end of the Amendment, in order to add the words "it shall not be competent for a Member to make any Motion to bring to a decision any Question already proposed from the Chair for the granting a whole Vote, in case any Member proposes to move the reduction of the Vote by omitting or reducing a sub-head thereof, the omission or reduction of which has not been previously moved."—(*Mr. Chance.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the said proposed Amendment."

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I do not think there is very much difference between the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) and that of my hon. Friend the Member for Kilkenny (Mr. Chance). If the Government will consent to one they will consent to the other. The difficulty which really leads to more prolonged discussion than we desire on this side of the House is that the Government never seem to know their minds. They have brought in a Rule, and they do not seem to understand what it means; there is no consensus of opinion among them. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) argued that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Swansea was not necessary, because every guarantee contained in it was already contained in the Rule. That view was also taken by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), and the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes), speaking with the authority of an ex-Chairman of Committees, said that he was going to vote against the Amendment because it introduced something which was not in the Rule. Surely, therefore, before we go much further we ought to have a distinct explanation from the Government as to which of these views is adhered to by the Government. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) has just entered the House; surely he will be able to speak with authority for all his Colleagues upon that Bench. I, for my part, think that the Postmaster General was entirely right. My hon. Friend the Member for Swansea evidently thinks so, too, because he has moved this Amendment. So far as I can see, if the Rule passes without this Amendment, the Chairman of Committees will always have it it in his power, if he sees fit, to say there has been sufficient discussion upon the whole Vote under discussion; and, whether there be an Amendment upon items which have not been under discussion or not, he, and the majority of the House, may insist upon a Division upon the whole Estimate. It is said that there may be obstructive Amendments. I believe there can be no obstructive Amendment having for its object the reduction of the Estimates; I believe that every proposal to reduce the Estimates is invariably right. I have always voted for reduction. This Government came in with great professions of retrenchment; but, after all, we know that it is a Government of classes, and we know that a Conservative Government only exists by expenditure of money among the classes. Allusion has been made already to-night to what has taken place on the Estimates. I have never obstructed on the Estimates; but I have moved frequent reductions in divers parts of the Estimates. What was the case with the Estimates of last year? They were hurried through the House, and we, on these Benches, were told, even if we devoted five minutes to discussion, that we were obstructing, and that hon. Gentleman wanted to get away to their shooting. The truth is that the Estimates have gone through far too speedily already, and I trust there will not be the same speed with regard to the rest of them. We do not admit that this Amendment is surplusage, as the Government contend, and I shall support, together with my hon. Friend, the Amendment before the House.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): What the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) has said is only a repetition of the argument used in support of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), and which, with painful iteration, has been put forward over and over again during the evening. This, I think, is an instance of the ingenious mode of discussion by which the time of the House is wasted. The object of the Amendment is to provide for the discussion of every item of a Vote. The Government believe that ample protection is provided for every Member who desires to move substantial Amendments to the Vote, and if they are *bonâ fide*, that the wisdom of the Chair will not shut out any substantial Amendment which would remain to be discussed.

MR. STOREY (Sunderland): If the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War thinks he has reason to complain that this discussion has been unduly prolonged, I must say that he has taken very good care not to submit personally to the unpleasant task of listening. I have been in the House during the greater part of the evening, and I perfectly agree with the right hon. Gentleman that there has been considerable reiteration of argument on this Amendment. But the reason of that has been that on this particular point we have not been able to ascertain what the Government actually mean. I listened to the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) with the respect due to the Office which he held in a former Parliament, and I think he was entirely wrong in his contention. I listened also to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), and I admit that he was more nearly right than the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General in the construction which he put upon the clause. The view of the former right hon. Gentleman was that in the Rule there is ample protection for discussion by the Opposition of every item on the Estimates. If I held that view I should be content. But I ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider a point which, I believe, has not yet been raised in the discussion. I very much regret, Mr. Speaker, that you are permitted to interfere in this matter at all; but if you are to do so the House has defined exactly when you are to interfere; and although personally I object to what has been laid down in that respect, yet in the interest of the House I am willing to submit to it. But I ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider with me what the clause contains. Suppose there is a Vote under discussion; the Vote contains a number of items; upon item number one say there is an obstructive discussion, and at last the Leader of the House interferes and secures the consent of the Chairman to the Motion for the Closure and the discussion is forthwith closed—what follows? According to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board you can proceed to discuss the next item unless the Leader of the House chooses to call for the closure. That, Sir, is going a step further than we have already gone, and I say that in this way all subsequent Amendments can be shut out. I submit that this is going too far. I suggest to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House that, having met the objections taken on this side of the House, to the extent of giving power to the Speaker to put the Amendment to part of a clause to enable the rest to be discussed, the Government should allow similar words to be inserted in the Rule with regard to Committee of Supply—that the Chairman should be permitted to put certain items of the Vote, and that we may be then at liberty to proceed with the discussion of other items without the threat of the closure being held over us. I wish to press it again on the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury that we want to be delivered from the fear that we may not have the fullest liberty to discuss every item without the leave of the

Chair. We do not, as Members of Parliament, wish to have to submit to the Chair; and of course, in saying that, I trust that you, Mr. Speaker, and the House will understand the sense in which I make the remark—we desire to have absolute freedom of discussion. I submit that the effect of the Rule is that because A has obstructed on the first item, I, B, am only to be allowed to discuss a second Amendment if the Chairman and the Government think fit. Sir, I have a higher right than that. I have the right of a Member of Parliament sent here by his constituents to speak on all questions, and it is my intention to do my best to preserve that right, particularly where the money of the taxpayer is concerned. I submit that if the right hon. Gentleman will apply to Votes in Supply the same principle which he has applied to Bills in Committee, he will meet the objections of hon. Members on this side of the House.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I must, in reply to the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) point out that the provision he suggests appears to me unknown in connection with Committee of Supply, and, as I honestly believe, absolutely unnecessary. The hon. Gentleman has laid great stress on his duty as a Member of the Committee of Supply to discuss any item which he thinks it desirable to discuss. I say, Sir, that it is the right and the duty of hon. Members in Supply to make their voice heard at any time for the protection of the pockets of the taxpayers; but does the hon. Gentleman really believe that that unlimited liberty of speech which he desires to preserve is the best method of discharging the duty of a Member of the Committee of Supply? I do not think it is. The hon. Gentleman admits that there has been considerable obstruction in Committee of Supply; he admits that obstruction is possible, and I say that this Rule is directed against that obstruction, and is so directed in order that the rights of Members in Committee of Supply may be secured. I say again that the hon. Gentleman is hardly doing justice to the majority of this House, and the responsible Member who may move that the Original Question be now put, or to the responsibility which rests on the Chairman of Ways and Means, if he supposes that it is possible that a substantive Motion which ought to be discussed in Committee of Supply can be passed over and shut out by the united action of a Minister who may move, a majority who may support, and a Chairman who may permit, an improper closure of debate. I repeat that I regret beyond anything I can express the necessity of limiting discussion even upon trivial Amendments with the view of protecting discussion on Amendments of importance. I know of no method by which we can secure that proper discussion so completely as to make it the duty and responsibility of the Chair to see that there is no abuse of the Rules of the House, and that no right of the minority is left unregarded. For that reason I am unable to accept the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman, and I believe that in resisting it we shall be securing to this House the just and proper control in Committee of Supply which, without some such regulation as we propose, would be found to be impossible.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): My advocacy of this Amendment is grounded upon the rights of the taxpayers of the country, and not on the rights of hon. Members of this House. We claim that the finances of this country are subjected to the control of the House of Commons, and that this House shall be allowed to exercise that control. That is our proposition. The right hon. Gentleman is always speaking about the rights of Members of Parliament in this matter; but it is the rights of the taxpayers that we are contending for. I wish to put a Question to the Government in reference to the Estimates. You set forth in them the salary of the lowest official in the country and the salary of the First Lord of the Treasury, the Lord Chancellor, Secretaries of State, and the porter who carries the messages of the charwoman who lights the fires in the morning; and that is quite right, because it is a Constitutional Rule that not one penny shall be spent without it is open to the criticism of Members of Parliament. But the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury has set forth a new Rule, that the money of the country shall be spent without that criticism if the majority in a discussion declare that it shall not take place. The right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General quoted a saying of Lord Beaconsfield, that two determined men could overturn the Constitution of the country if they had Supply in their hands; but we have here the proposal that a Minister shall take from the House of Commons the ancient right of criticizing Votes in Supply. I say that that is the fundamental right of the House of Commons; and to say that it shall be dependent on the caprice of any Minister, or any Member of a Section of the House, is a most revolutionary proposition. I maintain, Sir, that under this Rule the Chairman of Committees is the creature of the majority of this House, and that nothing which you can do by means of a Rule like this will make him anything but a creature of the majority of the House. Suppose that Vote 24 for Diplomatic Buildings is the subject of discussion in Committee of Supply. I find there are 21 sub-heads, and that these relate to buildings in various parts of the world. Under the Rule as it stands, if a Member wants to make a long speech on one of the items—relating, say, to a building in Africa—he would have it in his power to shut out discussion on all the other buildings. The right hon. Gentleman says we must have some power to curtail obstructive discussion. I say you have better means in your power than what we find here. I maintain that you have full power to put down obstructive discussion in Committee, and the right hon. Gentleman probably forgets that, even if the Amendment of my hon. Friend were passed, the power of the closure would still exist. My hon. Friend does not want to prevent you from stopping obstructive discussion on Sub-head A; he wants to prevent you from stopping discussion on all the rest of the sub-heads in the Vote. That is his contention, and I hope my hon. Friend will go to a Division, in which case I shall certainly follow him into the Lobby.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): I wish to point out that we are endeavouring to induce the Government to introduce into the first part of the second clause of the first Rule the words which the House has already accepted at the suggestion of the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess Hartington). I think the Government would do well by accepting the Amendment of the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) to introduce into the Rule, with reference to Supply, that very important principle which the noble Marquess put forward with regard to Bills in Committee. I wish to put it to hon. Members whether they really understand on what question they went into the Lobby on the occasion referred to, and to suggest that they will be stultifying themselves in the vote they are about to give if they do not support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Swansea. I do think that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, in replying to the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey), ought to have said that he had accepted the Amendment of the noble Marquess, and that he would carry the principle out logically to the end. If it were important to apply that principle in the case of the clauses of a Bill, it is more important to apply it in the cases of Votes in Committee of Supply. But the Government have refused to do so, and the result is that there will be no Proviso or means, in the second part of the first Rule, by which you can save yourselves from rushing through an entire Vote, even if the Committee wish to discuss the subsequent items. I ask the House to be consistent, and accept the principle of the Amendment of my hon. Friend.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Question put,

"That the words 'Provided always, That, in Committee of Supply, when a Vote is under consideration, and to the particular items of which more than one Notice of Amendment has been given, if, after discussion on one of such items, the Rule for closing that discussion is put in force, the fact of its adoption shall not be held to apply to Amendments to the other sub-items of that Vote,' be there inserted."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 130; Noes 216: Majority 86.—(Div. List, No. 63.)

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): The Amendment I have given Notice of is a simple one. Although hon. Members here are some of them extremely well acquainted with the Rules, I have always found that there are many Members who, notwithstanding that they can make able speeches, cannot tell the difference between Monday and Tuesday and Thursday and Friday. It takes six or seven years before a Member can tell the day of the week—I mean before he knows the difference between the class of Business taken on different days of the week. Of course, Mondays and Thursdays belong absolutely to the Government. I do not wish to deal with those days. Friday is a kind of half-and-half day. It belongs nominally to the Government; but the practice has been for private Members to take possession of it, to a certain extent, by putting down Motions on going into Committee of Supply. I do not wish to touch Fridays, but I limit my Amendment to Tuesdays and Wednesdays. On Wednesdays private Members bring in their Bills, and I think we ought to be very jealous of our privilege. I should like to point out to the House how totally unnecessary it is to have the clôture on Wednesdays, because we already have it by the fact of the clock arriving at 6.45 p.m. The clôture proposed might be used injuriously by the majority against the minority, as it would enable them to clôture Bills before they had been adequately discussed, in order to enable them to proceed with other measures in which they were interested, but for which they had failed to get priority on the Paper. I think such a course would be an unjust interference with the rights of private Members, and I hold that the first Bill should continue to have the priority which it has always been understood to possess. I should not object to the adoption of some new system by which a selection of Bills might be made for Wednesdays, but I think it unfair that the power of selection should be given to the majority by this Clôture Resolution. With regard to Tuesdays, our procedure differs on that day from our procedure on Wednesdays. Tuesday is the only day private Members can get for the moving of substantive Resolutions. On Friday only one substantive Motion can be moved; but on Tuesdays several Members may put down Motions, and may take Divisions on them. Many important measures have been brought forward in this way on Tuesdays by private Members, and long debates have ensued, which have served to enlighten the country, and prepare it for the ultimate adoption of the proposed reforms. Now, if the clôture is carried as at present proposed, the objection which I pointed out with regard to the course of Business on Wednesdays will apply, because the Government will select, by the process of clôture, that subject which they wish to have debated. They will be able to clôture Resolutions number 1 and 2, in order to bring on number 3, which may be of very little public importance. I think that the Government, by proposing to deprive private Members of the control of one day in the week, are not only doing something very unnecessary, but something very dangerous, because they are depriving the majority of their rights—because they themselves are really the Representatives of a minority. Owing to the present fortuitous state of Parties in the House on every subject except that of Ireland, they will be silencing the majority. By this Rule, the Government will have an easy method of getting rid of an awkward Resolution. No doubt, the Leader of an Opposition will always be able to get a day from the Government for a discussion; but there are always a great many questions cropping up with regard to which the Leader of the Opposition does not care to ask for a day, and which private Members should be allowed the opportunity of discussing.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of line 12, to insert the words, "Provided, That no Motion for a Closure of the Debate may be made on a Tuesday or a Wednesday."—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): It frequently happens that really interesting questions, which the House is anxious to discuss, cannot be reached by reason of the undue protraction of the discussion on some subject of small interest which precedes them. I think that if the House is of opinion that the debate should be closed on any question under discussion, it should be at liberty to close it. Moreover, of late years Governments have been obliged to ask for Tuesdays, and the effect of the Amendment will be to exempt those evenings from the closure when Government Business is under consideration. I do not think that the closure should be denied to private Members who have Motions and Bills before the House, and who may wish a decision to be come to with regard to them. It seems to me that it would be fair and reasonable, and more for the proper conduct of Business, that the Closure Rule should be applied universally.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): So far as I am concerned, if the clôture is good for the Government, it is also good for private Members. The proposal of my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Galway (Colonel Nolan) is to exclude Tuesdays and Wednesdays from the operation of the clôture. He started his speech by saying that Members did not get into proper count of the days in the week until they had been six or seven years in Parliament. Well, he himself seems to have lost count, because he appears to have lost sight of the fact that Tuesdays and Wednesdays are the days on which it would be very advantageous to private Members to have a guarantee that their Motions will not be closed by lapse of time. I have known cases in which hon. Members have spoken for a very long time on Wednesdays for the purpose of defeating a Bill. I remember Dr. Lyons speaking for an hour and a-half in order to talk out the Irish Sunday Closing Bills. I cheered him ironically, and I recollect his coming across to me afterwards and thanking me very earnestly for the encouragement I had given him. If the Government would exclude the operation of the clôture on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, whenever Government Business is set down for those days, I should have no objection; but if it is proposed to exclude the operation of the clôture on Tuesdays and Wednesdays merely, when private Members' Business is before the House, I should say that we ought to decline to accept the proposal. I do not know whether my hon. and gallant Friend intends to force his Amendment to a Division. I cannot think the alteration he proposes would be a good thing to private Members. I think, on the contrary, it would be a disadvantage to them. It is said that hon. Members in connection with Bills that are discussed on Wednesdays very frequently deliver long and carefully-prepared speeches. I do not think he can refer to the Irish Members, because it seems to me that we are able to pursue a debate at any time without very long notice. I do not see any way to support the Amendment of my hon. and gallant Friend, believing that it would cut against private Members rather than in favour of them.

Colonel NOLAN: I withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Amendment in Order is that of the hon. Member for South Kilkenny (Mr. Chance), in line 13.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): I have the following Amendment on the Paper:—In Rule 1, line 12, after "Debate," insert—

"Provided that no Motion that the Clause or any portion thereof stand part of, or be added to, the Bill shall be made until all the Amendments of which Notice have been given have been disposed of."

Mr. SPEAKER: I have ruled that Amendment out of Order, because I consider the principle was contained in the Amendment of the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington).

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): In the absence of my hon. Friend the Member for South Kilkenny, I beg to move for him the following Amendment:—In line 13, after the word "that," to insert the words—

"Questions that the Question that certain words of any Clause defined in the Motion stand part of the Clause, or that any Clause stand part of or be added to the Bill be now put, shall not be decided in the affirmative if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear by the numbers declared from the Chair that such Question has been supported by a number of Members at least twice the number of the Members voting against it, and that other."

The object of this Amendment is to provide an additional safeguard in the shape of a proportionate majority in the case of a decision come to, to apply the clôture to questions with reference to the putting of a clause, or in the case of an Amendment which may be moved to that clause. I think this is an Amendment which will commend itself to the sense of the House, because the whole tone of the discussion which has taken place on the question of the safeguards to be adopted for a close have shown the necessity for the adoption of some other and better safeguard than that which is provided in the Rule of the Government as it now stands. It will be in the recollection of the House that this question of the proportionate majority was debated in the last Parliament on the first Clôture Rule introduced by the Liberal Government. The Conservative Party, as a body, then took a very strong and decided stand upon that, occupying many nights with the discussion of the question as to whether a bare majority or a proportionate majority should decide the question involved in the clôture. That question was decided adversely to the views of the then Conservative Party by a majority of 44; but it excited very considerable interest at the time, and it is possible that when the time comes for discussing the question as to whether a bare majority shall be maintained in reference to the whole operation of this Rule, or whether there shall be some proportionate majority, the Conservative Party will be again beaten. The question involved is one of a minor character, referring only to the application of the clôture to a clause. When the majority takes the very unusual course of stopping discussion on a clause, and cutting out a number of Amendments, there should be a decisive consensus of opinion in favour of that step against the minority; in other words, that it should not be in the power of 200 Members, or considerably less than one-third of the Whole House, to apply the clôture to the clauses of a Bill. I think that this is a case on which the Tory Party should return to their old policy of insistence on the virtue of a proportionate majority, and that the Liberal Party should divert from the path which they originally marked out. I am reminded that in 1882 we voted against proportionate majority and in favour of clôture by a bare majority. We had then in view a clôture applicable to important Divisions like those in second readings and important Resolutions; we did not think it was a weapon which could be conveniently used in Committee. Besides, the old Clôture Rule was brought in by the then Government as a weapon which would be very rarely used; but there can be no doubt that this Clôture Rule will be frequently and indiscriminately used. We are therefore entitled to press very strongly upon the Government the necessity of giving the safeguard which my hon. Friend the Member for South Kilkenny (Mr. Chance) suggests. The adoption of this Amendment will not at all prejudge the question of proportionate majority later on. Now Sir, if you call to mind the many reforms which have been carried of late years, you will remember that they have not been adopted without considerable insistence in Committee. Take, for instance, the case of the Army Discipline Bill, or, as it was called, the Mutiny Bill. If the Government had been allowed to clôture the Amendments proposed in Committee to that Bill, I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that the Amendments which were entirely instrumental in obtaining the reform of the law comprised in the abolition of flogging in the Army and Navy would never have been carried. Our Amendments in those days were looked upon with great repugnance and impatience by the whole body of the Government Party. We could scarcely obtain leave to make ourselves understood by the House at large, so great was the impatience which was exhibited. Now, similar impatience and a similar situation will undoubtedly arise in future, if you leave it in the power of a bare and simple majority to rush headlong and not only stop discussion, but prevent discussion. There can be no hardship whatever in insisting upon proportionate majority, such as my Amendment requires, and I shall be very curious to see what the Conservative Party, which, in 1882, supported so stoutly a proposition for a proportionate majority in reference to the application of the clôture, have to say now, in 1887, in opposition to an Amendment which only provides that there shall be a proportionate majority in those cases where there is the greatest risk; nay more, almost absolute certainty of an abuse of this Rule by a strong and excited majority. I beg to propose the Amendment which stands in the name of the hon. Member for South Kilkenny (Mr. Chance).

Amendment proposed,

In line 13, after the word "that," to insert the words "Questions that the Question that certain words of any Clause defined in the Motion stand part of the Clause, or that any Clause stand part of or be added to the Bill be now put, shall not be decided in the affirmative if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear by the numbers declared from the Chair that such Question has been supported by a number of Members at least twice the number of the Members voting against it, and that other."—(*Mr. Parnell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I understand the argument of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Parnell) to be that the proceedings in Committee require a different treatment, as regards closure, than the proceedings in the House. I am unable to accept the proposition of the hon. Member. I do not think there is anything in Committee on a Bill, or a Committee of Supply, which should induce the House to make a distinction as to the conditions under which the closure should be applied to debate in Committee, than to debate upon a second reading or Motion. I cannot help thinking the safeguards introduced in this Rule are sufficient. I believe also that the Rule itself is necessary to enable the House to conduct its Business, and therefore I cannot consent to hamper its operation by putting into the hands of the minority power to prevent the House discharging its duties.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): I regret I was not in my place to move this Amendment, of which I had given Notice; and I have to thank my hon. Friend and Leader (Mr. Parnell) for proposing it. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) has overlooked a very strong argument in favour of introducing a different Rule as to the necessary majority in this case than in other cases. When you have a simple question of closure on one single point, I am entitled to assume the House will be divided into two distinct Parties. One Party will be composed of such Members as do not desire further discussion, having made up their minds upon the subject at issue; but when you come to the case of a closure, by which you will suppress a number of different Amendments, the House will assuredly be split up into many Parties. One Party will desire to get rid of one question, another Party will desire to shelve a second question, another Party will desire to prevent discussion upon the third question, and so on, in accordance with the number of Amendments which are to be summarily suppressed by one Motion. On the other hand, you will find a small number of Gentlemen who consider there is something in every one of the Amendments, and who will be unwilling to consent to any one of them being suppressed. This is an argument which cannot apply to other instances of the application of the closure; and, therefore, there is a very distinct case made out for this proposition—a case which the right hon. Gentleman has not answered at all. It is intended that 40 Members will be able to get rid of the opposition of 39 Members; but that if one Member be added to the 39, it will be necessary that 161 Members be added to the 40, before the clôture can be adopted. At the same time, 201 Members will be able to carry the clôture against 200. That seems to be a most extraordinary and illogical proposition. Now, my Amendment would get rid of this absurdity. This Amendment will also be more efficacious than the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman, especially in the case of small Divisions. For instance, 81 Members will be able to carry the clôture against 40; while, under the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman, 201 Members would be required to vote in the majority. I trust the First Lord of the Treasury will reconsider the position he has taken up in regard to this Amendment.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): The question of the majority, by which the clôture is to be put in force, is one of great difficulty. It was discussed at great length five years ago, and I am not at all sure that the conclusion then arrived at was regarded as satisfactory. Such as it was, it is embodied more or less in the Rule submitted by the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith); but a mere glance at the Paper containing the Amendments will show that very conflicting views are entertained upon the point, not only by Members upon the Opposition Benches, but also by Members who rank as Supporters of Her Majesty's Government; a variety of propositions have been proposed, of 2 to 3, 1 to 2, 1 to 3, and so on. Now, it is impossible, in considering the question, to lose sight of the position the Speaker occupies in this matter. The old Constitutional Rule of this House is, that every question should be decided by the majority; and with regard to all ordinary Business, it is right and reasonable that the opinion of the majority should prevail. But the imposition of the closure is not an ordinary proceeding. The Government will probably admit that the imposition of the closure is an exceedingly strong measure, and should never be resorted to unless the evident sense of the House in support of the proceeding is clearly manifest. Under these circumstances, it appears to me that any mere proportionate majority, where the majority is a small one, must be unsatisfactory; because the majority may be a chance majority, and the Speaker, recognizing the majority which happens for the moment to be before him, will give his consent—or rather will not withhold his assent—to the proposal that the closure should be inflicted. It may well be that, on many occasions, closure will be put in force under circumstances in which only a small portion of the House is really present. I have considered this question of majority from all points of view in which I could regard it, and I am satisfied that there is no satisfactory solution of the difficulty, except one, and that is the one which is akin to the traditions of the House—namely, an absolute majority. I do not mean an absolute majority for the time being. Closure is an exceptional measure, and should be enforced by an exceptional majority; and a proper and Constitutional majority is a majority of the House as a whole. An absolute majority of the House is, of course, 336 Members; and, if we resolve upon such a majority, we shall relieve the Chair at once of all the invidious responsibility which is now cast upon it. You will free the hands of the Chair; because, in submitting the Question to the House, the Chair will know perfectly well that if the closure is imposed it will be imposed by a majority of the entire House. Having regard to these considerations, I do not look with very great favour upon the precise wording of this Amendment; but, at the same time, if the larger proposal—and what I regard as the sounder and more Constitutional proposal—is rejected, I shall be obliged to go into the Lobby in support of this and other similar Amendments.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): The least we ought to expect is that when the clôture is imposed it should be imposed by a majority of the House as a whole, otherwise we have no guarantee that the House is not opposed to the closure. While I consider the adoption of the suggestion of my hon. Friend (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) would be the best solution of the question, I think the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Kilkenny (Mr. Chance) is extremely reasonable. Of course, we have ceased to hope that the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) will accept an Amendment proposed on this side of the House; he has steadfastly refused to do anything of the kind; and we continue to move Amendments, in the hope that sooner or later the House will be struck by the reasonableness of our demands, and accept our Amendments in spite of the opposition of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. STOREY (Sunderland): I must confess I am not in favour of this Amendment. It is proposed that when the clôture is applied to a clause of a Bill there shall be a two-to-one majority. The clôture upon a Vote in Supply is, according to our own argument, much more important than the clôture upon a clause. I submit that as the House has let so much go by default, they should let the whole go by default, and let the Government have its way. The hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) has suggested that the clôture should only be applied when an absolute majority of the whole House votes in favour of it. I have not had very much experience in this House; but I have had a good deal of experience of public bodies in the North of England, and I never understood a majority to be anything but a majority of those who at the time being are attending to their business. I am surprised that the hon. Gentleman, who has a very logical mind, does not see that his proposal would be impracticable and un-English, if it be not un-Irish. Sir, I thoroughly deplore the necessity there is for the House to take these proceedings at all. [*Ministerial cheers.*] I think that if the hon. Gentlemen who cheer that sentiment had been a little wiser, if they had brought certain constituencies in this country, and certain Members, into harmony in this House, there would have been no necessity at all to propose these un-English Rules. However, they have adopted their own course. They, who opposed the clôture by a bare majority in 1882, tell us they have now grown wiser. I am one of the minority who resisted the clôture then, and who resist it now, and I am only sorry we have not now the support of the Conservatives in preventing this Rule being adopted. But I maintain that if we are to have the clôture, let us have the clôture. The House has adopted the principle of a simple majority in the matter of second and third readings and in Supply, and I do not see how we can make an exception in this particular case. Therefore, if there be a Division, I shall feel it my duty to vote, for once, with the Government.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): As one of a body of Members who are likely to most frequently be in a minority, I desire to give my warmest support to this Amendment. It is quite possible that if on the clauses of a Bill there were but two Parties in the House, it would be undesirable to ask that there should be a majority of two to one; but when there is a third Party in the House that Party has a right to see that it receives that protection which the much larger minority receives. The regular Opposition requires no protection, as far as I can understand; but the Irish minority is the one which we seek to defend by this fair and reasonable Amendment.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): The House must clearly understand that this Amendment does not extend to the closure discussed in the first part of the Rule. My hon. Friend (Mr. Parnell) simply asks that when the closure is adopted in regard to the clause of a Bill, there shall be two to one in favour of its application. The state of things under the Rule as it now stands reminds me of the new machine gun. More care is required in using the machine gun than in firing the ordinary rifle, and the man in charge of the machine gun has to take all due precautions to avoid danger to his own friends. What my hon. Friend who has moved this Amendment says is, that when the House is in Committee on a Bill, when, as it were, the irregulars are in the field, to apply the machine gun suddenly and without proper precautions, might be dangerous to one's friends, whatever might be the effect with regard to the enemy. I think my hon. Friend has very fairly put the question to the House, and that he has shown that when the House is discussing Amendments to a Bill in Committee, when hon. Members are able to speak two or three times on the same question, when some hon. Gentlemen are not so much interested in the matter immediately before them as in the safety of the measure to which it relates, there will probably be a tendency, unless some such safeguard as that which is now proposed be carried, to resort to the application of the clôture. My hon. Friend has, therefore, provided for such a contingency. My observations have merely been intended to convey to the House what it is that my hon. Friend proposes; and I think that having shown what is his intention, and how much he narrows down the question, I have said sufficient to recommend his Amendment to the House.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): What I should like to see is, that the House should be brought into such a state of harmony of mind that there should be no necessity for us to divide on this question at all; but that, I fear, is too much to expect. I may say, however, that although there have been a good many acceptable arguments in favour of the proposal we are discussing, there have been very nearly as many against it; but I do not mean to say that I have risen for the purpose of opposing it. What I say is, that proposals like this do not exactly express the ideas we desire to embody. They are the consequential and necessary subsidiary parts of what is being forced upon us by the action of Her Majesty's Government. If I were asked my view of the proposal submitted by my hon. Friend, I should say I do not agree with it altogether; but looking at it as bearing on what the Government have already done, and is likely to do, I should say that, as one of a possible number of evils, we had better accept it. Now, what is the Amendment of my hon. Friend? He proposes, in Rule 1, line 13, after the word "that," to insert the following words:—

> "Questions that the Question that certain words of any Clause defined in the Motion stand part of the Clause, or that any Clause stand part of or be added to the Bill be now put, shall not be decided in the affirmative if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear by the numbers declared from the Chair that such Question has been supported by a number of Members at least twice the number of the Members voting against it."

What I desire to say is this—I do believe it to be necessary that the House of Commons should have the same privilege and power as any other body of Gentlemen in any other Assembly in the world possesses by inherent right—the power and privilege of closing its own discussions when the majority so wish: although I do not know that the proposition thus put is very acceptable to hon. Gentlemen opposite. Whenever the majority of this House desires, and there and then declares it to be desirable either for the public convenience, or, to put it at its lowest phase, even for the convenience of its own Members, that a discussion should cease, I hold that it ought to be in its power to make and act on such declaration. But it is a far different thing to say, as this Amendment proposes, that when, what I may for the moment be allowed to describe as a mechanical majority of two to one shall declare that a discussion shall be at an end, the discussion shall therefore terminate. And here I want the House to understand what is meant by a majority of two to one. In order to understand this, let me ask how do we stand to-night, or on any other occasion when the Government is supported by a strong majority for the purpose of carrying, not only these Rules, but anything they like in the shape of Procedure? They may, by means of a four or five-line Whip, or even of a twelve-line Whip, have prepared a majority of two to one, or even of three to one. Although I support the Amendment of my hon. Friend, I think it does not go far enough. It stops short of what I want to see in regard to the division of the House on the closure question. What I wish to put before the House is this—that although, at the present moment, a majority of two to one might be got to vote against me, it is at the same time quite possible that a majority of the whole House could not be got to vote against my hon. Friend's Amendment. What we want, although the words of the Amendment of my hon. Friend do not suggest it, is, that in order to enable the closure to be put on any Vote in Committee of Supply or otherwise, there should be a majority of the Whole House in favour of the closure; and, if the House should so decide, then I say that no hon. Member occupying a place in this House could, for one moment, pretend to represent the democratic views of any constituency in the Kingdom, if he maintained that he could stand against that decision. The position of any hon. Member taking such a course would, I venture to say, be a very dangerous one.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 49; Noes 191: Majority 142.—(Div. List, No. 64.)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

MR. GEDGE (Stockport): At this hour of the morning, I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Gedge.*)

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH): In assenting to the Motion for the adjournment of the debate, I hope the House will bear in mind the necessity for making progress with these Rules, and that we may be enabled to decide the question of the number requisite to apply the closure to-morrow.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

## *MOTION.*

### BANKRUPTCY OFFICES (SITES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. David Plunket, Bill for the acquisition of property, and the provision of new buildings for the Bankruptcy Department, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. David Plunket and Mr. Jackson.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 197.]

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

### *Wednesday,* 16*th March,* 1887.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—National Provident Insurance, Mr. Byrne *disch.*; Mr. Thomas Gill *added.*

PUBLIC BILL—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Reformatory Schools Act (1866) Amendment * [198].

## *ORDER OF THE DAY.*

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### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE)—RULE 1 (CLOSURE OF DEBATE).—RESOLUTION.

ADJOURNED DEBATE. [THIRTEENTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Main Question, as amended,

> "That, after a Question has been proposed, a Member rising in his place may claim to move, 'That the Question be now put,' and, unless it shall appear to the Chair that such Motion is an abuse of the Rules of the House, or an infringement of the rights of the minority, the Question, 'That the Question be now put,' shall be put forthwith, and decided without Amendment or Debate:
>
> "When the Motion 'That the Question be now put,' has been carried, and the Question consequent thereon has been decided, any further Motion may be made (the assent of the Chair as aforesaid not having been withheld) which may be requisite to bring to a decision any Question already proposed from the Chair; and also if a Clause be then under consideration, a Motion may be made (the assent of the Chair as aforesaid not having been withheld) That the Question, That certain words of the Clause defined in the Motion stand part of the Clause, or That the Clause stand part of, or be added to the Bill, be now put. Such Motions shall be put forthwith, and decided without Amendment or Debate:
>
> "Provided always, That Questions for the Closure of Debate shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear by the numbers declared from the Chair, that such Motion was supported by more than Two Hundred Members, or was opposed by less than Forty Members, and supported by more than One Hundred Members."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. GEDGE (Stockport): I beg to move, in Rule 1, line 15, to leave out all after "by," in order to insert—

> "A majority which consists of not less than one hundred Members and which bear to the minority the proportion of three or more to two."

I little thought when I gave Notice of this Amendment in the 15th line of the first Rule that 15 days would elapse before I should be able to move it, and though Pliny's maxim—*Nulla dies sine lineâ*—was a good rule for the minimum of work to be done by a student, I doubt whether the country at large will consider that there is sufficient justification for the inordinate length of time which has been taken up in the discussion of this Rule, line by line. However, here we are, and I hope the House will make an end of the Rule to-day. I should not persist in moving the Amendment if I had not convinced myself that if the Rule is to be made of any real use for the purpose for which it is intended, my Amendment, or something very like it, ought to be adopted. I will endeavour to show the difference between the Rule as it stands on the Paper and as it will stand if the Amendment is accepted. I take leave to say that I am not answerable for the questionable English on the first three lines of this part of the Rule—

> "Provided always that Questions for the closure of Debate shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear, by the numbers declared from the Chair, that such Motion was supported by more than two hundred Members,"

&c. "Such Motion" can scarcely refer to the plural "Questions" in the first line, and I take it ought to mean "any Question" instead of "Questions." The Rule goes on to say—

> "Unless it shall appear, by the numbers declared from the Chair, that such Motion was supported by more than two hundred Members, or was opposed by less than forty Members, and supported by more than one hundred Members."

I propose to get rid of the "Two Hundred Members" altogether, and to say, instead, "supported by a majority which consisted of not less than 100 Members, and which bore to the majority the proportion of 3 or more to 2." I find that anything in the shape of an arithmetical problem is a puzzle to many hon. Members, and therefore I think it is best to explain that the majority shall be half as many again. We talk of a majority being "five" when, as a matter of fact, the majority is 305 to 300. That is not the majority I mean. What I mean is that the greater part or majority must bear to the smaller number or minority the proportion of 3 to 2. In regard to the figure of "100" which makes provision for a larger quorum than the ordinary quorum of 40, it is laid down in the Rule that the closure shall not be applied unless there are 100 Members who desire to close the debate. It is put in this way in order to secure a quorum of 100 present; for if it had stated that there must be a quorum of 100, and 90 were in favour of closure and 15 against it, the 15 would walk out and so reduce the quorum below

100, and the debate must go on. Now there is considerable authority in favour of having a proportional majority. instead of a bare majority, for the purpose of the closure of debate. In 1882, in a full House of 597 Members, my right hon. Friend the Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott) proposed that consent should not be given to the closure by a bare majority, and was defeated by the small number of 39, although it was opposed with all the force which the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) and the large majority he possessed at the time could bear to bring upon it; 279 Members voted against the proposal that the closure should be carried by a bare majority, and among the 279 were the then Leaders of the Conservative Party and most of their followers. I do not blame them for having changed their opinions. There can be no doubt that "old times have changed, old manners gone," and it is imperative that some form of closure shall be adopted in order to restore by Rule that control over the proceedings of the House which was formerly secured and regulated by the gentlemanly feelings which prevailed among its Members. Hon. Members from Ireland tell us that their constituents have sent them here to attain certain objects, and they consider that the best way of attaining those objects, both in Ireland and here, is to substitute anarchy for law, and to paralyze the action of the House. They avow that as their object with cynical fairness, and they do not leave us in the dark about it and the results they desire to obtain. Some few years ago it was the practice of the Speaker to call first upon one side of the House and then upon the other, so that each side should have an opportunity of answering the arguments which had been put forward by their opponents; and the time when the Division was to be taken was fixed by agreement between the two Front Benches. This, however, is now entirely changed, and the custom is for Member after Member to rise from the same part of the House and to repeat over and over again the arguments which have been put forward by previous speakers, with the avowed object of delaying the Division. I do not blame the Irish Members; but, on the other hand, I say that those who represent the great majority of the constituencies of the country have also rights and have also duties. We come here with a mission or a mandate, as it is the fashion to call it, to prevent the Irish Members obtaining the object they desire, and to prevent it by any means necessary. If they have a right to destroy the spirit of our Rules and avail themselves of the Forms of the House, in order to paralyze the action of the House, we have also a right to do all we can to restrain them. Our constituents expect that we shall do so; and if the weapons we have hitherto employed are not strong enough, it is our duty to see wherein they have failed, and to amend them so that they shall fail no longer. They have no right to blame us if we endeavour to deprive them of the weapons with which they fight with a view to obtaining the victory which the country expects us to obtain. It is our bounden duty, sent here, as we are, to pass any Rule that is necessary to enable the House to resume its control over its own Business, and to pass the Estimates and laws as soon as they have been fairly discussed, without procrastination of any kind intended only to prevent the House from arriving at a decision. It is admitted on all sides that the Rule which was framed in 1882 has failed altogether. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, who introduced it, has confessed that it has failed; and the present Government have made a similar confession, because they are now endeavouring to amend it. Then let us examine it thoroughly, in order to see where it has failed, and why the Government, on attempting to amend it, are leaving the last part of it untouched. Why do they retain the extraordinary provision of 200 Members and a bare majority? They are making no alteration whatever in that part of the Rule. As a matter of fact, they are simply taking away the initiation of the Chair, and are giving to the Chair a power of veto. What I desire to know is, why, when the Government admit that the Rule has failed, they do not proceed to amend it in the particulars in which it has failed? When a weapon fails, the skilful workman mends the part which is faulty, and this shows us which part has failed, at least, in his judgment. The Government must clearly be of opinion that the Chair, for the last five years, has not done its duty, seeing that

that is the only point on which they have proceeded to amend the Rule. The Chair was to do this—when he thought that a matter had been sufficiently debated, and that this was the evident sense of the House, it was his duty to report that fact to the House, and, if supported by a majority of at least 201, the closure was to be applied. But the closure has not been applied when wanted; and all the Government propose now is to alter the power and duty of the Speaker; and therefore it is quite clear that, in the view of the Government, the Rule has failed to have the operation it was intended to have, not because of any difficulty as to the 201, but because the Speaker has omitted to state the evident sense of the House, and therefore the closure could not be applied. The Government now propose to take that power out of the hands of the Speaker. Now, I do not believe, for one moment, that that is the cause of the failure. I believe that the Chair throughout has done its duty; and the reason why he has not made the necessary declaration has been that he did not believe there was a majority of 201. Our special object is to put down anything in the shape of Obstruction, from whatever quarter it comes, and to enable the House to obtain complete control over its own Business. Now, Sir, when it is that this Obstruction generally takes place? Is it in a full House, when some Vote of Want of Confidence in the Government is being debated, and when there happen to be 500 or 600 Members present? Nothing of the kind; but it is generally in a House of 200 or 300 Members. Therefore, if this Rule is to be effectual to do its work, it ought to be made weak in a full House, and strong in a small House; whereas, as it now stands, it is exactly the reverse. The closure may be applied if a quorum of 100 vote for it and 39 against it, and the Speaker would be perfectly right in refusing to interpose his veto when he found there was a large majority in favour of the closure and only a small minority against it; but if there are 40 Members against it—one Member happening to come in at the last moment, perhaps because he failed to find a pair —the application of the closure will be prevented. In that case, there must be 200 Members in favour of the closure before it can be applied. Why should that 40th man have such an enormous power? Are we to look upon him as the Fortieth Stripe which the Jews dare not give, or the Fortieth Article which Theodore Hook offered to sign, and was very nearly sent down by the Dean of Christ Church for his impertinence? What I venture to propose is an absolute 3 to 2 majority all round, which would make it more easy to apply the closure when necessary, especially in a small House. There are 670 Members in this House; one-half is 335. According to the Government, there must be 201 in the majority, with half the House, or 335 Members present. That leaves 134 in the minority; and if the minority be anything between 40 and 134 it equally requires 200 to beat them; but if you adopt my proposal, a majority of 100 would stop 66; 120 would stop 80; 150 would stop 100; and so on until you reach 134, who would require 201 to stop them. Again, by the Government Rule, 301 could insist on the closure of debate against 300 who may wish it to continue. We know from past history that it has frequently happened, in a debate upon a great question, when the mind of the country has been aroused, the discussion which has occurred here has instructed the country, and caused a considerable difference in a Division. If the Government have 301 supporters, it would probably be worth their while to do all in their power to stop the debate as quickly as possible. The Speaker is unable to tell how many there are in the minority, because there may be Members in the Smoking Room and elsewhere who do not think it worth while to come into the House to listen to the debate. But there would be a rush of Members when the Division bell was rung, and 301 would apply the closure against the wish of 300 who desired it to go on. Now, I say that that is not right, and I am of opinion that 300 should have the power of insisting that the debate should go on. As the Rule now stands, the Speaker must often be in a difficulty on a Motion being made to apply the closure. He is doubtful whether he ought to consent or not. In the end, he allows the Motion to be put; hon. Members rush in, and it is carried by a small majority—say, 201 to 200. Such a circumstance as that would, I think, make the Speaker exceedingly careful in future; and he would determine always to interpose his veto unless he was quite certain that there was a large majority in favour of the closure. With the Rule as I propose to amend it the Speaker would do nothing of the kind, because he would know that the minority would be able to protect itself if large enough. I am satisfied that if you pass the original Rule you will, in the end, have to come to my Amendment, or something like it. It is said that a bare majority governs greater matters, and ought to prevail in this instance. In 1882 the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian mentioned five historical incidents to show that great majorities always had their own way in important questions; but upon examination of them it will be found that really they all tell the other way. For instance, as to the first which he mentioned, it is true that the Reform Bill of 1831 was carried by a majority of 1; but the result of the smallness of the majority was that the Government were unable to make way with it, and they found it necessary to dissolve. The Reform Bill of 1832 was carried by 2 to 1. Small majorities may be powerful to prevent a particular thing from being done; but they are powerless to carry their own will in any particular direction. Then it is said that a proportional majority is a new-fangled idea—that it is something un-English and undemocratic. Now, in the United States of America it takes a majority of 2 to 1 to override the President's veto, or to make a radical change in the law. In our own country, in the case of Joint Stock Companies, there is a proportional majority of 3 to 1 required before any change can be made; even the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian did not venture to propose a bare majority in the case of urgency, and in the very Rule before us 200 cannot beat 199, and it takes 201 to beat 40—that is to say, 5 to 1; so that this sacred principle of the bare majority does not come into force unless there are 400 Members present. It is, therefore, too late to say that it is un-Constitutional to have anything but a bare majority. We are told that the Whips are against it—that they know when there are 200 Members in the House, but they would not know how they can count upon an unknown quantity. But I assert, Sir, that it ought not be a question of Whips, for that gives it a Party character. Unless the general body of the House on both sides come to a conclusion that a debate ought to be stopped and the closure applied the debate ought to proceed; and I would venture to point out, as a Member of a Party who, for practical purposes, are in a majority, that one day or other we may be in a minority, and may then regret that it is in the power of a bare majority to stop an important debate in order to please the whim of a Government. The closure ought never to be made a Party question; personally, I think it ought to be taken out of the region of Party and placed in that of the general good sense of the House. It may be said that there is no danger, and that no bare majority will venture to use its power; but I strongly object to put a weapon in the hands of any Party on the mere supposition that they will not use it. Let me quote what a high authority — Mr. Grattan—said in 1792. He made this wise statement—

> "When the liberty and security of one Government depend on the honour of another, the one country may have much honour, but the other will have no liberty."

We are fairly warned as to what is going to be done. One hon. Member said to me in the Lobby—

> "I intend to make the closure as hard as I can, because I know that you Tories will not dare to use it against us, although when we are in power we will use it as tightly as we can against you."

And the right hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) said much the same openly in this House a few nights ago. He is like the boy at Eton who, being unmercifully thrashed by his master, consoled himself with the reflection, "When I get a fag of my own won't I lick him." I think we ought to do what we believe to be right without regard to what may happen when we get our chance. If the Government and their followers vote in favour of the Rule as it is now placed before them, and which, as I have shown, will be useless for the purpose required, and may be turned to their injury hereafter, they may live to regret it. I appeal to the Government to state publicly that this is not a Party question, and that no Member who votes for my Amendment will be looked upon as voting against the Government. Last June the danger we are afraid of now actually occurred. The hon. Gentlemen whose conduct we are obliged to resist were then as numerous as they are now, and it was considered desirable to look into the matter and see whether the Rules relating to closure were sufficient to give the House the command of its own time for Business. The Rule of 200 Members and a bare majority came under the consideration of that Committee, which was presided over by the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington). On the Motion of the hon. Member for the Bodmin Division of Cornwall (Mr. Courtney) the present Rule was negatived in that Committee without a Division. So bad was it thought that not a hand was held up in its favour, and instead of it two other proposals were made, both of which got rid of the 200 Members, and required a proportional majority of either 3 to 2 or 2 to 1. The 3 to 2 proposal only found 10 present in favour of it. And why? Because 18 Members present preferred the proposal of 2 to 1, and that was adopted in the Report after having received the support of a considerable number of the Members of that Committee. Only six voted against it, and 23, at one time or other, voted in its favour. I do not know whether the Members who served upon that Committee were the same as certain hon. Members of this House; but I find that the six who opposed were Sir William Harcourt—who was in favour of a bare majority—Mr. Cecil Raikes—who was against any closure at all—Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Leake, Mr. A. O'Connor, and Mr. Sexton. The 23 who voted in favour of it were Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Mr. A. Bass, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, Mr. Courtney, Sir William Hart Dyke, Mr. Duff, Sir James Fergusson, Mr. Dillwyn, Sir John Gorst, Mr. Goschen, Mr. Holms, Mr. Illingworth, Sir John Mowbray, Sir Richard Paget, the late Mr. Peter Rylands, Mr. Sclater-Booth, Mr. Craig-Sellar, Mr. W. H. Smith, Mr. E. Stanhope, Mr. Whitley, and Mr. Whitbread. Under the shelter of this high authority, I think I am not doing too much in submitting this Amendment to the House. I trust that the Government will make it an open question, and that every Member will vote upon it in reference to its real merits. If that be done I shall not be afraid of the result. I beg to move the Amendment which stands in my name on the Paper.

Amendment proposed,

In Rule 1, line 15, to leave out from the word "by," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a majority which consisted of not less than One Hundred Members, and which bore to the minority the proportion of three or more to two."—(*Mr. Gedge.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'more than' stand part of the Question."

MR. HENEAGE (Great Grimsby): I entirely agree with one of the objects of the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Gedge)—namely, that of simplifying the arithmetical puzzle which now exists; but the hon. Member has complicated the question by attaching to the Amendment a proportional closure, to which, for my own part, I am altogether opposed. If the Government are to go back now and make a retrograde step, we shall have lost all the advantage of the last three weeks' discussion. Every speech made by the Government on these Rules has been made on the assumption that the Rule is to be founded upon simple closure, and to that they have remained firm, the only case in which they have altered their Rule having been where, in accordance with the general feeling of the House, they omitted the previous consent of the Speaker and substituted his veto. I cannot believe that the Government will turn their backs upon all their previous arguments, and therefore it is not necessary to go further into the question. I fully agree that it is desirable to get rid of the arithmetical puzzle, and that the real reason of the Rule having proved useless has not been the action of the Chair, but the fact of a majority of 200 being necessary. I cannot see why 40 Members should neutralize 200, while 301 are enough to prevail against 300. I do not see what magic there is in the number of 40. I should prefer that we should have a simple closure, the necessary quorum being fixed. The object is to make the will of the majority prevail, and also to prevent a snatch Division on the subject. I should like to see some words substituted instead of the arithmetical puzzle, and I would suggest that the majority should be double the minority. I hope that the hon. Member for Stockport will not go to a Division, but will withdraw his Amendment, so that we may be able to go into the question and decide what the quorum should be. By the means which I suggest we should simplify the Rule and get rid of the arithmetical puzzle.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I cannot help thinking that the Amendment now under consideration is simply a bogus Amendment—that it is not intended to be prosecuted seriously, but simply to prevent another which stands lower on the Paper from being discussed. That sort of thing shows that what we have dreaded is very likely to occur—namely, that some irresponsible Member on the other side of the House will be found resorting to tactics not of a very creditable kind against a particular section of the House. Whatever the Government may think of the matter, after the speech of the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Gedge) no doubt can be entertained as to what is meant by these Rules by the hon. Member and those with whom he acts. He speaks of the real foe to be encountered in the matter as the Irish Party. We have asserted over and over again that these Rules are wholly, solely, and expressly intended to be used against the Irish Party. Now, I maintain that the Irish Members, notwithstanding the charges of obstruction which have been made against them, have not been guilty of such obstruction as to call for the sweeping censure which would be implied in the application of the clôture. The admissions of the hon. Member certainly make out a case of resistance to these Rules which I do not think the Irish Members anticipated would be forthcoming from the other side of the House. The majority of the House, I am afraid, will at certain times act unjustly, very much like Caliph Omar, when he burned the Alexandrian Library, when he declared that books containing anything consistent with the Koran were superfluous, while those which contained anything inconsistent with the Koran were mischievous. It is exactly the same case here. If the views of the Irish Members are in accordance with those of the Government they are superfluous, and if not they are mischievous, and should be summarily disposed of. There is something like malice in the suggestion of the hon. Member for Stockport—that the Rule should be further strengthened, so that it may strike us more heavily when we are in a minority. He knows very well that we shall always be in a minority, and, therefore, it will be constantly applied to us, while it will never be allowed to hurt the Tory Party when they are in a minority.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I shall not follow hon. Members in attempting to vindicate the closure as a Rule, or the necessity for the closure. I think the House has had enough of that argument. I will, however, express a hope that in the remaining discussions the House may be enabled to confine itself to the particular Amendment under debate, and that it will not be diverted into the consideration of other questions which have been decided over and over again by majorities of the House. I am sure my hon. Friend the Member for Stockport (Mr. Gedge) will not think that I am wanting in respect for him if I fail to notice his arguments in favour of the closure. My hon. Friend has made an elaborate argument in favour of a different system of closure from that which the Government propose. I will not go so far as to say that the hon. Member has not made an argument which, considering the figures which should be applied to closure in the first instance, and supposing there had been no system of closure in existence, might not have been considered by the House with great advantage; but the House is not in such a position. It must be understood that the Government, in proposing this Rule for the consideration of the House, have based it upon certain conditions in a Division, under the belief that those conditions are necessary to secure the complete liberties of the House—the liberties of the minority as well as the rights of the majority—and that any departure from the principle upon which this Rule is based, as far as Divisions are concerned, would not be an act of good faith on the part of the Government with the House itself. My hon. Friend has asked the Government to leave this matter an open question, and not to make it a Party question. Throughout these debates I think I have made it clear to the House that the subject of closure is not regarded as a Party question. It has been my duty to press this Rule on the attention of the House, because I have been placed in a position which rendered it imperative that I should submit conditions which are thought necessary for the conduct of the Business of the House. I may recall to the recollection of the House that I stated clearly and distinctly that the Rule is not a Party question, although it is a matter which we consider to be necessary and imperative for the conduct of the Business of the House. If any hon. Member is in favour of the Amendment, of course, he is quite at liberty to vote for it; but, as a Member of the Government, I am bound, as being responsible above all for the conduct of this particular debate, to be no party to changing the principle of the Rule. My hon. Friend laid stress on the fact that the 40th man, under the Rule, will enjoy a power and influence which are undue and improper; but under no circumstances can we get rid of the extraordinary power we are obliged to give to that one man. If there is no 40th man, there will be in the proposal of my hon. Friend some man who will have precisely the same influence. My hon. Friend objects to the condition that if there are more than 39 Members who vote in one way, there must be more than 100 who vote the other; but, under his Amendment, he requires that more than 139 should vote in order to close the debate.

**Mr. GEDGE**: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. He is taking the difference between the majority and the minority under the Rule. I do not propose anything of the kind; but I provide, whenever the majority is in the proportion of 3 to 2, it shall have the power of closure.

**Mr. W. H. SMITH**: The Rule provides that when the minority is less than 40 the majority shall be more than 100, and unless the 100th Member can be found the application of the closure will be prevented. It is scarcely necessary for me to refer to the Amendment which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Grimsby (Mr. Heneage) intends to propose. The right hon. Gentleman objects to the existing Rule because of the arithmetical puzzle it involves. If it be a puzzle, it is one with which the House is familiar. The Chair has not always been informed as to whether there were really 200 Members in the House who were prepared to support the closure, and I have myself always seen the extreme difficulty by which the Chair would be surrounded in the attempt to ascertain whether that was the case or not. From that responsibility the Chair under this Rule will, to a great extent, be relieved, as the responsibility will be cast on the Member who proposes to apply the closure. Under all the circumstances I trust that my hon. Friend will rest content with having raised the question, and will spare the House the necessity of going to a Division on a subject upon which it has already expressed a conclusive opinion.

**Mr. M. J. KENNY** (Tyrone, Mid): I do not know that I should feel inclined to object to the first part of the Amendment, but in regard to the last part I do not think the Amendment is fair, or that the hon. Member has succeeded in making it clear to the House that it is one which ought to be accepted. The hon. Gentleman has indulged in a considerable amount of invective against the Irish Party, and has accused us of making the same speeches over and over again for the purpose of obstruction. No more unfounded charge was ever made, for we have always been extremely careful not to repeat speeches made on this side of the House. At the same time I may point out that a great portion of the argument of the hon. Gentleman consisted of an abstract of the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Kilkenny (Mr. Chance). With regard to the Amendment on the Paper, I have given Notice of a further Amendment to that Amendment to leave out at the end "two" and insert "one" with the view of securing what I believe would be a better safeguard for the rights of minorities. The Rule, as it stands, undoubtedly does tell in favour of small minorities, and it cuts against large minorities. I believe it will always be the desire of Parliament to protect small minorities, and it will be the duty of the Chair in all cases to have regard to the rights of minorities, and especially of small minorities. I will not travel over the important part which small minorities have played in this House in past times. It would only be tiresome to recite the number of instances in which small minorities, by their perseverance, activity, and sometimes by their doggedness, have succeeded in bringing about useful reforms and alterations of the law. Large minorities are generally able to protect themselves, and a Minister would hesitate to apply the closure to them. I have myself, therefore, put down on the Paper an Amendment to the hon. Member for Stockport's Amendment, the object of which is to require that the majority which is to be able to enforce the closure should never be less than in the proportion of 3 to 1. That, I think, would be perfectly fair. It has been repeatedly said by hon. Members who are destitute of solid argument that the proceedings of the House would degeneaate into anarchy unless we adopt a most drastic Closure Rule; but I maintoin that the Chair is already fully capable of preventing such a state of things, rnd I assert that during the last five years there has been nothing in the nature of obstruction on the part of the Irish Members, either in Committee of Supply or in Committee of the Whole House on Bills.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I support the suggestion of my hon. Friend, for the reason that the Rule is far better as it stands than it would be with the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Gedge), and I protest against that hon. Member—who is responsible for having put upon the Paper bogus and decidedly obstructive Amendments—charging anyone on these Benches with obstruction. I would remind him that an ounce of practice is worth a pound of theory. We have had to complain of the conspiracy of silence on the Front Bench opposite.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would remind the House that the subject under discussion is that of numbers. It would be more regular, therefore, for the hon. Member to confine himself to that Question.

Mr. FLYNN: I wish to support the suggestion of my hon. Friend the Member for Tyrone. The Clôture Rule is intended to put down obstruction and deliberate prolixity, and it will be apparent to the whole House that if there be obstruction and prolixity of debate a large number of Members will recognize the fact, and that there will be no difficulty, under the Amendment of my hon. Friend, in voting down those who may be anxious to prolong a discussion beyond what the majority think fair. In a House of 400 Members, if 300 think a discussion has lasted long enough, they will be able to close that discussion.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): I maintain that if we act on the principle of the clôture we should always require it to be applied by a bare majority in a full House. The restrictions which it is sought to place upon the application of the clôture are for the purpose of preventing it being done by a snatch vote, and it certainly seems to me that the safest thing to do is to insist that the number of Members necessary to enforce the clôture shall be such that there will be no fear of the clôture being applied to a minority which would be a majority in a full House. In a House of 500 you would have a majority of 300 to vote down 200 under the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite; but that would always save the regular Opposition, and I maintain that if the clôture is to be adopted by the House, it should be adopted fairly. The principle should be laid down that the will of a bare majority in a full House should prevail, and there should be no arrangement made to save a certain Party or section of Members in the House. The hon. Member wants his Amendment as a possible protection for the Conservative Party. Can he, then, quarrel with us for seeking protection for a much weaker Party? If, in the future, the Tory Party is in the minority, it will always be a minority of more than 200, and it will have a great Party outside to appeal to. I submit that if you require a majority of three to one to enforce the clôture, it will be perfectly competent for the House to silence the Irish Members. I do, however, think it only fair that whenever the House is full, it should have the power of closing its debates by a bare majority. The desire of the hon. Member for Stockport is to so arrange the clôture that it may be used against the Irish Members, but against no one else. Of course, a large minority such as would bear the proportion of two to three would always be able to protect itself in this House, and will always have an appeal to a sympathetic country; but the minority which we seek to protect by the Amendment of my hon. Friend is one which is not protected by public opinion in this country—although, no doubt, it has public opinion at its back in Ireland. The influence of that Party is discounted by this House. We desire for it, therefore, the shield of the Rules of the House. I appeal in a spirit of fair play to hon. Gentlemen opposite, and I say to them that when they seek to apply a limitation they ought to apply the principle to its legitimate conclusion. I would appeal to hon. Members now on the Opposition side of the House who hold strong views with regard to the clôture, and I would tell them they would do well to vote with us on this Amendment, for the reason that they would be voting against the principle of protecting the minority of the future. What the House ought to do is to protect, not large minorities—which are capable of protecting themselves—but small ones.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.): I also desire to support the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Tyrone. According to the proposal of the Rule, for the first time in the history of Parliamentary debate, the minority would be entirely at the mercy of the majority. The Amendment of the hon. Member for Stockport would probably be less objectionable than the Rule as it stands, but the Amendment of my hon. Friend (Mr. M. Kenny) would make it possible for a small minority to make itself heard, whilst, at the same time, preventing a small minority from wrecking the proceedings of the House. Without the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Irish Party would be utterly powerless, if all the English Parties should combine for the purpose of closing the debate and preventing us from making ourselves heard. It would be impossible for 85 or 86 Members to continue a debate in the House for a quarter of an hour longer than the House generally desired, if the Opposition joined with the Government in enforcing the clôture. I have no doubt that every Englishman, whether belonging to the Government or the Opposition, and however much in sympathy with a certain section of Members, would put his foot down to prevent the degradation of the House by frivolous discussion and obstruction. If Radical Members in this House once thought that the Irish Party were introducing Motions and carrying on a discussion for obstructive purposes, they would not, I am sure, have the least hesitation in coalescing with the Government in order to prevent the carrying on of those tactics. Whether you have a majority of three to two or three to one can make very little difference to the Government of this country. The hon. Gentleman opposite acknowledges that the Irish Members have been sent here by the people of Ireland in order to discharge a certain duty, and that we consider ourselves conscientiously bound to discharge that duty. But he says the House of Commons cannot afford time to listen to us, and that that is the reason he brings forward his Amendment. He thinks it desirable to close the mouths of the Irish people. Well, I do not think a declaration of that kind can do the hon. Gentleman any good. I am sure the Government do not feel obliged to him for showing his hand in that way. However, I trust the House will not assent to the hon. Gentleman's Amendment, but will carry the modification suggested by my hon. Friend the Member for Tyrone.

MR. CONWAY (Leitrim, N.): I can scarcely congratulate the hon. Member for Stockport upon the manner in which he has introduced his Amendment, which simply accentuates exclusion *plus* clôture. We have a Conservative Party made up of 320 Members, and the Whips of that Party are required to look after little more than half that number to put down the Irish Party. Looking at the fact that in a short time we shall have a Coercion Bill before us, some of the provisions of which will be sufficient to call from Irish Members a demand that they shall have a hearing, we cannot fail to observe that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stockport will give power to a small part of the House to stop Irish Members from making their representations. The hon. Member let the cat out of the bag when he declared that we had usurped the time of the House. We know from perusal of the records that obstruction has come mainly from the Conservative side of the House. I have a Return of the number of Adjournment Motions moved in the House of Commons for several years past, and I find that out of a total of 27 such Motions the Conservative Party have moved no less than 13, whilst there have come from these Benches only four.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not confining himself to the Question of the proposition of three or more to two by which it is proposed to apply the clôture.

MR. CONWAY: I am adducing this as an illustration.

MR. SPEAKER: It is altogether irrelevant to the subject under discussion.

MR. CONWAY: Then, I will pursue the argument with regard to the numbers relatively. I contend that this Motion of the hon. Member for Stockport is intended as a weapon to stifle our voices. As the Representative of an Irish constituency, sent here to express the grievances of the Irish people, I shall resist to the very utmost the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stockport, and shall give all the support I can to the suggested Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Tyrone, which seeks to make the majority at least three to one. Seeing that the Conservative Party consists of 320 Members, and that they have declared over and over again that it is their intention to stifle our voices, I think that this three to one is not a very great concession for them to make us. I appeal to the House to support, so far as the sense of fair play demands, the suggestion of my hon. Friend.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): The controversy raised by the hon. Gentleman opposite is one with which hon. Members who were in the last Parliament must be familiar. It will be rememdered that when the question of Procedure was before the House in 1882, the Tory Party brought forward a Motion practically the same as that now moved by the hon. Member for Stockport. That Motion would have substituted a clôture by two-thirds for a clôture by a bare majority. The question was ably discussed by the Irish Members, and there were some among them who thought there was something to be said in favour of such a form of clôture. I think, however, that if there is to be a clôture it should be one that should apply equally to all Parties and sections in this House. The hon. Gentleman opposite thinks that you might leave untrammelled licence to the particular Party he is associated with, for the purpose of putting down a section of this House to which he did not scruple to make pointed and definite allusion. That is the objection we have been making all along. We have stated that that will be the effect of the clôture, and it has been denied over and over again by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. Now, at the close of the discussion, we have the cat let out of the basket by the hon. Gentleman, who tells us that the clôture is intended to operate against us. The Amendment of the hon. Gentleman would be to prevent the clôture being applied at all unless there happened to be more than 100 Members present, and the second result would be that if you had 100 Members present you could only put them down by a majority of 150, and if you had a minority of 200 the clôture could only be applied by a majority of 300. The effect of the Amendment would be to prevent the application of the clôture to any English political Party. The Conservative Party possesses 318 Members, which does not give them a majority in the House. Under the Rule they could be put down if, on a Division, there were 319 in favour of the clôture; but if the Amendment of the hon. Member were to be adopted, it would require 100 more Members than there are in the House to apply the clôture to that Party, which I submit is a *reductio ad absurdum*. If the hon. Member's Amendment were to pass, the Conservative Party would be protected under all circumstances, even if it were in Opposition. The plain, elementary question the House has to decide is this: Whether it is in favour of a clôture which will put down any minority that wants to override the wish and desire of the majority, or whether it wants to confine the clôture to a single section and nationality in the House? On such a question I cannot help thinking there should be no difference of opinion, except, perhaps, amongst a few irreclaimable and irreconcilable Tories. I trust that when the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman is put to the House it will be rejected, not only by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, but by the majority on this side of the House.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I trust that the clear declaration made by the First Lord of the Treasury will tend to reduce the number of Amendments on this Rule. The right hon. Gentleman has stated that he has acted all through these discussions in perfect good faith, and that the Government feel bound to adhere to the remaining portion of the Rule as it stands. A good many hon. Members have expressed views and recorded votes on former parts of the Rule on the assumption that the Government intend to adhere to the quorum mentioned in the latter part of the Rule. Whether the selection in that latter part of the Rule is the best one possible I do not know; but I deny that it is an arithmetical puzzle. We may, by breaking down these figures, extend this already protracted discussion to an interminable length. I think, with the right hon. Gentleman, that any alteration of this part of the Rule will be a departure from principle, and will tend to increase the number of Amendments.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I beg to move, in line 16, to leave out "Two Hundred," and insert "Three Hundred." This House is full in the evenings from half-past 4 o'clock to half-past 7, and empty from about half-past 7 to half-past 10 or 11; and what we want to guard against is, the application of the clôture in the absence of a large majority of the House, and at a moment when the House is not prepared for the Question of the clôture. The clôture is a thing which, in its essence, demands preparation, and ought to preclude surprise. In its very essence, according to its most earnest advocates, it is a thing which ought to be applied, not by an accidental majority at a particular moment for the purpose of winning a chance triumph, but should be an instrument permanently in the hands of the majority for ruling the Business of the House, with due regard to minorities and with due notice to them. We desire to prevent hon. Members, in moments of Party passion, snatching a victory from Gentlemen who are unprepared to meet the Question of clôture. It will be easy for an hon. Member who intends to move the clôture to give Notice to the Whip of his Party, and it would be easy for that Whip to have 200 Members in the House at 10 o'clock, to take other Parties by surprise and carry the clôture. What we fear is, that Members will be able, as the Resolution now stands, to carry the clôture by a *coup de main*. I am not going beyond the bounds of propriety when I say that you can imagine hon. Members doing a thing like that. If I myself had a Bill before the House, and found hon. Members endeavouring, by foul means, to obstruct the verdict of the majority, I should have no objection to giving them a bit of a surprise by moving the clôture, and I should be able to do it by the means I have pointed out. This state of things will be provided against by the adoption of the Amendment I propose. I would point out that, since the new Parliament, there have almost always been 200 Conservative Members in this House. The Government are compelled, under stress of circumstances, to have a large number of Members present during the dinner hour, and the result will be, if the Rule passes in its present form, that they will always be in a position to carry a Clôture Resolution even between half-past 7 and half-past 10 o'clock, when the Members of the Opposition are dining, are at the theatre, or are somewhere else than in the House of Commons. We should not allow a fleeting majority to carry the clôture. Of course, speaking at 20 minutes to 3 o'clock on a Wednesday afternoon, I find it somewhat difficult to convince hon. Members that there may be occasions on which hon. Members may be carried away in a whirlwind of Party passion. The sacred dulness of the present hour is rather an obstacle to getting hon. Members to contemplate such a state of things; but hon. Members who have been in the House at 12 o'clock at night, at the close of a long debate, know that we not unfrequently find a large number of Members anxious for one thing, and one thing only—namely, to bring the discussion to an end at the earliest possible moment. The result of my Amendment would be this—that during an important discussion the clôture would never be applied until everybody said—"We are heart sick of this—the question has been adequately discussed, therefore let us now take a Division." The clôture would in that way be applied on a day and at a period of the evening when Members were in the House to take part in the Division. The clôture would never, under almost any circumstances, be applied until the Whips of the Ministerial Party said—"This is the night for the Division, and this is the night on which you must be in your place in the House of Commons." If you enable the clôture to be applied in a thin House, you will make it a matter of odium. You lessen the odium by broadening the responsibility, and you broaden the responsibility by having the Motion for clôture supported by 300 instead of 200 Members, which may be little more than half a Ministerial majority.

Amendment proposed, in line 16, to leave out "Two Hundred," in order to insert "Three Hundred."—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor.*)

Question proposed, "That 'Two Hundred' stand part of the Question."

MR. CRAIG SELLAR (Lanarkshire, Partick): As an Amendment, which stands next on the Paper, is in my name, and is, in the first part of it, identical with that of the hon. Member (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), I think I may save the time of the House if I now say what I wish to say in defence of my Amendment. I observe, however, a discrepancy between the statements of the right hon. Gentlemen on the two Front Benches, which might, perhaps, be explained before we proceed further. I understood the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House to say that he would sanction no departure from the principle of the existing Rule, and that seemed to me a very reasonable statement to make. But the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) put what seemed to me to be a gloss on the statement of the First Lord of the Treasury, because he said that the right hon. Gentleman had stated that any change in the Rule would be a departure from principle. I certainly did not understand the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House to say that. I hope I am right in what I imagined—namely, that he said he would sanction no departure from the principle of the Rule.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Perhaps it would be better that I should intervene at this moment. I cannot, of course, bind the House; but I am responsible for the proposal which I made. I consider that the figures as they stand on the Paper are figures that bind me. I am personally bound to ask the House to adhere to the Rule as I proposed it; and the debate has proceeded upon the assumption that I shall adhere to those figures. I have used the word "principle," and the hon. Member is at liberty, from his point of view, to attach to that word the interpretation he has done. Individually, while I cannot bind the House, I am bound by the figures I have placed upon the Paper.

MR. CRAIG SELLAR: I am glad, Sir, that this point is cleared up; and now I understand that, though the right hon. Gentleman considers himself personally bound to the numbers on the Paper, his followers need not consider themselves bound. I hope, therefore, that some, at least, of them will vote with me for my Amendment. The object of that Amendment is to reduce the necessary quorum. I hope that those who agree with me that the quorum ought to be less than 200 will support the Amendment now before the House for the purpose of getting rid of 200, and will then support me in inserting a lesser number—say 120, as I propose, or 140 if that number is preferred. There is no particular principle in 200, unless it is that it is five times 40. It is a number—a round number—taken very much at haphazard and without consideration, and we have great authority against it. In 1882 the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) said it was pushing things very far indeed in the way of protecting the minority to sanction so large a quorum as 200, and has not experience proved him right? Until the other night the closure has been applied only once by the Speaker, and that was in February, 1885, when a debate involving a Vote of Censure on the Government on account of its Egyptian policy was interrupted by a debate on the conduct of a policeman named Murphy. The closing of the latter debate was supported by 207 against 46, so that a collapse was prevented by only seven votes. From that time the Rule has been practically a dead letter, never applied by the Chairman, and only once by the Speaker. The reasons are—first, because the initiative has rested with the Chair; and, secondly, because so large a quorum was required. The first has happily been overcome. The responsibility has been removed from the Chair, because the responsibility of the veto is a mere feather-weight compared with the responsibility of the initiation. That part of the cause of failure is at an end. But the large quorum of 200 remains. It is true that on great occasions there would be no difficulty in bringing up 200 Members; but it is not on great occasions that Obstruction is really rife. On ordinary occasions, as in Committee on a dull Bill and towards the end of the Session, it is difficult to keep together 200 Members of the same way of thinking. The close of the Session is the time when the Government wants to get on with its Business, and when in order to do so it has to make compromises to depart from its policy, and, so to speak, to "square" Members. It is then that it is difficult to get 200 Members to join in stopping a debate. Well, Sir, how are we to meet the difficulty? By a simple process—reduce the quorum. The hon. Member does not wish to meet the difficulty; he wishes to increase it. He would make the quorum larger. I would make it smaller; and if the House agrees to my proposal—if it strikes out 200 and inserts 120 or 140—the difficulty will be met. But the number in the clause makes it a dead letter. You are forging an important weapon, which, as the matter stands, will be ineffective except on great occasions—you are putting a button at the point of your rapier. It is said that tyrannical majorities will rush measures through the House, and that the minorities will not be protected. We have most carefully protected minorities by the words inserted in the Rule a few nights ago, and by the duty of the Chair to protect their rights from infringement; but we have a still greater protection against the majority rushing to a Division in the opinion out-of-doors; and, that being so, I think everyone will admit that minorities are in no danger from the operation of the Rule. It has been said, on the other hand, that there might be occasions when the majority are asleep on which the minority would be able to snatch a Division; but there are, however, very watchful guardians whose duty it is to see that the majority are not taken at a disadvantage in that way. But there is a danger that, unless we make this closure effective by reducing the quorum to 120 or 150, so that it can be used on ordinary occasions, the House will not recover its character for dealing in a business-like way with the Business of the country. I certainly hope that the House will agree that it is desirable to make the closure effective, and that the only way in which that can be done is by reducing the number of the quorum. I am sure, if we do that, we shall have an instrument which will enable us to regain the confidence of the country and the respect of all civilized communities. I trust that hon. Gentlemen who agree that the quorum ought to be reduced will vote for the omission of the words "Two Hundred." If that is carried, I hope they will vote against the insertion of "Three Hundred," and we shall then have a blank space in which to introduce the number which I propose.

MR. RATHBONE (Carnarvonshire, Arfon): There is, I think, no disguising the fact that there is an objection on the part of Members from Ireland to making the closure effective, because they are afraid of its being used to pass a Coercion Bill. But I would point out that the proposal they make would have no effect whatever, because the Conservative Party would have no difficulty in getting the requisite majority on a question of this kind. I contend that there is no section of the House which has so great an interest in making the Rule effective for legislation, as the Representatives of the smaller nationalities. It is Ireland, Scotland, and Wales which want legislation and have to wait for it, and their Representatives ought to join with us in trying to make the closure effectual for the purpose of bringing back the House to the position of an effective Legislative Assembly; and that will not take place until there is a reduction of the number of the quorum. I hope the time may come when the closure will no longer be required, and I believe that then the House will be ready to relax the Rule; but until we again make the House the first Legislature in the world, instead of what it has become—the laughing-stock of the world—it is in vain to hope for the legislation which the country requires. I therefore appeal to Members on both sides of the House to make this Rule efficient by reducing the number of the quorum.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. Member for the Northern Division of Carnarvonshire (Mr. Rathbone) has stated that the smaller nationalities are most in need of the legislation which it is hoped will be rendered less difficult by these Rules of Procedure. I am not able to agree that these are the only portions of the Kingdom interested, because a great deal of general legislation has been delayed by the incapacity of the House to conduct the Business of the country. I shall not, however, go back to that question, which has been dealt with over and over again. The hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) proposes that the words "Two Hundred" should be left out in order to insert "Three Hundred;" but I would point out that if he carries the first part of his proposal, the Amendment of the hon. Member for Lanarkshire (Mr. Craig Sellar) is almost certain to be inserted. It is clear that the House will not consent, under any conditions, to increase the number of the quorum; and, therefore, hon. Members below the Gangway may be almost sure that if they exclude the words "Two Hundred" a smaller number would be introduced. If the House adheres to 200, it will do so because it is in the Rule which now exists, and because it has been inserted by the Government in this Rule; but I confess that if I were to take up the question again, I should be willing to insert a smaller number than 200. However, I trust that the figures on the Paper will make the Rule effective. I do not expect to see it frequently enforced, because I believe that Members in all parts of the House will put such a restraint upon themselves as will render it unnecessary that the House should inflict upon itself the humiliation of applying such a Rule as this. There is no doubt, however, that if this Rule fails in its object some other must be adopted by which that object will be secured, because the House will demand and procure for itself greater powers for the conduct of Business, and for regaining the confidence of the country. I repeat, with regard to this Amendment, my belief that no amount of discussion will induce the House to increase the number of the quorum which is on the Paper, and that if the number we propose is left out, its place will be filled, almost of necessity, by a number that may be less agreeable to hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway.

MR. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire): As one of those who have had care in the past of majorities in this House, I would earnestly urge the reduction of the number of the quorum, if not to 120, to 150. I have been well acquainted with the difficulty of insuring the presence of 200 Members of the House when it was desired to put the closure in force. I think, if we are to have the closure at all, it should be one that can be easily and readily applied, and which will admit of application to those smaller matters which constantly arise, and which constitute the difficulty of conducting the ordinary Business of the House. Towards the end of the Session, when the House begins to empty, and Members, on one pretext or another, go into the country or abroad, it will be very difficult to insure a majority of 200 for the discussion of the Estimates and similar Business. It would seem that hon. Gentlemen opposite, in proposing this number, were considering the possibility that when the Rule comes to be applied against themselves the number requisite for its application will stand in the way of its being so used. I earnestly urge on the House not to follow the lead of the First Lord of the Treasury, but to consent to make the Rule effective, the first step towards which is to leave out the words "Two Hundred."

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I rise to protest against the adoption of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Lanarkshire (Mr. Craig Sellar). The arguments which have been brought forward in support of that Amendment are, in my opinion, fallacious. It is said that in July and August it is difficult to get 200 Members of the House together for the purpose of supporting the closure; but that is not consistent with the statement of some Members on the Front Bench, who speak of the necessity of having 200 Members present to prevent snatch Divisions being taken. I trust that the House will not agree to the proposal to reduce the number of the quorum.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): I do not think that on an important question like this we ought to be guided entirely by the convenience of the Whips. It is assumed that the Rule which has been in force since 1882 has been a failure; that the House has been regularly obstructed and unable to carry on its Business. I utterly deny that. I say that since 1882, during the years 1883-6, there has been no obstruction of the ordinary Business of the House which needed the application of any closure whatever; and, so far as Committee of Supply is concerned, I cannot recollect a single instance since 1882 when, if this Rule had been in operation, it would have been enforced by the Chairman. Therefore, although hon. Members may contemplate some difficulties with regard to the future, we ought not to assume that the House has been reduced to the state of impotency which is alleged by the want of this Rule. The obstruction and paralysis of Business has arisen from causes more frequent and more deadly in their results than the prolongation of debate. In my opinion, if 200 Members, who do not represent one-third of the House, are not prepared to attend to the Business of the country, then I cannot see that such a serious Resolution as that of stopping all debate ought to be used at all. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman that this will not be a Rule of daily application, and that it would be a discredit to the House if it became so. I appeal to hon. Members to take the sound advice given by the right hon. Gentleman, and not fall into the trap, by striking out a number whose place would be filled by a smaller number. Her Majesty's Government are in this position—they have put down this Resolution as a whole; they propose to the House a material variation in the Law of Closure; the question has never been raised during the last three weeks that there was to be any alteration in the number of the quorum; the Government are pledged to the number on the Paper, and it would be a departure from principle on their part if they were to alter the number now. I say it is now too late in the day to change front, and I hope the House will support the Government in the view which they take. I strongly urge hon. Members below the Gangway to agree to the proposal of the Government.

**Mr. A. R. D. ELLIOT** (Roxburgh): The right hon. Gentleman has himself told us that a smaller number than 200 might be desirable as the quorum; but he said also that we must be careful to guard against this becoming a Party consideration. The object of this Rule is to give back to the Members of the House some of the rights which they have lost in recent days, because of the interminable discussion which arises on almost every subject brought forward by the Government of the day. These are the only subjects which are able to be discussed. How are hon. Members to get back their rights? Simply by shortening discussion on these questions. It is in consequence of the length to which debates have been needlessly extended on subjects of comparatively little interest, that the time of private Members has been taken up by the Government, and it has been impossible for them to bring forward for discussion many subjects of great interest to the country. These Rules are to assist us in discussing and legislating on matters of interest to the people. We have been prevented from doing that, and we hope, by passing a stringent measure of this kind, that the present state of things will be remedied; and we believe that by placing this weapon in the hands of the majority the rights of all will be protected. I must join issue with the right hon. Gentleman below me when he says that we have had no obstruction during the last few years; and I am astonished that my right hon. Friend should have stood up and made that statement, because my experience, and I believe that of most hon. Members, is that during the period he speaks of there has been an intolerable amount of useless discussion. I hope hon. Members who object to the words "Two Hundred" will go into the Lobby to support the Amendment to leave them out, and then will come the question as to the proper number for the quorum.

**Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR**: As I find that unconsciously I have got right hon. Gentlemen into a position of difficulty I ask leave to withdraw my Amendment.

**Mr. SPEAKER**: Is it your pleasure that the Amendment be withdrawn? ["No, no!"]

**Mr. HENEAGE** (Great Grimsby): Mr. Speaker, I think the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House has furnished us with the strongest reason why we should go to a Division on this Amendment. While I have great respect for the abilities of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler), I venture to regard the remarks that have fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks) as describing the true state of the case. I ask hon. Members whether, as a matter of fact, there were during the whole of last Session 200 Members always present? There have been many occasions in the autumn when the attendance of Members has been less than 200; and I ask how, if a similar state of things occurs again, we are to get the quorum which is necessary for the application of the closure? We have a right to vote on the question that the words "Two Hundred" be left out, and I think hon. Members ought to exercise that right. I am in favour of the insertion in the Rule of the number 150 instead of that proposed by the Government. If we beat the right hon. Gentleman on this Division, after what he has said, I think it is very likely that he will give way; but, at any rate, I hope hon. Members on this side will stand to their guns and go to a Division, whether they support the hon. Member below the Gangway or not.

Mr. W. H. JAMES (Gateshead): We are practically placing the Business of the House in the hands of the Government of the day by adopting this Rule; but it must be remembered that the legislation of this country is the result of the authority given by the constituencies, and that the matters treated in this House have wider ramifications and are more far-reaching in their consequences than the mere excitement which they cause here. I am anxious to contribute as much as I can to the speedy passage of these Rules, and I hope that hon. Members will bring about that result by all the means in their power. I support the Government in this matter, although I believe that the more latitude we give them the deeper will they stick in the mud.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 222; Noes 120: Majority 102.

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Glam.)
Acland, C. T. D.
Allison, R. A.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Asher, A.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, G. S.
Baggallay, E.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Balfour, Sir G.
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Beach, W. W. B.
Bentinck, Lord H. C.
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Biggar, J. G.
Bigwood, J.
Blake, J. A.
Blake, T.
Blane, A.
Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
Bolton, J. C.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bradlaugh, C.
Bristowe, T. L.
Broadhurst, H.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brooks, Sir W. C.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Burghley, Lord
Byrne, G. M.
Cameron, C.
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, H.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Chance, P. A.
Childers, rt. hon. H. C. E.
Clancy, J. J.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Cobb, H. P.
Cochrane-Baillie, hon. C. W. A. N.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Conway, M.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Corbet, W. J.
Corbett, J.
Cossham, H.
Craig, J.
Cranborne, Viscount
Craven, J.
Cremer, W. R.
Crossley, E.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Curzon, hon. G. N.
Dalrymple, C.
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Elliot, Sir G.
Elliot, G. W.
Ellis, J. E.
Ellis, T. E.
Esslemont, P.
Evelyn, W. J.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Feilden, Lt.-Gen. R. J.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitz-Wygram, General Sir F. W.
Flynn, J. C.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forster, Sir C.
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, rt. hon. H. H.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Fry, T.
Fuller, G. P.
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. A. E.
Gibson, J. G.
Gill, T. P.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Gourley, E. T.
Grimston, Viscount
Grove, Sir T. F.
Gunter, Colonel R.
Hall, C.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hardcastle, E.
Harrington, E.
Hastings, G. W.
Heath, A. R.
Heaton, J. H.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hermon-Hodge, R. T.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hoare, S.
Holden, I.
Holland, rt. hon. Sir H. T.
Holmes, rt. hon. H.
Hooper, J.
Howard, J.
Howard, J. M.
Hoyle, I.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Hunt, F. S.
Hunter, Sir W. G.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
James, hon. W. H.
Johnston, W.
Kelly, J. R.
Kenny, M. J.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kerans, F. H.
Kilcoursie, right hon. Viscount
Kimber, H.
King-Harman, Colonel E. R.
Knightley, Sir R.
Lane, W. J.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lea, T.
Leahy, J.
Lewis, T. P.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Low, M.
Lyell, L.
Macdonald, rt. hon. J. H. A.
Macdonald, W. A.
MacInnes, M.
MacNeill, J. G. S.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Cartan, M.
M'Donald, P.
M'Ewan, W.

Mallock, R.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Matthews, rt. hon. H.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Menzies, R. S.
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morley, rt. hon. J.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Mulholland, H. L.
Noble, W.
Nolan, J.
Northcote, hon. H. S.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Doherty, J. E.
O'Hanlon, T.
O'Kelly, J.
Paget, Sir R. H.
Parker, C. S.
Parnell, C. S.
Pearce, W.
Pelly, Sir L.
Plowden, Sir W. C.
Plunket, right hon. D. R.
Pomfret, W. P.
Powell, F. S.
Power, P. J.
Rankin, J.
Redmond, J. E.
Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Roberts, J.
Roberts, J. B.
Robinson, T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Rowlands, J.
Rowntree, J.
Russell, E. R.
Salt, T.
Sandys, Lieut-Col. T. M.
Selwyn, Captain C. W.
Shirley, W. S.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Smith, S.
Stack, J.
Stanhope, hon. P. J.
Stansfeld, rt. hon. J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Sullivan, D.
Sutherland, A.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Tanner, C. K.
Temple, Sir R.
Theobald, J.
Thomas, A.
Trotter, H. J.
Tuite, J.
Wallace, R.
Watson, J.
Webster, R. G.
Weymouth, Viscount
White, J. B.
Whitley, E.
Whitmore, C. A.
Will, J. S.
Wilson, H. J.
Winterbotham, A. B.
Woodhead, J.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

## NOES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Anstruther, H. T.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, G. W.
Banes, Major G. E.
Barbour, W. B.
Barran, J.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Beadel, W. J.
Beckett, E. W.
Beckett, W.
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Biddulph, M.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Bryce, J.
Buchanan, T. R.
Buxton, S. C.
Caldwell, J.
Chamberlain, R.
Channing, F. A.
Coghill, D. H.
Collings, J.
Colman, J. J.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Crawford, D.
Cross, H. S.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
Dixon, G.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Duff, R. W.
Dugdale, J. S.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Elliot, hon. H. F. H.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Finch-Hatton, hon. M. E. G.
Fisher, W. H.
Flower, C.
Fraser, General C. C.
Fry, L.
Gedge, S.
Gent-Davis, R.
Green, Sir E.
Grey, Sir E.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hanbury, R. W.
Hardcastle, F.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hayne, C. Seale-
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Heneage, right hon. E.
Hingley, B.
Hornby, W. H.
Howorth, H. H.
Hubbard, E.
Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Isaacs, L. H.
Jennings, L. J.
Joicey, J.
Kay-Shuttleworth, rt. hon. Sir U. J.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, hon. H. T.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Lawrence, Sir J. J. T.
Lewis, C. E.
Macartney, W. G. E.
Maclean, F. W.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Milvain, T.
Montagu, S.
Morgan, hon. F.
Morgan, O. V.
Morley, A.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Pease, H. F.
Penton, Captain F. T.
Playfair, rt. hon. Sir L.
Powell, W. R. H.
Price, T. P.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Reed, H. B.
Robertson, E.
Robinson, B.
Russell, T. W.
Saunderson, Col. E. J.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stewart, M. J.
Swetenham, E.
Sykes, C.
Tapling, T. K.
Taylor, F.
Thorburn, W.
Tollemache, H. J.
Townsend, F.
Verdin, R.
Vernon, hon. G. R.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Waring, Colonel T.
Wharton, J. L.
Williams, J. Powell-
Williamson, S.
Wilson, Sir S.
Wilson, I.
Winn, hon. R.
Wood, N.
Wright, H. S.
Yerburgh, R. A.

TELLERS.

Rathbone, W.
Sellar, A. C.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words, "Provided always, That this Rule shall be put in force only when the Speaker or the Chairman of Ways and Means is in the Chair."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E. R., Holderness): I should like to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what would be the effect of the Amendment in the event of the Speaker or the Chairman of Ways and Means falling ill? If I am right in my supposition, all the labour we have gone through would be lost under those circumstances.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): It is intended that this Rule shall only be put in force by the Speaker or the Chairman of Ways and Means. The contingency to which my hon. and gallant Friend alludes is happily one of infrequent occurrence; but the arguments from all parts of the House as to the inexpediency of giving this authority to any Member of the House who might temporarily occupy the Chair are so strong that I do not feel compelled to adhere to the words which are laid down in the proposed Rule.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): I understand that this Rule is to prevent casual Chairmen exercising the power of closure. I fail to see that there is any real distinction to be drawn between the Chairman of Committees and a casual Chairman in this respect.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I have explained that no deputy or casual Chairman will have power to put the Rule in force. The observation of the hon. Member, therefore, falls to the ground. I take care to distinguish between the casual occupant of the Chair and the Member who takes the Chair as the result of the vote of the House. The observation of the hon. Member is of no value, because the Rule, as it stands, restricts the application of the closure to the Speaker and the Chairman of Ways and Means.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: I rise to move, at the end of the Question, the addition of the following words:—

> "Provided that the Member who shall claim the application of this Rule shall inform the House that he has previously had no communication with the Chair, direct or indirect, as to the propriety of making such Motion."

I put forward this Amendment with the view of relieving the Chair of responsibility, and I think it right to claim for it the support of the House, including that of the right hon. Gentleman himself. From the very first, the right hon. Gentleman has put forward in favour of this Rule that it makes an important departure from the old Rule in relieving the Chair of responsibility. I do not assent to that proposition; on the contrary, I think the Rule, as it stands, leaves where it was, if it does not increase, the responsibility of the Chair. The meaning of the present Rule is that the occupant of the Chair is to stand as guardian and protector between the tyranny of majorities and the rights of minorities. I am desirous that the Chair should discharge that function, and I say that my Proviso will confirm and strengthen the position of the Speaker and the Chairman in protecting the rights of minorities. The gravest charge that could be brought against a Speaker or Chairman of Committees is that of collusion with the majority, and I desire to relieve the Chair of the remotest chance of coming under that suspicion. As the Rule stands, if a Member gets up and moves the closure, the inevitable conclusion will be that he has had communication beforehand with the Chair. Unless the words which I propose are adopted, I consider that the Rule, in this respect, will be inefficient. There are many ways in which you can hold communication with the Chair which are not direct; and therefore I think that every Member, and still more every Minister of the Crown, ought to be able, when he rises to propose the closure, to declare that he has not had any direct or indirect communication with the Chair. The Vice President of the Council has stated that when he was Tory Whip, during the Parliament of 1874-80, he was frequently sent by Mr. Disraeli to the then Chairman of Ways and Means, to complain that the Business of the House was not being conducted with sufficient speed, and to threaten him with Mr. Disraeli's displeasure if the Business was not got through more quickly. The Speaker and Chairman ought, so to speak, to be placed in quarantine; there ought to be a cordon around the Chair to guard it against infection from the Treasury Bench. I do not, of course, say that disrespectfully to right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench; but the great thing we have to do is to save the Chair from the suspicion of collusion, and it is for that reason that I venture to submit my Amendment to the House.

Amendment proposed,

> At the end of the Question, to add the words, "Provided that the Member who shall claim the application of this Rule shall inform the House that he has previously had no communication with the Chair, direct or indirect, as to the propriety of making such Motion."—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. Gentleman proposes that a cordon should be drawn around the Chair, and that a form of quarantine should be brought into operation; but the House must be aware that a proposal of that kind would be simply impracticable. The custom of the House, from time immemorial, has been for Members to go to the Chair for assistance, guidance, and advice, and it has never yet been suggested that there has been collusion as between the Chair and the Government. The hon. Gentleman has referred to some observations which fell from a Member of the House with reference to a former Chairman of Ways and Means; but we may be perfectly certain that in that case both the Chairman and the Minister were absolutely free from the desire to exercise any undue influence either on one side or the other. No Chairman whom I have seen in the course of my Parliamentary experience has been one on whom any undue influence could have been exercised either by a Member of the House or the Government itself. It is quite impossible that the Business of this House can be carried on unless there is some ability to refer to the Chair whenever the occasion renders it necessary for a Member of the House to obtain advice; and it is almost an insult to the Chair to suggest that it would consent to express an opinion inconsistent with the duty it owes to the House. The question before us is whether we suspect the Speaker and the Chairman of being liable to exercise undue influence, of being capable of exercising undue influence, and of being, therefore, open to motives which might unduly and improperly influence their decisions. I believe that is utterly impossible, and, therefore, it is that I cannot accept the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman.

MR. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.): The reasons given by the right hon. Gentleman for rejecting this Amendment are based upon the assumption that no improper conduct on the part of the Chair is possible. My hon. Friend has pointed out that a Member on the Government Bench stated that when he was Whip he constantly approached the Chairman of Ways and Means on the subject of the Business in Committee. But there was a more notable instance in the days of Speaker Sutton, who was accused of being so active an instrument of the will of the Tory Party that the matter was brought before the House. It formed the subject of debate, and gave rise to a very strong opposition to the Speaker. These are two instances of the suspicion of collusion between the Speaker and Chairman of Ways and Means and the Governments of the day It remains for us to consider, notwithstanding the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman, whether this may possibly arise again. I trust that the right hon. Gentleman will reconsider his decision, and accept the Amendment of my hon. Friend.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co. Mid): Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the clôture is a very strong measure indeed, directed, in the main, rather against the privileges possessed by private Members than by minorities, it would be for the benefit of the House, and certainly for the benefit of the occupant of the Chair, that this Amendment should be accepted. I have not risen for the purpose of talking at any length, but to appeal to the senior and experienced Members of the House to consider what dangers and difficulties will probably be brought about by the rejection of this Amendment. Surely it ought to be one of the first cares of hon. Members to protect the House from injury, and to protect the Chair from suspicion. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) said the Chair has never been suspected of being in collusion with Members of the House. I do not like to indulge in any innuendo, but, during the first Session I was in the House, I frequently noticed one of the Whips going to the Chair——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must ask the hon. Gentleman not to pursue that line of innuendo.

DR. TANNER: I had no intention——

MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to withdraw the expression he has used.

DR. TANNER: I shall most certainly withdraw any expression I used that would throw any innuendo on the Chair. I wish to be perfectly plain and aboveboard in this matter. It was not my intention to throw any innuendo on the Chair. I was saying that to a new and inexperienced Member of the House some proceedings appear somewhat strange. I say, distinctly, I believe the Chair is above all innuendo and all suspicion. I sincerely hope the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) will pay more attention to the protection of minorities. I trust that, for the future of this House and the Chair, he will accept this Amendment.

**Mr. CLANCY** (Dublin Co. N.): The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) ridiculed the notion that there can be any suspicion thrown on the Chair. I am surprised to hear that coming from a Colleague of several hon. and right hon. Gentlemen sitting upon the Ministerial Benches. If there is anything at all notorious, it is that in the debates on the Procedure Rules proposed in 1882, nearly every prominent Member of the Tory Party indulged in predictions that a Speaker might be elected in future who would act in collusion with the majority of the House. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Ecclesall Division of Sheffield (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) "looked forward with dread to a possible time when the Government of the day would secure the election of a Speaker who would put the clôture into operation whenever the Government wished." Sir H. Drummond Wolff pointed to the possible contingency when the Speaker would be found acting in collusion with the majority of the House for the time being; and the Marquess of Salisbury, speaking at Hitchin in 1882, in reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain), pictured the time when that right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain) would have a Speaker of his own appointed, and when laws would be passed without a shred of discussion, and the noble Marquess went on to say—

> "If it is true, as it is true, that the Commons is asserting to itself all the power of the Realm, and when changes are taking place which are contrary to all the traditions of the British Constitution, including the Rules which are now under discussion, we should take care that everything is said that can be said on any subject introduced."

In the face of these observations it does not become the First Lord of the Treasury to wax indignant at the idea that the Speakers of the future will be so false to their duty as to act in collusion with the temporary majority of the House. The right hon. Gentleman said that the question raised by this Amendment was, whether we suspect the present Speaker or not. I indignantly deny that such is the question which the Amendment raises. The question raised is, whether the exercise of the great powers that are now to be entrusted to the Speaker, is not to be put entirely beyond suspicion. In my opinion, you cannot secure the immunity of the Chair from suspicion, except by the adoption of some such Amendment as this.

**Mr. M. J. KENNY** (Tyrone, Mid): I do not think it altogether becomes the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) to lightly laugh away the Amendment of my hon. Friend (Mr. T. P. O'Connor). The right hon. Gentleman virtually admitted that it was necessary to frequently consult the Chair for advice and assistance. Now, to define the difference between advice and assistance is extremely difficult, and the right hon. Gentleman admitted, in effect, that if the Amendment which my hon. Friend has moved is not accepted, there is nothing to prevent an hon. Member approaching the Chair, and consulting it upon the most delicate question whether the clôture should be applied. This Amendment is practically consequential upon the altered nature of the relations between the House and the Chair. Surely, there can be no objection to the distinct declaration that the Member moving the application of the clôture should have previously made no private application to the Chair; but that the application should be altogether public. The very fact of insisting upon spontaneity of action would be in itself a guarantee that the Motion for closure was, under the circumstances, justifiable, even whether the Motion was carried, or beaten. I am fully persuaded it would be an advantage to the Chair, and an advantage to the great body of Members, if the Amendment of my hon. Friend were accepted.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 55; Noes 304: Majority 249.—(Div. List, No. 66.)

**Mr. PARNELL** (Cork): I now propose to ask the House and the Government to adopt a Proviso at the end of the Rule. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) will have any objection in accepting this Proviso; because it follows the Precedent he, himself, set in 1882, when he was in Opposition, in respect to the Rule of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). This Proviso is, with the exception of the word "collective," word for word with the one proposed by the right hon. Gentleman in 1882, and it gives an opportunity to a defeated minority to place on record its protest against the decision the House has arrived at. The application of this Proviso will be slightly different in the present case to what it would have been in the case of the Rule of 1882; because the Rule of 1882 was put in force by the Speaker. Under the old Rule, the Speaker had to declare that, in his opinion, it was the evident sense of the House that the subject had been fully discussed, and, thereupon, the Question "that the Question be now put" was to be moved by the Minister; consequently, the protest contemplated by the Proviso would have been directed, not so much against the action of the House, as against the action of the Speaker. From that point of view the Proviso was more open to objection then than it is now. The minority may protest against the decision of the majority, and always does; but when it comes to protesting against the decision of the Chair, who is the umpire of our debates? It is quite another and far more serious matter. The action of the Chair under the recent Rules, and under the custom and usage of the House, is carefully guarded against all protest. It is true a Member of the House can put down a Motion against the action of the Speaker; but in no other way is a protest admissible or allowed. Consequently, the action the Leader of the House proposed in 1882, was of a less inoffensive and of a more extreme character than the action I propose. I simply propose that when the Rule has been put in force—

> "Any number of Members exceeding Ten, who shall be dissatisfied with such decision, shall be entitled, at the next Sitting of the House, to make a collective protest in writing, which shall be recorded in the Journals of the House."

I think this is a most desirable Proviso. It may happen that the majority will act under circumstances of irritation with reference to questions of great importance. Their action may trespass upon the rights of the minority, and that action may be allowed by the Chair. At a grave and weighty juncture in the history of affairs, it is important that the minority should, at least, have the right of written protest. Is this right which the right hon. Gentleman proposed, and the Conservative Party supported in 1882, to be deliberately refused to us now? In support of my Amendment, I shall content myself by reading a short speech the right hon. Gentleman made in 1882 in moving this very Proviso:—

> "Mr. W. H. Smith proposed on an Amendment to add at the end of the Resolution the following Proviso:—'Provided also, That any number of Members exceeding Ten, who shall be dissatisfied with such decision, shall be entitled, at the next Sitting of the House, to make a protest in writing, which shall be recorded in the Journals of the House.'"

The Amendment was amended by the insertion of the word "collective" before "protest," so that my Amendment is word for word with the right hon. Gentleman's. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say—

> "If the action of the Speaker or the Chairman in closing the debate, pursuant to what he considered to be the evident sense of the House, was taken against a considerable minority of the House, it was impossible but that great dissatisfaction would prevail in consequence of the majority having tyrannically closed the mouths of the minority. Instead, therefore, of driving the minority to the country or the Press for the ventilation of their grievances, he proposed that the minority should in such cases have the power of recording the grounds of their dissatisfaction by a protest to be recorded in the Journals of the House, as was the case in the House of Lords."

But times change, and we change with them. The right hon. Gentleman continued—

> "He could not conceive anything more dangerous to the House than that there should be no means of stating the grounds of dissatisfaction; and he thought it would be a far more Constitutional course to allow that dissatisfaction to find expression in the Journals of the House than elsewhere. He believed that this would appear to be a moderate and reasonable course to the country at large. He wished to preserve the power of the House to deal with its own Business, so that its Members might not find a mode of giving expression to their wrongs elsewhere than in that House. He trusted, therefore, that the Government would consent to this addendum to the Resolution. He did not disguise the fact that he was opposed to the Resolution altogether; but if it passed, he wished it should do so with the least possible danger to the House; and he thought his Amendment would mitigate the evils which a very large section of the House felt were attendant upon the Resolution."—(3 *Hansard*, [274] 808-9.)

Sir R. Assheton Cross, Mr. Stanhope, Lord John Manners, Mr. A. J. Balfour, and Captain Aylmer supported the

Amendment, and finally the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) set a good example to future Obstructionists by delivering a second speech upon his Amendment. I beg leave to move the Amendment which stands in my name.

Amendment proposed,

At the end of the Question, to add the words—"Provided also, That any number of Members exceeding Ten, who shall be dissatisfied with such decision, shall be entitled, at the next Sitting of the House, to make a collective protest in writing, which shall be recorded in the Journals of the House."—(*Mr. Parnell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): My right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) regrets he has been obliged to leave the House; but he has deputed to me the duty of replying to this Amendment. I should have had great difficulty, perhaps, in so doing in the face of the speech my right hon. Friend made some years ago, and which was quoted by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), if it had not been for those wise words of prescience which were cautiously inserted in that speech. My right hon. Friend said, on the occasion referred to, "that times change, and we change with them."

MR. PARNELL: I am afraid I have unwittingly led the hon. and learned Gentleman (Sir John Gorst) into a mistake. Those words were an interpolation of mine.

SIR JOHN GORST: I am even more fortunate than I supposed I was, because if the hon. Member for Cork defers to the wisdom of my right hon. Friend, he will, I am quite sure, defer in a greater measure to his own wisdom. At any rate, in the words of the hon. Gentleman, "when times change, we change with them." Perhaps, at the time the speech quoted was made many speeches were delivered which, after more mature consideration and experience of the House, the speakers had been induced to modify. It certainly is now the opinion of the Government that a Proviso of this kind might give rise to considerable inconvenience. The Speaker or the Chairman has to assent, or has not to withhold his assent, to the closure; and if an angry minority is empowered to make a collective protest in writing, which is to be recorded on the Journals of the House, it is the opinion of the Government that such a collective protest, however comforting it may be to the minds of the dissentients, will not conduce to the order and to the progress of the Business of the House. While admitting the ingenuity of the hon. Member (Mr. Parnell), in moving an Amendment which was formerly moved by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, I must say it is the deliberate and calm opinion of the Government that, on the whole, the wiser course for the House is to reject the Amendment.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I must say, Mr. Speaker, that what the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) is in the habit of calling the delicious irony of the situation is not entirely completed by the running away of the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith); because nothing could be more deliciously ironical than that the duty of vindicating the Order of the House against obstruction should be deputed to the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Sir John Gorst). The position of the hon. and learned Gentleman reminds me of a celebrated character in one of Balzac's novels. I am not going to make the reference too pointed, and I am sure the hon. and learned Gentleman will not misunderstand me. In one of Balzac's novels there is a character called Vautrian, who is unquestionably the ablest—I do not like to use the word "swindler" though it most correctly describes him—[A VOICE: Operator!]—operator of his time. When he had pursued his nefarious career for a great many years he got tired of it, and placed his services at the disposal of the detective force. In the same way, if the Government desire to put down obstruction, I do not know that they can do better than to secure the services of so experienced a man as the hon. and learned Gentleman. The hon. and learned Gentleman did not condescend to tell us why it was the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) was obliged to leave the House. Has he been summoned to a Cabinet Council; or is he afraid to meet his past utterances on this question, lest the House should see what a perfect turn and right-about-face the Tory Party have executed? Now, in addition to the right hon. Gentleman, the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) took part in the debate on this Proviso in November, 1882, and the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) and the whole Tory Party went into the Lobby in support of the Proviso. The very argument used by the hon. and learned Gentleman (Sir John Gorst) against the proposal now was used against it then. It was said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) that it would be undesirable that Members should, in a moment of irritation, put upon the Journals of the House an expression of their strong and angry feelings upon a question. Does anybody suppose the Tory Party remained without a convenient answer to that? Sir R. Assheton Cross (now Viscount Cross), who at that time sat on the Front Opposition Bench, said—

> "The protest would not be entered, as the Home Secretary supposed, at the moment when those who made it were suffering under a sense of defeat, but on the next day, after time had been given for reflection."—(3 *Hansard*, [274] 811.)

I find that one of the ablest speeches made on that occasion was made by the right hon. Gentleman the present Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope). That right hon. Gentleman said—

> "It appeared to him that the House of Lords would shortly be the only Assembly in which freedom of discussion would be allowed. In this House they were going to be gagged, and therefore they contended they had a right to enter their protest, in order that the country might judge of the course they had adopted."

It was argued in 1882 by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian that the protest would be, to a certain extent, a reflection upon the Chair. That is the very argument used by the Tory Party now. In 1882 the Tories said it was all nonsense to try to raise the Chair above criticism, and they asked why the Chair should be raised above criticism any more than anybody else. If the New Rule be carried, it is not the Speaker who will be responsible for the application of the clôture, but the Member who proposes it, and the majority who agrees to it. It is now argued in support of this Rule that the action of the Speaker is practically automatic, and therefore that the position of the Speaker cannot be affected by the operation of the Rule. This protest cannot cast any reflection on the Speaker, for it is merely a protest against what may be supposed to be the tyrannical action of the majority of the House.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): I think that this Proviso is most skilfully drawn. It provides that this protest shall not be made when Members are smarting under defeat; but that any minority of Members exceeding 10 can deliberately and respectfully enter their protest next day against the action of the House in imposing the clôture. I shall be greatly surprised if we do not have the support of many Tories upon this question, because it is one in which the interests of the House are distinctly at stake. I do not see anything in this proposal opposed to the spirit of the traditions of the House, or opposed to the spirit of the Constitution; but, on the contrary, I think we should be merely acting in accordance with the traditions of the House and the spirit of the Constitution if we allowed a minority to enter their protest in black and white against what they consider an unjust use by the majority of the House of its power. It is well to bear in mind that it is not proposed that this protest shall be made in the moment of excitement, but at the Sitting following the imposition of the clôture. In that fact I think we have the very best protection against the possibility of any rash or precipitate action on the part of the minority. Naturally enough it will be to the interest of the minority that they should, during the 24 hours which will elapse between the application of the clôture and the next Sitting, see that they do not write anything to be recorded in the Journals of the House which may afterwards be used against them as evidence that they had been guilty of an obstructive use of their functions in the House.

Debate *adjourned* till *Friday*.

## *MOTION.*

### REFORMATORY SCHOOLS ACT (1866) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Dugdale, Bill to amend "The Reformatory Schools Act, 1866," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Dugdale, Mr. Whitmore, Mr. Curzon, Mr. Dixon, and Mr. Mark Stewart.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 198.]

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Thursday*, 17*th March*, 1887.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Pharmacy Acts Amendment (28).

*Committee* — *Report* — Incumbents of Benefices Loans Extension Act (1886) Amendment * (39).

*Report*—Glebe Lands (41-45).

*Third Reading* — Lunacy Acts Amendment (40); Justices' Jurisdiction (24), and *passed*.

Provisional Order Bill—*Third Reading* — Local Government (Ireland) (Carrick-on-Suir) * (30), and *passed*.

## PHARMACY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

(NO. 28.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

**The Earl of MILLTOWN**, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that its object, though extremely simple, was one of considerable importance to the general public. It was framed with the object of enabling the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain, which was formed in 1841, and received a Charter in 1843, to make adequate regulations for the education and curriculum to be followed by those who were enrolled among its members. Its purpose was to protect the public against the admission to practice of persons without the necessary training. Hitherto there had been great difficulties in the way of the Society dealing with that matter, the importance of which it was impossible to over-estimate, because the members had the exclusive right of dispensing and selling poisons. By the Pharmacy Act of 1852, it was made penal for any unauthorized person to assume the title of pharmaceutical chemist, and by the Act of 1868 it was made unlawful for any person not duly qualified to sell or dispense poisons, or to assume the title of chemist and druggist. Certain poisons of a particularly dangerous character, the sale of which was placed under special restrictions, were contained in a Schedule to the Act. That Schedule could be added to by the Society, from time to time, with the consent of the Privy Council. The Society consisted of members, associates, and registered apprentices, each of whom had a separate qualification, and passed a separate examination. It was intended that the apprentices should pass a preliminary examination before admission, and after a three years' apprenticeship should pass a qualifying examination; but it had been found that, owing to the development of the extensive system of cramming that now prevailed, the gentlemen who were known as apprentices trusted entirely to passing the qualified examination, and did not devote themselves to acquiring the practical knowledge absolutely essential during apprenticeship, although all operations in pharmacy required to be maturely practised for the safety of the public. By the 6th clause of the Bill of 1868, the Examiners were bound to pass those who answered their questions, which might be answered by those who had no skilful training at all. The Society accordingly framed bye-laws for remedying these defects and establishing a sufficient curriculum of study; but the Privy Council, to whom all bye-laws had to be submitted, felt unable to confirm them, as it considered that the Statutes did not authorize the Society to frame them; and this Bill, which had the unanimous assent of the Council of the Pharmaceutical Society, had been introduced into their Lordships' House to remedy this defect. Subject to a slight amendment in the phraseology of one of the clauses, his noble Friend the Lord President of the Council (Viscount Cranbrook) did not object to the Bill. He might add that the 2nd clause gave this Society power to dispense with the three years' curriculum in the case of those who had obtained technical skill in any part of the United Kingdom or the Colonies, but not with the qualifying examination. In moving the second reading, he might say, in conclusion, that the Bill did not apply to Ireland, as the Irish Pharmacy Act of 1875 did not require similar amendment. The Bill would have the effect of making the practice in the matter uniform throughout the Kingdom.

*Moved,* "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow.*

## LUNACY ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

(NO. 40.) THIRD READING.

Order of the Day for the Third Reading read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY), in moving that the Bill be now read the third time, said, that a question had been raised by the noble and learned Earl (the Earl of Selborne) on the new clause which he (Lord Halsbury) proposed to move to add to the Bill. The new clause provided that when a person had been received as a lunatic in any asylum under an order of a Judge of County Courts, magistrate, or justice, without having been previously seen or examined by him, he should have a right to be taken before a Judge, magistrate, or justice. It was provided by the clause that this jurisdiction should be exercised by "any Judge, magistrate, or justice other than" the one who made the order; and his noble and learned Friend desired that the same magistrate who made the order should have the personal interview with the alleged lunatic. If that were done, it would have the effect of making the magistrate practically hear an appeal from his own order. He could not take the responsibility of advising the House to adopt such an Amendment, and would leave the decision in their Lordships' hands.

*Moved,* "That the Bill be now read 3ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 3ª accordingly.

On Question, "That the Bill do pass?"

Amendment *moved,* after Clause 4 add a new clause:—

"(1.) When a person has been received as a lunatic in an asylum hospital or licensed house or as a single patient, under an order of a judge of county courts magistrate or justice, without having been personally seen or examined by such judge magistrate or justice, the person shall (subject as herein-after mentioned) have the right to be taken before or visited by a judge magistrate or justice, other than the judge magistrate or justice under whose order he has been received, except so far as the medical superintendent of the asylum or hospital, or the medical proprietor or attendant of the house, or the medical attendant of the single patient, within twenty-four hours after his reception, in a certificate signed and sent to the Commissioners (in the Form 3*a* in the First Schedule), shall state that the exercise of such right would be prejudicial to the person so received.

"(2.) Subject to any such certificate, the superintendent or proprietor of the asylum hospital or house, or the person having charge of the single patient, shall, within twenty-four hours after reception, give to the person so received as a lunatic a notice in writing in the Form 3*b*. in the First Schedule, and shall ascertain whether he desires to exercise such right as aforesaid; and if he, within seven days after his reception, expresses his desire to exercise the right, such superintendent proprietor or person shall procure him to sign a notice in the Form 3*c*. in the First Schedule, and shall forthwith transmit it by post in a registered letter to the judge magistrate or justice, who shall thereupon arrange, as soon as conveniently may be, either to visit the person giving the notice or to have him brought before him by the superintendent proprietor or person as the judge magistrate or justice may think fit. After any such personal interview the judge magistrate or justice shall send by post to the Commissioners a report thereupon, and the Commissioners shall take such steps as may be necessary to give effect to the report.

"(3.) For the purposes of this section the notice shall be sent to and the jurisdiction exercised by any judge magistrate or justice, other than the judge magistrate or justice who made the order for reception, then present within the petty sessional division or borough where the person received is, who shall be in such notice named by the person desiring the interview, or if no judge magistrate or justice is so named, any justice who shall, under arrangements which shall be for that purpose from time to time made amongst themselves by the justices in such division or borough, undertake such jurisdiction; and the notice shall, in such last-mentioned case, be sent to the justices clerk of such division or borough for transmission to the justice.

"(4) The judge magistrate or justice shall be entitled, if he desires so to do, before making his report, to see the medical certificates and any other documents upon the consideration of which the order for reception was made.

"(5.) If any superintendent of an asylum or hospital, or any superintendent or proprietor of a licensed house, or any person having charge of a single patient, omits to perform any duty imposed upon him by this section, he shall be guilty of a misdemeanour."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

THE EARL OF SELBORNE said, he did not see why the magistrate making the order should necessarily be prejudiced against the patient. He would not very willingly propose an Amendment to the clause, because they were all of one mind as to the general object and scope of the Bill. He had a very strong opinion, however, that the clause as it stood would have an effect which they did not intend it to have, and he would therefore move to amend the first sub-section by leaving out the words "any judge, magistrate, or justice other than." He proposed to insert instead thereof, a provision that the examination of a lunatic should be made by the Judge, magistrate, or justice who made the order for reception—

> "If the person so received as a lunatic is still within the county or place in which such Judge, magistrate, or justice has jurisdiction, and in any other case by any Judge, magistrate, or justice."

His object was that the magistrate who had made an order for detention should be the magistrate to personally see and examine the alleged lunatic, for having had all the materials before him, he was better able to form an opinion than any magistrate would be who knew nothing of the case. There was no reason for supposing that the magistrate who made the order would be prejudiced in the matter, whereas to call in another magistrate would be making him sit as a court of appeal from the first.

Amendment *moved*,

In the new clause to be added after Clause 4. by the Lord Chancellor, subsection (3.), lines 2 and 3, leave out ("any judge, magistrate, or justice, other than"); line 4, after ("reception") insert ("if the person so received as a lunatic is still within the county or place in which such judge, magistrate, or justice has jurisdiction; and in any other case by any judge, magistrate, or justice.")—(*The Earl of Selborne.*)

On Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause?" Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 40; Not-Contents 22: Majority 18.

CONTENTS.

Halsbury, L. (*L. Chancellor.*)
Cranbrook, V. (*L. President.*)
Cadogan, E. (*L. Privy Seal.*)

Mount Edgcumbe, E. (*L. Steward.*)
Lathom, E. (*L. Chamberlain.*)
Clarendon, E.
Feversham, E.
Harrowby, E.
Ilchester, E.
Jersey, E.
Leven and Melville, E.

Milltown, E.
Northesk, E.
Onslow, E.
Stanhope, E.
Wharncliffe, E.
Yarborough, E.

Cross, V.
Sidmouth, V.

Ashbourne, L.
Balfour of Burley, L.
Bateman, L.
Brabourne, L.
Bramwell, L.
Brodrick, L. (*V. Midleton.*)

Chelmsford, L.
Colchester, L.
Colville of Culross, L.
Ellenborough, L.
Elphinstone, L.
Fermanagh, L. (*E. Erne.*)
Foxford, L. (*E. Limerick.*) [*Teller.*]
Kenry, L. (*E. Dunraven and Mount-Earl*)

Kintore, L. (*E. Kintore.*) [*Teller.*]
Norton, L.
Poltimore, L.
Saltersford, L. (*E. Courtown.*)
Shute, L. (*V. Barrington.*)
Stanley of Alderley, L.
Wigan, L. (*E. Crawford and Balcarres.*)

NOT-CONTENTS.

Bedford, D.

Ripon, M.

Camperdown, E.
Ducie, E.
Granville, E.
Innes, E. (*D. Roxburghe.*)
Kimberley, E.
Selborne, E. [*Teller.*]
Suffolk and Berkshire, E.

Elgin, L. (*E. Elgin and Kincardine.*)

Foley, L.
Grimthorpe, L.
Herschell, L.
Kensington, L.
Lingen, L.
Lyttleton, L.
Romilly, L.
Stratheden and Campbell, L.
Sudley, L. (*E. Arran.*)
Thring, L. [*Teller.*]
Thurlow, L.
Tweeddale, L. (*M. Tweeddale.*)

Amendment *disagreed to*.

LORD HERSCHELL said, he thought it objectionable and very prejudicial to the lunatic himself, that he should be enabled to name the particular Judge or magistrate before whom he should be taken, as it would give rise occasionally to considerable inconvenience. He, therefore, proposed to amend the clause so as to dispense with the necessity of the lunatic naming the particular magistrate who should visit him, and enabling the justices of the borough or county to choose, from time to time, the magistrate or justice who should investigate the case of the alleged lunatic.

LORD HALSBURY, said he had no objection to the proposed Amendment.

Amendment *agreed to*.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to*, and *ordered* to stand part of the Bill.

Further Amendments made.

Bill *passed*, and sent to the Commons.

## GLEBE LANDS BILL.—(No. 41.)

(*The Viscount Cross.*)

REPORT.

Amendments *reported* (according to Order).

Clause 3 (Sale of glebe by or with approval of Lord Chancellor).

LORD NORTON moved, as an Amendment, to insert, in line 21, before "benefit" the words "permanent and prospective," and, in the same line, after "benefice" to insert "and without unfair prejudice to adjoining property." He remarked that, in Committee, it was moved that no glebe should be sold without the Bishop's and patron's consent. The object of the Bill seemed to be to prevent the Bishops in the Ecclesiastical Commission vetoing all sales of Church real property. Such an inclination seemed to be erroneous, as late legislation had made real property no securer than Consols; and to prevent all sales of glebe would be a senseless loss, especially of minerals, which the clergy could not work at all, or interlying pieces of land they could not improve. On the other hand, the Land Commissioners might feel themselves unauthorized to refuse a poor incumbent's pressing application for premature sale for immediate benefit to the prospective detriment of the living. The noble Viscount in charge of the Bill had suggested in the debate the words "permanent benefit." He proposed to take the noble Viscount's words and to add "prospective," so that the Land Commission might feel it their duty to take probable improvement of value into their consideration in consenting to a sale. The other insertion would meet such a case as lately occurred, where glebe lying in the middle of the patron's park, the incumbent wanted to sell for villa building, the site being very attractive to a neighbouring manufacturing town. The patron, like most landlords, was too poor to outbid the market; but, fortunately, an exchange of land removed the difficulty. But it ought to be within the Land Commission's power, as the Act of *Vict.* 1 put it in that of the Ecclesiastical Commission, to save adjoining property from such injury by exchanges or other arrangements. Unfair advantage should not be taken of the patron's bequest to the Church.

Amendment *moved*,

In page 1, line 21, after the second ("the") insert ("permanent and prospective"); and after ("benefice") insert ("and without unfair prejudice to adjoining property").—(*The Lord Norton.*)

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Viscount Cross) said, he would agree to the insertion of the word "permanent," as he had no objection to making it clear that the sale was to be for the benefit of the benefice, and not for the immediate advantage of the incumbent. He could not, however, seeing that it might be looked upon as an Instruction to the Land Commissioners to look to prospective improvements by building or otherwise, assent to the insertion of the word "prospective," which, it seemed to him, would open up too remote contingencies, and, if the noble Lord would exclude it, he would not oppose the Amendment.

Lord NORTON said, he feared he was unable to do otherwise than accept the suggested limitation of this Amendment.

Amendment *amended,* and, as amended, *agreed to.*

Amendment *moved,*

In page 2, line 8, at the end of sub-section (2.) insert ("and if such objection be not removed the matter shall be referred to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, whose decision shall be final").—(*The Earl of Feversham.*)

Viscount CROSS said, that during the progress of the Bill in Committee, it was understood that the Land Commissioners were to be the arbitrators, and if the Ecclesiastical Commissioners were substituted, the title of the Bill might as well be altered, for instead of being one to facilitate the sale of glebe, it would rather be one to impede the sale. He regretted to oppose anything proposed by the noble Earl, but he could not accept the Amendment.

Amendment *negatived.*

On the Motion of The Viscount Cross, Amendment made, in page 2, line 7, by leaving out ("and patron"), and inserting ("or patron, as the case may be").

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Application and investment of purchase money).

On the Motion of The Viscount Cross, the following Amendment made:—At end of clause insert—

"Any land purchased with money arising from a sale under this Act of the glebe land of any benefice shall be conveyed to the incumbent of that benefice, and shall be held by the incumbent for the time being as part of the glebe of the benefice, and the income arising from the land shall be paid or applied as the income of the land sold would have been payable or applicable if the sale had not taken place."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 6 (Restriction as to sales).

On the Motion of The Viscount Cross, the following Amendment made:—In page 4, line 16, after ("Act"), insert—

("but until such sum is fully recouped, nothing in this section shall discharge the incumbent from his liability to make good the said dilapidations.")

On the Motion of The Viscount Cross, the following Amendment made:—Leave out Clause 7, and insert the following clause:—

(Provision where land is subject to mortgage or other debt.)

"(1.) Where any glebe land sold under this Act, or the benefice to which it belongs, is subject to any mortgage or other debt, the land shall be sold free from such mortgage or debt, but such mortgage or debt, if not discharged, shall attach to the purchase money of the land and to any securities or land in or in connexion with which such purchase money is invested, and the mortgagee or creditor shall have the like remedies as nearly as may be in relation to such purchase money, securities, and land as he would have had if the land had not been sold.

"(2.) The prescribed notice of the proposal to sell any such glebe land shall be given to the mortgagee or creditor, and the mortgagee or creditor may, within the prescribed time after such notice, object to the sale on the ground that his security will be damnified by the sale, and before the Land Commissioners approve the sale or sell, they shall be satisfied that either such an objection to the sale has not been made by the mortgagee or creditor, or if an objection has been made that the mortgagee or creditor will not be damnified by the sale, and the Land Commissioners may, if it seems to them necessary, make provision either for securing the rights of the mortgagee or creditor, or for the discharge of the mortgage or other debt, so that nothing is done which will prejudice the future interest of the benefice.

"(3.) The Land Commissioners may require the mortgagee or creditor to accept payment of the principal and interest due, together with such additional sum (if any) as seems necessary in order to dispense with any notice which would otherwise be required for such payment."

Viscount CROSS said, it had been represented to him that there were owners of glebes who would wish to sell portions of them for the purpose of discharging debt incurred by assigning part of the income to new benefices in the original parish. The Rector of Wigan was in this position, having endowed new livings with part of his glebe. To meet such cases he would propose the insertion of a new clause.

*Moved*, after Clause 7, insert the following clause:—

(Provision as to annual charges on benefice.)

"Where any glebe land sold under this Act, or the benefice to which it belongs, or any part of the endowment of such benefice, is subject to a permanent annual charge in favour of the incumbent of any other benefice, the land shall be sold free from such annual charge, but the annual charge shall attach to the purchase money, and to any securities or land in or in connexion with which such purchase money is invested, and the authority holding the securities in which such purchase money is invested, may, if they think fit, set apart an adequate portion of such securities for the purpose of meeting such charge, or any part thereof, and shall thereupon discharge the said benefice and the endowment thereof from the liability to the annual charge or the said part thereof, and the securities so set apart shall be placed to a separate account or otherwise set apart in such manner as the said authority may direct."—(*The Viscount Cross.*)

Clause *agreed to.*

Bill to be read $3^a$ on *Tuesday* next; and to be *printed* as amended. (No. 45.)

## IRELAND (CITY OF LIMERICK)—THE ASYLUM RATE.

### MOTION FOR PAPERS.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN, in moving for the Correspondence respecting the Limerick County Asylum rate, said, he should like to know what had recently transpired. He should be satisfied if he were informed the rate was levied, or about to be.

*Moved* for—

"Correspondence between the Irish Government and the Mayor of Limerick with reference to the rate ordered to be levied upon the City of Limerick for the maintenance of lunatics in the city and county asylum."—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

The LORD CHANCELLOR of IRELAND (Lord Ashbourne) said, there would be no objection to give the Correspondence; and he might say that, when the noble Earl read it, he would find the attitude of the Government towards the Corporation of Limerick very clearly defined. The Government had required that the money should be paid, and the Corporation had admitted their liability.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said, he should like to know whether the Mayor of Limerick had announced the intention of the Corporation to levy a rate?

Lord ASHBOURNE said, he did not know the exact form; but the liability had been acknowledged by the Corporation.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: I am afraid that is a rather different matter.

Motion *agreed to;* Correspondence *ordered* to be laid before the House.

## LORD ASHBOURNE AND HOME RULE.—OBSERVATIONS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR OF IRELAND (Lord ASHBOURNE): My Lords, I should like to take this opportunity of saying one sentence in reference to a personal matter. My attention has been called, within the last hour before the meeting of the House, to a paragraph in *The Daily News* this morning, which, under the heading of "Lord Ashbourne and Home Rule," states as follows:—

> "The story goes that in a copy of *Thom's Directory for* 1885, which has come in due course out of his Lordship's residence, there has been discovered a memorandum of an Irish Home Parliament at least as extensive as Mr. Gladstone's, in the characteristic handwriting of his Lordship; but whether it is tentative or final, whether it correctly expresses Lord Ashbourne's sentiments, or whether it was written to order, there are no means of testing. After some curious adventures, the document, it is said, was purchased at a considerable price by a gentleman of the same politics and profession as his Lordship, and lithographed copies have passed into extensive, though private, circulation."

My Lords, the first intimation I ever received of this romantic episode in my life was when I read that paragraph. There is not even the vestige of the shadow of a foundation for the story; and I have only to say that I shall be very much obliged to "the gentleman of the same politics and profession as myself" if he will only give me a private view of one of the "lithographed copies."

House adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Thursday*, 17*th March*, 1887.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—National Provident Insurance, Mr. Hoyle and Captain Fellowes *added.*

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—NAVY ESTIMATES, NUMBERS, Vote 1; SUPPLEMENTARY (NAVY SERVICES, 1886-7).

PUBLIC BILLS—*Resolution in Committee—Ordered—First Reading*—Isle of Man (Customs)* [199].

*Second Reading*—Merchandise Marks Law Consolidation and Amendment* [194], *referred to the Select Committee on the* Merchandise Marks Act (1862) Amendment.

*Committee* — Merchant Shipping Act (1854) Amendment (No. 2)* [184]—R.P.

*Committee—Report*—Merchant Shipping (Fishing Boats) Acts Amendment [168].

*Third Reading*—County Courts (Expenses)* [177], and *passed.*

## QUESTIONS.

### ADMIRALTY—DOCK ACCOMMODATION AT BOMBAY FOR HER MAJESTY'S NAVY.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the Lords Commissioners are willing to co-operate with the Indian Government, in providing suitable dock accommodation at Bombay for large ships of Her Majesty's Navy, by payment of a moiety of the cost of enlarging existing docks in the Government Dockyard at that port; whether different Admirals in command of the Indian Station have repeatedly urged the necessity of providing such docking facilities as aforesaid, especially in view of requirements in time of war; whether estimates have been submitted showing that the cost of such dock extension would not exceed £100,000, or thereabouts; and, whether, in January 1882, the *Euryalus*, late flagship on Indian Station, was compelled to be sent to Malta (distant 4,000 miles) to be docked for repairs, through the want of the necessary accommodation at Bombay? The hon. and gallant Gentleman also asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Government of India are prepared to co-operate with the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty in providing the necessary dock accommodation at Bombay for large ships of Her Majesty's Navy, in accordance with the repeated recommendations of different Admirals in command of the Indian Station, to meet the urgent requirements of the Navy, especially in time of war; and, whether he is aware that the flagship on Indian Station, in January 1882, was obliged to proceed to Malta to be docked for repairs, for want of the necessary accommodation at Bombay, whereby the said Station was deprived of the most efficient ship belonging thereto for a period of several months?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): The Admirals in command of the East India Station have reported the insufficiency of the existing docking facilities at Bombay. A dock extension, costing £83,000, was formerly suggested; but it was found that this extension would not make sufficient provision for docking first-class ships. It was, therefore, thought preferable to build a new dock altogether; and I understand that the Indian Government are taking steps to provide the accommodation. It is the case that the *Euryalus* had to proceed to Malta from Bombay to be docked.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Government of India are now engaged in providing the necessary dock accommodation at Bombay for the largest type of ships in Her Majesty's Navy.

## EGYPT—THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION—DECORATIONS FOR THE TROOPS AT ASSOUAN.

MR. SHIRLEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Doncaster) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the intention of the Government to grant any decoration or batta money to the troops who were quartered at Assouan during the hot season of 1886, on account of the appalling mortality and sickness which was rife there, in accordance with the precedent of 1885, when the Egyptian medal was granted on account of the excessive heat?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: The medal granted in 1885 was for the campaign in Egypt, towards which the troops at Assouan were directly contributory. Excessive heat of the climate does not in itself constitute a claim to a medal or decoration. It would not be convenient that the pay of a soldier should be dependent on the climate in which he may be serving; but all troops in Egypt have advantages in rations which they would not have at home. The value to the individual soldier is about 4½d. a-day.

*Admiral Field*

## LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—THE NATIONAL GALLERY—THE NEW ROOMS.

MR. W. H. JAMES (Gateshead) asked the First Commissioner of Works, How soon the new rooms of the National Gallery will be in readiness for the admission of the public?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): The new rooms and staircase will be completed, so far as this Department is concerned, by the end of May. There will, however, be some further time required to complete the hanging of the pictures, so that I do not think it likely that the rooms will be in readiness for the admission of the public before the end of June or the beginning of July.

## IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA (Monaghan, S.) asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If he is aware that much dissatisfaction exists when the town in which land cases are to be heard is selected to meet the convenience of the landlord, to the cost and inconvenience of the tenants; and, whether Dundalk has been lately selected as the place of hearing for 43 cases arising in the Castleblayney Union, when Castleblayney itself, and other towns, would be much more convenient and easy of access for the tenants?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University), in reply, said, in selecting the place of hearing of land cases the convenience of the landlords was not consulted more than that of the tenants. With regard to the latter part of the Question, a number of cases were heard at Dundalk, and no complaint whatever was made as to that place being selected.

## FISHERIES (IRELAND)—BOARDS OF FISHERY CONSERVATORS.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Limerick, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether *ex officio* members of the Board of Fishery Conservators must be magistrates, and, in addition, hold land abutting a river or lake in the district, and pay licence duty for the current year; whether certain magistrates attended meetings of the Board of Conservators of the Limerick

District on the 5th of August, 1886, 6th of January, 20th of January, and 4th of February, 1887, and took part in the proceedings without possessing the requisite qualifications; whether the Limerick Board met on the 5th of August, 1866, and proceeded to elect one of their number to the position of Inspector of Water Bailiffs, contrary to Act of Parliament; if the Inspectors of Irish Fisheries have remonstrated with the Limerick Board respecting this election, and declared the appointment, in their opinion, illegal; whether the Board still retains this member of their body in the position of Inspector as aforesaid, and have refused to hold a new election; and, whether the Irish Executive will inquire into these allegations; and, if proved to be true, will take the necessary steps to set matters right?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I am advised that the law is as stated in the first paragraph. With regard to the alleged matters of fact about the election of Inspector of Water Bailiffs, the circumstances are understood to be as stated, though the hon. Member has not given any sufficient opportunity for inquiry on those points not already within the knowledge of the Inspector of Fisheries. The matter does not appear to be in a satisfactory state; and I understand that some questions connected with it are at present before the Law Officers, with the object of ascertaining whether, in the present state of the law, any action can be taken by the Executive.

## ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE—DELAY OF CAUSES—INSUFFICIENCY OF COURTS.

Mr. BAGGALLAY (Lambeth, Brixton) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether, looking at the facts that during the present and recent sittings of the High Court of Justice, the hearing of actions, particularly jury actions, has been delayed in consequence of the insufficient number of Courts at the Royal Courts of Justice, and that three Judges are sometimes unnecessarily sitting together in banc, because there is no Court for the third Judge to sit in—he will consider the desirability of providing further accommodation for the Judges to hold their Courts?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University): The facts referred to have not been brought to my notice. The question of further accommodation at the Royal Courts of Justice seems to be for the consideration, in the first instance, of the Lord Chancellor, rather than of the Office of Works. Of course, any suggestion coming from the Lord Chancellor would be immediately and carefully considered.

## RUSSIA — IMPRISONMENT OF J. W. ROBINSON, A BRITISH SUBJECT.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to the statement made by the Odessa Correspondent of *The Daily News*, regarding the case of John William Robinson, a British subject, stated to be undergoing the eleventh month of an imprisonment at Kieff, in connection with some passport offence; whether Robinson's offence was the non-possession of a passport, or the possession of a false passport; and, whether representations have been made to the Russian Government on the subject?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Consul-General at Odessa reports that Robinson is stated by the Russian authorities at Kieff to have been condemned on the 4th of December last to four months' imprisonment for having resided in Russia under a false name with an Austrian passport. Robinson states that he was in prison about six months before being tried. Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburgh is inquiring into the case; but his report has not yet been received.

## AUSTRALIAN COLONIES — APPLICATION FOR GOVERNMENT LOANS—GREENWICH HOSPITAL FUNDS.

Sir SAMUEL WILSON (Portsmouth) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether he is aware that the Government loans in the leading Australian Colonies have been expended in railways and other reproductive works, which remain Government property, and which make a return of about 4 per cent in some cases, on the whole amount of the debt of those Colonies, and that the railways alone would sell for more than the whole debt, making such loans a perfectly safe investment; whether he will take this into consideration in the future re-investment of Greenwich Hospital Funds; and, whether he will endeavour to continue the payment of age pensions, without the conditions as to the ability to earn a portion of their sustenance, to seamen who have served their full time?

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (A Lord of the Admiralty) (Sheffield, Ecclesall) (who replied) said: I do not contest the accuracy of the facts mentioned in the first part of the Question of my hon. Friend; but, as already stated, arrangements have been made, or are in progress, for re-investing at home, on favourable terms, a large portion of the Three per Cent. Stock hitherto held on account of Greenwich Hospital, and it is anticipated that there will be no difficulty in similarly re-investing as much of the remainder of the Stock as may be considered advisable. In the Charter of Foundation it is stated that the benefits of Greenwich Hospital are intended for seamen who, by age, wounds, or other disabilities, shall be incapable of further service at sea, and be unable to maintain themselves. It seems proper, therefore, to take into account, when distributing the funds, the physical condition of the men as well as their age.

## MAGISTRACY (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE WINCHESTER BENCH—"A JOB LOT."

Mr. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been directed to an article in *The Daily News* of the 14th March, entitled "A Job Lot," and having reference to the Magisterial Bench at Winchester; whether it is true, as stated in the article referred to, that there are at present 17 magistrates in Winchester and only 19 policemen; is it usual in English cities for judicial officials to be nearly equal in numbers to administrative officials; is it true, as stated in the article referred to, that the Lord Chancellor has sent down a list to the Town Council of Winchester of five other gentlemen, whom he intends to raise to the dignity of the Bench—so that in Winchester there will be 23 magistrates and only 19 policemen; and, whether the Town Council of Winchester have struck out four of the five names sent down by the Lord Chancellor, and have substituted others for his consideration?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I have seen the article in question. The number of magistrates and police is accurately stated. I am informed that the late Lord Chancellor added four names to the list of Justices in 1881, making the total at that time 22. Since that date there have been five vacancies through death; and it is to fill these vacancies, and not to add to the total number of magistrates, that five gentlemen have been recently nominated by the Lord Chancellor. The Town Council have submitted to the Lord Chancellor the names of certain gentlemen from among whom they suggest that he should select four magistrates in lieu of four whom he had nominated, but for whose rejection they assign no reason. The Town Council have thereby gone beyond their proper function.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether all the magistrates recommended by the Lord Chancellor are Tories?

Mr. MATTHEWS: No, Sir; they are not.

Mr. CLANCY: May I ask how many are?

[No reply.]

## POST OFFICE—DELIVERY OF THE IRISH MAILS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) (for Mr. Flynn) (Cork, N.) asked the Postmaster General, If the Post Office Authorities can make such arrangements as will insure an earlier delivery of the Irish Mails in the House of Commons to Members representing Irish constituencies than that which at present obtain; and, if they can arrange such an alteration as will permit of Irish Members posting letters for the Irish night mail by special mail-bag, or otherwise, at a later hour than is at present necessary?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): Before the Question of the hon. Member was placed upon the Notice Paper, arrangements had been made for accelerating the delivery in the House of the day mail letters from Ireland, and such letters can now be obtained at 7 p.m., or one hour earlier than before. As regards posting for the Irish night mail, letters can at present be posted up to

7.15 p.m. without late fee, and up to 7.30 p.m. with a fee of a halfpenny. It is proposed to extend the hour for posting letters with a late fee up to 8 p.m.; and this will apply not only to letters for Ireland, but also to letters for places in England, North Wales, and Scotland, served by the night mail train from Euston at 8.30 p.m.

### COURT OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND)—TRANSFER OF UNCLAIMED DIVIDENDS.

MR. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Under what Statute, or by what authority, £35,000 of the Unclaimed Dividends of the Irish Court of Bankruptcy were transferred to the Commissioners of the National Debt; whether the transfer of the money of the unpaid creditors is contrary to, and in violation of, the sections 294, 295, 296, and 297 of "The Bankruptcy (Ireland) Act, 1857;" and whether it is a fact that, owing to the conduct of the Bankruptcy Court officials, dividend warrants are frequently returned by the Post Office, in consequence of wrong direction or address, and large sums are thereby allowed to accumulate, creditors not being permitted to examine the list for themselves?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University): The transfer referred to was made pursuant to the provisions of the 85th section of the Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Act, 1877. Dividend warrants are often returned by the Post Office, in consequence of persons to whom they are addressed not being found; but I am not aware that this arises from the misconduct of the Bankruptcy Court officials, who are themselves often unable to discover the proper addresses. Creditors can see for themselves what are the unclaimed dividends in any particular estate; but a general examination of all the lists is not allowed.

### EGYPT—ARMY OF OCCUPATION—MAJOR MACDONALD.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is true that Major Macdonald is acting as military *attaché* to Sir Evelyn Baring, in Cairo; whether in consequence of their being an English Army of Occupation in Egypt, the Egyptian Army being officered by English officers, Major Macdonald's extraordinary services to Sir Evelyn Baring will be dispensed with; and, whether the extra pay drawn by Major Macdonald is defrayed by the Egyptian or English Government?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Major Macdonald is attached to the British Agency in Egypt as a military *attaché*. His functions are on behalf of the British Government, who pay him, in connection with the presence of British troops in Egypt.

### LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—IRREGULAR CONVICTION AT NEW ROSS POLICE STATION.

MR. J. E. REDMOND (Wexford, N.) (for Mr. SEXTON) (Belfast, W.) asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether John Malone and Richard Magee, inmates of the New Ross Workhouse, arrested and lodged in New Ross Police Station on the night of the 21st ultimo, on a charge of insubordination, were, on the following day, brought before a magistrate in a room of the said police station, and sentenced on conviction to three months' imprisonment; whether this private mode of trial was in accordance with the law; whether Mr. Hurson, the solicitor retained for the defence, was absent from the proceeding in the police station, not having received notice of it; and, what action will be taken upon the case?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University), in reply, said, the men named were arrested in New Ross Workhouse, and brought before the presiding magistrates, charged with insubordination. Bail could not be obtained, and on the arrival of another magistrate the case was heard in the police office, and the case being proved by three witnesses, they were sentenced to three months' imprisonment. The proceedings were taken under *Geo.* IV., c. 83. The Government did not intend to take any action in the matter.

MR. J. E. REDMOND: I would ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman, whether it is a fact that no legal opportunity for legal defence was given to these men? My information is they had got a solicitor, and he never received any notice of the trial.

Mr. HOLMES: The men made no application whatever, or any statement whatever, that they had engaged a solicitor.

Mr. J. E. REDMOND: Is the right hon. and learned Gentleman aware that the statement is made by a solicitor who is a supporter of the right hon. and learned Gentleman?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.): I should like to ask, whether an opportunity was given to the prisoners to obtain bail before they were convicted?

Mr. HOLMES: Sir, I have already answered the Question on the Paper.

## RIVER THAMES POLLUTION — BYE-LAWS OF THE THAMES CONSERVATORS.

Colonel DAWNAY (York, N.R., Thirsk) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention had been called to the proposed new bye-laws of the Thames Conservators, by which

> "no direct action will be taken to put a stop to the insanitary nuisances caused by house-boats and steam launches;"

and that,

> "although a bye-law provides against casting any sewage, rubbish, or other offensive matter into the River, this will not be taken to apply the shocking condition of things seen at places where the River is shamefully polluted by the sewage from house-boats;"

whether he is aware that any objection or representation against the proposed new bye-laws must be made on or before the 28th instant; and, whether, in the interests of the millions of people who depend upon the Upper Thames for their water supply, he will compel the Thames Conservators to take immediate and efficient steps to free the River from its present and ever-increasing state of pollution?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): My attention has been called to the proposed new bye-law of the Thames Conservators. I have been in communication with the Conservators on the subject. I am informed that the hon. Member is incorrect in assuming what is stated in the first part of the Question. The Conservators state that the bye-law is intentionally drawn as wide as possible, to cover every possible mode of pollution of the river; and that it was so prepared with the object of carrying into effect Section 4 of the Thames Preservation Act, 1885, which enacts that it shall be the duty of the Conservators to make special Regulations for preventing the pollution of the river by the sewage of any house-boat or steam launch. The Conservators believe that when the bye-law comes into operation, it will have the effect of preventing the nuisance which now arises from vessels moored in or navigating the river. If the hon. Member would wish to make any specific suggestion as to any additions to the proposed bye-law, and will communicate it to me, I shall be happy to forward his communication to the Conservators.

Colonel DAWNAY gave Notice that in consequence of the answer of the President of the Local Government Board he would call the attention of the House to the subject, and move to disallow the proposed bye-laws of the Thames Conservancy Board, in consequence of their neglecting to deal with the nuisance caused by house-boats and steam launches.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked, Whether the legal advisers of the Local Government Board were satisfied that the bye-laws would prohibit house-boats from discharging sewage into the Thames?

Mr. RITCHIE said, that he had not considered it necessary to consult the legal advisers of the Board on the subject; but, so far as he had been able to ascertain the opinion of the officials, he thought that the bye-laws would have that effect.

## INDIA—DISCONTENT IN MADRAS.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he has any information to show that discontent has, within the past five years, been exhibited in Madras; and, if he will call for a Return showing the number of tenants evicted or otherwise proceeded against, by the Government of Sir M. E. Grant Duff?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): There has been no information of any special discontent in Madras. There is no eviction of Government tenants in Madras; but both land and personal property is liable to sale to realize arrears of land revenue. The average annual number of landowners whose property is thus sold is 116,000 out of 4,500,000. No further Return appears to the Secretary of State to be necessary.

## POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF POOR LAW GUARDIANS TO THE MALLOW UNION.

**Dr. TANNER** (Cork Co., Mid) (for Mr. J. O'Connor) (Tipperary, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether there are sufficient police in the Killavullen Police District to distribute the voting papers for the election of Poor Law Guardians to the Mallow Union; whether the Mouanimy Division was the only one so attended to at the last election, when the police did not allow sufficient time for the delivery of the post containing the votes of distant electors, and otherwise displayed negligence in the collection of votes by passing the houses of voters if their doors happened to be closed at the time of their calling; and, whether he will give instructions to the police to extend the time of collection until 10 p.m., as is done in other districts, and to exercise greater diligence in the collection of the voting papers from the residents in the locality?

**The CHIEF SECRETARY** (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Local Authorities of the Mallow Union have made their own arrangements for the distribution of the voting papers, and they have not reported to the Local Government Board what agents they are employing. I am not aware that any question as to the sufficiency of police has been raised. I am informed that, at the election last year, they were employed only in the Electoral Division named in the Question, and that they discharged the duty satisfactorily, so far as is known to the Local Government Board. One individual complaint with regard to the collection of a voting paper was made, but, on consideration, was not found to affect the vote. I see no reason arising out of these circumstances to give any special instructions to the police.

**Dr. TANNER**: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer that part of the Question which says the police did not allow time for posting the papers?

**Mr. A. J. BALFOUR**: We have no ground for believing that the state of things ever occurred.

## CONVENTION OF PARIS, 1815—ENGLISH INDEBTEDNESS TO FRANCE.

**Dr. TANNER** (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that a sum of no less than one milliard of francs, or forty millions sterling, is due to France by the English Government under Clause 9 of the private Convention, dated the 20th of November, 1815; if it is a fact that, by the Conventions signed in May, 1814, November, 1815, and April, 1818, a guaranteed fund of 6,500,000 francs of French Rentes, with a capital of 130,000,000 francs, was transferred to the British Government; whether M. Blandin, a Deputy, lately proposed to the Chamber that a Committee should be appointed for the purpose of asking the British Foreign Office for an account of these funds, and also for a return of the surplus, with the interest accruing thereon, to the French Treasury; whether the surplus, with the interest, is estimated to amount to one milliard of francs; and, whether a Committee has been appointed by the Chamber with M. Blandin as reporter?

**The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE** (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): It is not true that the sum mentioned in the hon. Member's Question, or any other sum, is due to France by the British Government under the Convention of November 20, 1815. A statement of the matter was made to the House of Commons by the Secretary to the Treasury on the 8th of June, 1869; and a Return of the disposition of the funds received from the French Government is shown in a Paper (No. 239) presented to Parliament in 1872. There is no new feature to be considered. A report of a proposal made in the French Chamber of Deputies has been made in the French newspapers similar to that mentioned by the hon. Member; but Her Majesty's Government are not aware that a Committee has been appointed by the Chamber to inquire into the subject. The statement in question is, no doubt, connected with the legend of the Baron de Bode, which haunted this House for a long period; but which, after being investigated by a Select Committee, was laid to rest.

### EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—THE NEW CODE, 1887—"SPECIFIC SUBJECTS."

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether he can state what "specific subjects" have been sanctioned by the Education Department other than those mentioned in Article 15 of the Education Code?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): The Returns for the last three years show that bookkeeping, theology, German, hygiene, navigation, physiography, social economy, and Welsh have been included in the subjects specially sanctioned by the Education Department.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda) asked, whether instructions in Welsh would be definitely entered in the Code?

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE said, he thought that he had just shown that this was practically included.

MR. W. ABRAHAM: All that we ask is that it should be included in the Code.

### ADMIRALTY—WILLIAM ROPER, AN ARTIZAN OF DEVONPORT DOCKYARD.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) (for Mr. CONYBEARE) (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether it is the fact that Mr. William Roper, who lately lost his life while working in the Government Dockyard at Devonport, was a skilled artizan whose character stood very high in the estimation of the Dockyard authorities; whether it is the fact that he lost his life under the following circumstances—namely, that after serving under the Government for some 30 years he was disentitled to any pension, because, through the difference of a few days in his age, he had never been put on the establishment; that at the age of 60 he might have retired and received a gratuity of about £60 which was then due to him; that he had the option of remaining on, if he passed the doctor, till he was 65; that he did so stay on, and left his gratuity of £60 to be taken up when he should have completed his extra five years; but that he met with his death a few weeks after while working overtime in December last; whether the authorities have refused to pay over to the widow the gratuity to which her husband was entitled before his death, and why; and, whether he will, taking into account the deceased's long service and high character, and the fact that his widow is left with a family of six children, consider whether the above decision of the authorities should not be reversed?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): It is true that William Roper was injured in the Devonport Yard when at his work; but his death was not attributed to such injury. He was 60 years of age, and was allowed to remain for his own benefit, and was entitled to a gratuity only as a hired man on completion of his service. Such gratuity has hitherto only been paid to the man himself upon his discharge from the Service. Compensation is only given to the widows of civil *employés* when their husbands' death is directly attributable to the service in which they are engaged. My hon. Friend the Member for Devonport has already spoken to me concerning this man's case; and we are in correspondence with the Treasury on the subject.

### LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND)—DECREES FOR RENT, CO. DONEGAL—WRONGFUL ACTION OF A BAILIFF.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Sheriff of the County Donegal issued any warrant, special or otherwise, on foot of decrees for rent at suit of Mr. A. J. R. Stewart, of Ards, against John M'Cue, Manus M'Fadden, Mrs. —— M'Cue, and James Magee, or any of them, during 1886, and especially to James Wason, the bailiff of the Stewart Estate, at Dunfanaghy, in said county; whether Wason collected the said decrees, with costs and Sheriff's fees, as if he had such warrants in the said year of 1886; whether, in the end of 1885, he extorted from widow Ellen M'Fadden, Magheramana, £3 11*s*., pretending that he had there a decree at suit of Samuel Fleming, of Letterkenny; whether he was compelled to refund this latter sum, having no decree at all then in his possession; whether there is any means of distinguishing between bailiffs duly authorized and those not; and, if the facts are as alleged, what action the Government propose to take in the matter?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Holmes) (Dublin University) (who replied) said: The hon. Gentleman is, of course, aware that the only action that the Executive could take in reference to James Wason would be to prosecute him for a criminal offence, in case there was evidence to show that such an offence has been committed by him. I have caused inquiries to be made on this subject; and as the matter may come before a legal tribunal it is not expedient for me to make any further statement.

### WAR OFFICE—COMPULSORY RETIREMENT OF LIEUTENANT COLONELS—THE ROYAL WARRANT, 1887.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, What number of Lieutenant Colonels under 60 years of age will be compulsorily retired in July next, and what will be the annual amount of the half-pay of the officers so retired; and, whether he will lay upon the Table a Statement showing the financial effect of the recent Royal Warrant as to compulsory retirement?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): From the present time to the end of July there will be no compulsory retirement of Lieutenant Colonels, although a certain number will vacate their regimental appointments on completing the term for which their appointments were made. While unemployed, these officers will be on half-pay at 11*s.* per day. A calculation was made last summer on the probable financial effect of the then intended Royal Warrant; but several important changes were made later in the conditions. The calculation does not, therefore, now hold, and a new one, showing the effect of the Warrant as promulgated, is now being made. When completed, I will consider whether I can lay on the Table a statement of the financial effect of the Royal Warrant.

### POOR LAW—DEATH OF ELIZA RYAN IN ST. PANCRAS WORKHOUSE.

Mr. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he has seen, in this morning's *Daily News*, a report of an inquest held on the body of Eliza Ryan, aged 62, in the St. Pancras Workhouse; whether he will inquire if it is true, as stated in the report, that the woman was placed in solitary confinement for 12 hours on bread and water,

> "In a cell at the workhouse some nine or ten feet beneath the basement of the main building,"

while suffering from inflammation of the lungs following on chronic bronchitis; whether he will inquire into the statement of the master that he ordered the confinement "as a punishment, in the exercise of his lawful authority," for offensive language to the matron; under what statute have masters of workhouses a power of summary jurisdiction in such cases; and, what steps will be taken in the matter if it is found death was hastened by the punishment?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I have made inquiry respecting this case. I am informed that it is not the fact that the woman was placed in solitary confinement as stated in the Question. The room in which she was placed was on the basement of the main building. Although the woman had occasionally been under medical treatment for chronic bronchitis during the past five years, she had not, prior to her last illness, been under any treatment during the past three months, and she was not placed in the punishment room until after she had been seen by the assistant medical officer. On the day following she was apparently in her ordinary state of health, and was at work in the needle-room. On the second day she left the workhouse to attend the funeral of her mother, and on her return she told one of the inmates that she had caught a chill while in the cemetery. She died six days afterwards; and both the medical officer and the assistant medical officer concur in the view that the commencement of the illness from which she died was the shivering and chill taken at the cemetery. At the inquest the verdict was that the death was due to natural causes, and 11 of the 12 jurymen desired to add to their verdict that no blame attached to the workhouse officers. The woman, I am informed, was punished for being very drunk, violent in her conduct, and for using abusive and insolent language, and persisting in doing so. The punishment was duly reported by the master in the punishment book, and was approved by the Workhouse Visiting Committee. The Rules as to the punishment of refractory paupers are contained in the Regulations of the Local Government Board as to the management of the workhouse.

## NAVY—PROMOTION OF CHIEF GUNNERS AND OTHER NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) (for Mr. LABOUCHERE) (Northampton) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether Article 272 of the Queen's Regulations states—

> "Of the total number of Chief Gunners and Chief Boatswains, including Officers holding either rank by virtue of their appointments, one-half shall be composed of Chief Gunners;"

whether *The Navy List* has, for a considerable time past, contained the names of 18 Chief Boatswains, and of 17 Chief Gunners; whether there were 18 Chief Gunners on the Active List before the retirement of Mr. Bechervaise; whether that officer, although retired, is at present doing duty at the Admiralty; and, whether he still draws full pay, and therefore keeps the number of Chief Gunners on the Active List at 17?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): Promotion to the rank of Chief Gunner is not regulated by seniority alone; but is, as in the case of Chief Boatswains and Chief Carpenters, by selection of the most deserving officers. The selection of these officers is a matter of very careful consideration, and the claims of the various officers with regard to age, seniority, and service at sea are carefully compared. The promotions made are the result of these comparisons, and not, as the hon. Member appears to infer, in consequence of favouritism on the part of any individual member of the Board. There is no intention of altering the present practice of promotion in these ranks. There are on the list at the present time 34 Chief Gunners and Chief Boatswains; of these, 17 are Chief Gunners. In the present month's *Navy List* there appears 18 Chief Boatswains, there happening to be that number for a few days pending the pensioning of one of these officers. There were not 18 gunners on the Active List before Mr. Bechervaise's removal. Sir Anthony Hoskins had personal cognizance of Mr. Lee's good service. Mr. Bechervaise is doing duty at the Admiralty; but his vacancy was duly filled up, and his retention in his present post in no way affects, nor has affected, the number of Chief Gunners.

## UNLICENSED HALLS, &c.—"PUBLIC" BUILDINGS.

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, taking into consideration that there is no power or authority to deal with buildings not licensed but used for public performances, he will advise Her Majesty's Government to bring in a Public Bill constituting an authority who shall have the same powers over unlicensed, but public, buildings as is at present exercised under the Act 41 & 42 *Vict.* s. 32, and to include a definition of the meaning of the word "public" building?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I understand that this question is now engaging the attention of a Committee of the Metropolitan Board of Works, who are the constituted authority to carry the Metropolitan Management Act into effect. Any representation which they may address to me will receive my best attention; but I can hold out no prospect of Her Majesty's Government being able to legislate on the subject this Session.

## THE ROYAL GARDENS, KEW.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) (for Mr. LABOUCHERE) (Northampton) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether any record has been kept of the plants, seeds, and specimens received at the Royal Gardens, Kew, and of the work done in connection with them, and of the information received from abroad, no Report having been issued since that for the year 1882?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): A minute record is kept of everything received in the several Departments of Kew Gardens. Mainly owing to the protracted illness of the late Curator the work of compiling the Annual Reports has fallen into arrear; but materials for the series of 1883 to 1886 are in hand, and it is hoped to issue them all this year. In response to the demands for the publication more speedily than in the Annual Report of information received from abroad, I have sanctioned the publication of a monthly bulletin, which can be purchased for a small sum.

### THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881, AND THE PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND), ACT 1885—THE SHORTHAND WRITERS' NOTES.

**Mr. T. P. GILL** (Louth, S.) (for Mr. Chance) (Kilkenny, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will make representations to the authority having custody of the shorthand writers' original notes and transcripts of the proceedings of the Cowper Commission, to insure facilities being accorded to Members of this House to inspect such notes and transcripts so far as the same record the evidence of witnesses?

**The CHIEF SECRETARY** (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I know of no reason why I should take such an unusual course as is here suggested.

### INDIA—DISCONTENT IN MADRAS.

**Mr. TUITE** (Westmeath, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether last year there was a fresh outbreak of discontent, accompanied with violence, in the Rumpa Country, Madras, and to what extent?

**The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE** (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): There has not been an outbreak of discontent in the Rumpa District. Last June or July 25 hillmen in the Gudem District burnt a police station and two bungalows. They were speedily dispersed and arrested.

### ARMY—MAJORS—THE ROYAL WARRANT, 1887.

**Sir HENRY TYLER** (Great Yarmouth) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Royal Warrant issued 1st January, 1887, has made an alteration of great importance to officers holding the rank of Major in Her Majesty's Service, who were promoted before the 1st January, 1887; whether it is the case that the pension of £300 a-year previously granted cannot now be obtained until the age of 48 has been reached; and, whether the previous Warrant will be taken to apply to those who were promoted under it, especially as a considerable proportion of those now holding the rank of Major purchased their first Commissions, and can no longer expect to receive compensation for the money which they have so advanced?

**The SECRETARY of STATE** (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): It was not intended that the Royal Warrant of January 1, 1887, should diminish in any way the privileges as to retirement enjoyed by pre-warrant Majors; but, by a clerical error, in removing the obligation to retire after seven years' service in the rank, the right to retire at that period was taken away also. The mistake was at once discovered, and Her Majesty has signed a Warrant rectifying it. The Article will be corrected in its next issue.

### INDIA (MADRAS)—THE COVENANTED CIVIL SERVICE — LAND SPECULATIONS—MR. SULLIVAN.

**Mr. BUCHANAN** (Edinburgh, W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the late senior member of the Madras Civil Service and senior member of Council in the Government of Madras has been compelled to resign because he was unable to meet the charges brought against him, of having infringed the terms of the Civil Service Covenant forbidding the holding of land by Civil servants; whether other Madras Civil servants are known to be landowners, or shareholders in Land Companies, or otherwise interested in land speculation within the Presidency, or in Native States under the Madras Government, all of which practices are forbidden by the Civil Service Covenant or the Orders of the Government of India; whether Civil servants who have notified these breaches of the covenant to the Madras Government have been subjected to most unfair treatment, that has been acknowledged by, and partially redressed by, the Secretary of State; and, whether the Secretary of State will order a general inquiry into the subject, or take such steps as are necessary for the cessation of these irregularities, the future strict observance of the covenant, and the full protection of those Civil servants who, in the discharge of their duty, are bound to inform the superior authorities of cases of infringement of the covenant?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): Charges of the kind stated were brought against the gentleman referred to, and before any decision was arrived at he tendered his resignation, which was accepted. To the second and third Question my answer is, No. Such steps as are necessary to insure the future strict observation of the Regulation in question have already been taken by the Secretary of State.

## NAVY—LIEUTENANTS AND SUB-LIEUTENANTS.

MR. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Mid) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether there are a sufficient number of Lieutenants and Sub-Lieutenants upon *The Navy List*, to carry on the duties of the service as watchkeepers, and to take command of torpedo and picket boats in time of war; and, if so, how it comes that in a time of peace their Lordships recently refused to accept the resignation of a Lieutenant who was able to give what have, until recently, been considered sufficient grounds to have such a request granted?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): Exceptional measures would have to be taken in time of war to provide the number of Lieutenants and Sub-Lieutenants required for the duties specified, which could not be resorted to in time of peace. Owing to various causes there was at the latter part of last year an insufficient number of Lieutenants available to meet all the requirements at that time; so the Admiralty were, in consequence, compelled in the public interest to withhold their assent for the time to certain officers of that rank resigning their commissions.

## STATE OF IRELAND—DISTURBANCES AT YOUGHAL.

MR. LANE (Cork Co., E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the following statements, which appeared in *The Times* of last Friday, are true:—That a determined effort was made on the previous night to burn the house of Inspector Kerin at Youghal; that the crowd broke the windows of the Protestant Schools and the Methodist Church at Youghal; that children of 12 to 14 years of age were found drunk in the doorways, early on Thursday morning, in the streets of Youghal; and, whether any official Report, in reference to the above alleged outrages, was made by the local police officer to the authorities at Dublin Castle previous to this Question appearing on the Notice Paper?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): This Question was on the Paper for Tuesday without Notice. The hon. Member was then informed that local inquiry was necessary. He has put it down again without leaving time for the receipt of the reply in course of post, even assuming that the local officer could answer by return, and without making any inquiry. All I can say, therefore, is that no official Report had up to yesterday been received in Dublin as to the alleged occurrences.

MR. LANE: I must ask the right hon. Gentleman if he is not aware that a contradiction of the report in *The Times* appeared in the London papers last Saturday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have got no official Report yet.

MR. J. REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman permit me to ask——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

## NAVY—WIDOWS OF SEAMEN AND MARINES.

CAPTAIN PRICE (Devonport) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, What steps have been taken to carry out the recommendations of the Duke of Edinburgh's Committee as to making provision for the widows of seamen in the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): The Admiralty have not yet been able to take practical action on this Report; but if my hon. and gallant Friend would confer with me I could point out to him the nature of the difficulties we have to contend with.

## EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — GREENWICH HOSPITAL SCHOOL.

CAPTAIN PRICE (Devonport) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether there is any reason why the usual Government

Grant should not be given to the Greenwich Hospital Schools, in the same way as to other schools of a similar nature?

The VICE PRESIDENT (Sir William Hart Dyke) (Kent, Dartford), in reply, said, no application had ever been made to the Department on behalf of the schools. Should such an application be made, he saw no reason why they should not deal with the case on its merits.

### PROSECUTION OF OFFENCES ACTS—THE REGULATIONS—RESULTS.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will instruct the Director of Public Prosecutions to make a Report showing the working of the Regulations made, in 1885, for carrying out the Prosecution of Offences Acts, 1879 and 1884, with statistics showing the number, nature, cost, and result of the proceedings instituted by the Director in accordance with those Regulations; and, whether he will lay such Report upon the Table before the Vote for Public Prosecutions is taken?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I have consulted the Director of Public Prosecutions, and he tells me that he will be able to prepare such a Return as the right hon. Member asks for; and, provided the Vote for Public Prosecutions is not taken before Easter, the Return will be ready before then. There will be no objection to lay the Return on the Table of the House.

### INDIA (MADRAS)—SALE OF MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS IN OOTACAMUND.

Mr. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether, in August, 1881, the Commissioner of the Nilgiri Hills, *ex-officio* President of the Municipality, ordered the local fund engineer to value certain municipal buildings in Ootacamund; whether the engineer reported their value to be Rs. 3200; whether, in spite of this valuation, these buildings were then sold privately to the senior member of the Madras Board of Revenue for Rs. 100 only; whether these facts were last year formally brought to public notice; and, whether, as the matter has been so severely commented on by the Native and European Press in India, he will say whether these statements are true?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): The statements alluded to in the Question have been made by one officer of the Madras Government, and denied by another. As no formal inquiry has been made into the accuracy of the statements, I am unable to say whether they are true or not.

### WAR OFFICE—COAST DEFENCES—MARTELLO TOWERS.

Mr. NORRIS (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse) asked the Secretary of State for War, The number of Martello towers that are situate on the coast between Brighton and Dover, and if he can say for what purposes they are used; if the sites of these Martello towers could not be adapted, at a very small cost, to a "disappearing system" of fortifications, by substituting a pit in place of the tower and adopting the Moncrieff gun carriage; what, if any, fortifications exist on the South East Coast, from Pevensey Bay to Pett Level; and, whether the old Military Canal at the last-named place, now unused, could not be adapted to defensive purposes?

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing) (who replied) said: There are 43 Martello towers between Brighton and Dover, one of which is armed with a 7-inch rifled breech-loading gun. Nineteen carry smooth-bore ordnance; and the remainder are used as barracks, or let. The sites could be made use of for guns; but the towers themselves could not be adapted to "disappearing," or any other modern mounting for heavy guns. With the exception of 14 towers, all at Pevensey, there are no fortifications between Pevensey Bay and the Pett Level at Winchelsea. The old Military Canal retains its value as an obstacle in the event of a hostile force landing in the neighbourhood.

### WAR OFFICE—ROMAN CATHOLIC ARMY CHAPLAINS.

Mr. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the services of the acting

Roman Catholic Army Chaplains at Portsmouth, Hilsea, Fareham, Dover, Shorncliffe, Colchester, and Cyprus are to be dispensed with; if it is the intention of the Authorities, on the retirement of the next Roman Catholic Commissioned Chaplain, not to fill up the vacancy; and, if so, whether, in view of the number of Roman Catholics serving in the Army, the War Office will reconsider their determination relative to the dismissal of Roman Catholic Chaplains; and, if a corresponding reduction is proposed to be made in the number of Church of England Army Chaplains?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE)(Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The acting Roman Catholic Chaplains at Portsmouth, Chatham, and Colchester are to be relieved by commissioned Chaplains returning from Egypt on the reduction of the force there. The acting Chaplain at Cyprus was sent out specially on account of the invalids from Egypt; and as there is no longer an invalid depôt there he has been brought home, and sent to relieve the acting Chaplains at Hilsea and Fareham. It has also been decided to dispense with an acting Chaplain at Dover, as the work there is not considered to be more than sufficient for one Chaplain. No change is contemplated at Shorncliffe. There is no intention of reducing the number of Roman Catholic commissioned Chaplains. The Church of England acting Chaplains will also be reduced, as a consequence of troops coming home from Egypt.

### WAR OFFICE—WOOLWICH CADETS—THE JUBILEE REVIEW AT ALDERSHOT.

MR. E. R. RUSSELL (Glasgow, Bridgeton) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether arrangements will be made to enable the Cadets of the Royal Military School at Woolwich to take part under their own officers in the Review which is to take place at Aldershot in honour of Her Majesty's Jubilee?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE)(Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The arrangements for this Review are not yet complete, and I cannot, therefore, answer this Question at present. But I may say that the amount of money at my disposal is very limited.

*Mr. W. J. Corbet*

### THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE CELEBRATION—A SPECIAL HOLIDAY.

COLONEL ANSTRUTHER (Suffolk, Woodbridge) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, considering that Tuesday, the 21st of June, is to be observed as a public holiday, he can see his way to recommend that the Monday previous should, by Royal Proclamation or otherwise, be kept as a special Bank Holiday, so as to grant to Her Majesty's subjects three consecutive days in which to celebrate Her Jubilee?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I am sorry to say that I cannot hold out any prospect to my hon. and gallant Friend that Monday, the 20th of June, will be proclaimed as a national holiday, in addition to Tuesday, the 21st.

### COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE—THE HESSIAN FLY.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether his attention has been called to the reported presence of chrysalide of the Hessian fly in the siftings of threshing machines in Hertfordshire and Essex; and, whether, in view of the urgency of the danger, he will take steps at once to publish official instructions on the subject?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) (who replied) said: The attention of the Agricultural Department has been called to this matter, and specimens of both infested substances have been sent to the Department by Mr. Whitehead. A warning has been printed, and is about to be issued to all Local Authorities in Great Britain.

### INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT, DUBLIN—APPOINTMENTS.

MR. J. E. REDMOND (Wexford, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If it is a fact that the principal posts in the Inland Revenue Department in Dublin are filled by Englishmen, and if the two important posts of Controller of Legacy Duty and Controller of Stamps were filled by transfers of minor Clerks from the London Office to these appointments, over the heads of competent Irishmen, of long experience, in the Irish Office in

Dublin; if it is a fact that a scheme of re-organization is at present being carried out by an official from London; if there is any rule in the Department which excludes Irishmen from promotion; and, if he will lay upon the Table the draft scheme of re-organization before it has been finally adopted?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): I am informed that the answer to all the Questions of the hon. Member is no, Sir.

### STATE OF IRELAND—THE RIOTS AT YOUGHAL.

Mr. LANE (Cork Co., E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has seen a copy of the following letter, which was addressed by Dr. Charles Ronayne, J.P. (the only magistrate living in the town of Youghal) to Mr. Kerin, the District Inspector of Youghal:—

> "Dear Sir,—I am just after coming from the death of a fine young man, who was stabbed by a policeman. I went to the barracks to see who was in charge of the police, and to inquire what circumstances produced the sad business. I found there a number of strange police, and a young officer, Mr. Somerville, who assumed the responsibility of having ordered the charge that caused this young man's death. Now, as I have taken great pains for the past 24 hours to preserve the peace in this usually quiet town, and as I am of opinion that there was not the least danger to apprehend any public disturbance, and as I am afraid that it was the advent of these new men led to this calamity, I desire to know from you, as the residing District Inspector, under what circumstances they were brought or sent here.—Yours faithfully,
>
> "8th March 1887. Charles Ronayne;"

whether this magistrate had been taking a very active part for some days previously, in co-operation with the Catholic clergymen of Youghal, in allaying the excitement caused by the threatened arrest of the Reverend Father Keller; why the police authorities ignored him by not consulting him as to the necessity of bringing a force of strange police into Youghal; and, whether the preservation of the peace of Youghal has been transferred from the magistrates of Youghal to the police officer?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): This Question has been referred to the District Inspector for the local inquiries necessary. There has not been time for the receipt of his reply.

Mr. LANE: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman the number of days' Notice he will require to be given of a Question for the purpose of receiving an answer by telegraph from an official in Ireland?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It entirely depends upon the special circumstances of each case.

### LEGACY AND SUCCESSION DUTIES—COPIES OF RESIDUARY ACCOUNTS.

Mr. FINCH-HATTON (Lincolnshire, Spalding) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether repeated applications have been made by residuary legatees and others interested in the estates of deceased persons, to the Controller of Legacy and Succession Duties, for office copies of residuary accounts passed by executors; whether such applications are refused, unless upon an order of the executors or an order of one of Her Majesty's Judges of the Court of Chancery; and, whether persons interested are obliged to apply to the Court for an administration suit where executors refuse to render proper accounts to beneficiaries, and are thus put to unnecessary expense; and, if so, whether the present rule cannot be altered?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): It is the fact that applications are at times made by persons for inspection of residuary accounts passed by executors, and that such applications are refused unless the written consent of the executors is obtained. The documents are also produced in Court on subpœna. It is also the fact that when executors refuse to render accounts beneficiaries have to apply to the Court for an order for administration of the estate. The documents at the Inland Revenue Office are filed there merely for the purpose of the Revenue, and not for public inspection, and are treated as *quasi*-confidential documents. The Inland Revenue officials have no means of ascertaining whether persons making the application are, or are not, persons interested, or beneficiaries. It would, in my opinion, be detrimental to the Public Service if intending litigants were permitted to have access to the books and papers filed at Somerset House; as, in the circumstances, I do not see that the Rule can or ought to be altered.

## EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — OUTBREAK AT EXETER TRAINING COLLEGE.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether his attention has been called to the recent outbreak among the students at the Exeter Training College; and, whether it is his intention to institute any inquiry into the circumstances attending it, and into the complaints of the second year students in regard to the teaching staff?

The VICE PRESIDENT (Sir William Hart Dyke) (Kent, Dartford): A detailed statement of the circumstances attending the outbreak at the Exeter Training College has been placed in my hands by the Principal of the College, from which it appears that the students have now submitted to discipline, and expressed their regret for what occurred. No further inquiry on this point seems to be necessary; but I have thought it best to communicate with Her Majesty's Inspector of Training Colleges, who, at his next visit, will pay special attention to the qualifications of that member of the teaching staff in respect of whom complaint has been made.

## CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—IMPORTATION OF CATTLE FROM IRELAND INTO SCOTLAND.

Mr. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the action of certain Local Authorities in Scotland with regard to forbidding the importation of cattle from Ireland generally; whether any distinction is made by these Authorities either as to the locality or port from which cattle are sent or as to the sort of cattle, whether store or dairy cattle; whether any disease has been traced to any, and what, Irish port and what class of cattle was affected; whether he will call the attention of the Scottish Authorities to page 22 of the last Report of the Agricultural Department of the English Privy Council, where it is shown that 69 per cent of the cases of pleuro-pneumonia in Scotland are shown to be in the dairy stock of Glasgow and Edinburgh; whether he will make representations in the proper quarter in Scotland, so as to prevent these powers of sanitary regulations from being an injury to the export trade of Ireland; whether it is a fact that two years ago some similar action was taken but afterwards modified, so far as the Ports of Derry and Belfast were concerned, on the protest of the Irish Authorities; and, whether he will take similar energetic action to have the same modifications made immediately?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): This subject is much too extensive and important to be dealt with satisfactorily within the limits of the answer to a Question. The Scottish Local Authorities have no power to prohibit generally the importation of cattle from Ireland. They have power to prohibit the movement of cattle into their districts from other districts in Great Britain; and the attention of the Veterinary Department in Ireland has recently been drawn to the manner in which this power has, in some cases, been exercised, as being calculated to interfere with the export trade in Ireland. This, I presume, is what the hon. Member refers to. With regard to the recent detection of disease at Irish ports, the facts are that pleuro-pneumonia has been detected in three dairy cattle at the Port of Dublin, and that one bullock shipped at Drogheda was also found to be similarly affected. With the exception of the Dublin District Ireland is, I am happy to say, entirely free from pleuro-pneumonia. So far as I have been able to ascertain, the circumstances of the present difficulty with the Scottish Authorities are not precisely similar to those of a former occasion to which the hon. Member refers, and they may possibly not be so easily arranged; but I shall give instructions to the Veterinary Department in Dublin to communicate at once to the Agricultural Department of the English Privy Council the representations already made, and also any further representations that may be received on the subject, and to request that Department to urge upon the Scottish Local Authorities to exercise their powers with as much consideration for the Irish export trade as is possible.

## DISTRESS IN THE METROPOLIS—THE CONFERENCE.

Captain COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the attention of the Government has been directed to the proceedings of an important Conference held on the 21st January, to consider the question of the distress existing in London, at which a Resolution was passed calling upon the Government to institute an exhaustive inquiry into the extent, character, and causes of the distress existing in London; and, if so, whether it is contemplated that any steps should be taken to give effect to the views of the Conference?

**The PRESIDENT** (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Yes, Sir; the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been directed to the Conference in question, which was of an essentially representative character. The Resolution passed at such Conference was forwarded to the Prime Minister, who has conferred with me on the subject, with the result that the Government have determined to institute an inquiry as to the employment and earnings and other particulars with regard to the working classes in four typical districts in the Metropolis. The districts selected are in St. George's-in-the-East, Battersea, Deptford, and Hackney. Each district has a population of about 50,000 persons, and is chiefly populated by persons of the working classes. The information which it is sought to obtain is of an exhaustive character; and the inquiries will be made from house to house by enumerators acting under the Registrars of Births and Deaths in the several districts. The Registrar General, through the agency of his Department, will render all the assistance he can to secure accuracy in the Returns. The Returns will be tabulated in the General Register Office, and will afterwards be submitted to Parliament. The inquiry will, I hope, commence on Saturday.

## EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—THE "OCTROI" AT CAIRO.

**Mr. PICTON** (Leicester) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If it is true, as stated in a letter from Cairo to *The Times* of Wednesday, that—

> "A poor man cannot bring his cow or buffalo into the town without paying 20 francs each time for the transit;"

whether there is any truth in the assertion made in the same letter, that, in consequence of the heavy octroi—

> "Whole loads of cabbages, &c., are actually often thrown away, because the tax on their admission is more than the cultivator could hope to gain on the sale;"

and, whether there is any reason to believe, as alleged, that—

> "The land, which ought to be one of the most fertile in the world, is made comparatively barren by these oppressive exactions, which, added to a heavy Land Tax, become actually crushing?"

**The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE** (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): The Octroi Duty in Egyptian towns is heavy, and a Bill was lately introduced into the Legislative Council to modify it in favour of the country people; but the Council did not pass it. Her Majesty's Government have no reason to believe, as alleged in the Question of the hon. Member, that the land is going out of cultivation on account of these and other burdens; on the contrary, though the Land Tax is still heavy, cultivation is extending itself, the indebtedness of the peasantry has diminished, and their material condition has improved.

## ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—CO. TIPPERARY.

**Mr. P. J. O'BRIEN** (Tipperary, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that the regular Constabulary Force for the North Riding of the County of Tipperary stands at 309 men; whether out of that number there are at present only 266 men in active service in the district; whether the sum of £1,000 is annually paid out of the Riding for what is termed extra police; whether, including the so-called extra police, the regular force is at present short to the number of 19; and, if so, whether he will fill up the regular Parliamentary quota, and relieve the ratepayers from this tax for extra police who are not in the district; whether, at the recent Spring Assizes at Nenagh, where the presentment for this extra police tax was opposed, the Presiding Judge, Baron Dowse, replying to the Traverser, made use of these words—

> "It is imperative on me to pass this presentment, otherwise I would be most happy to concede to the just application;"

whether he will inform the House, or give a Return, as to the number of persons who are at present under police protection, and the number of men employed in discharge of protection duty in North Tipperary; and, for what purpose, with the comparative absence of crime in the county, as stated by Baron Dowse, the ratepayers are burdened with this tax for extra police?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Part of this Question I have already answered. It is renewed with some additions, and without Notice, and it cannot be fully answered without local inquiry on some points. I can at once say, however, that the entire free force is not 309 men, as stated by the hon. Member, but 266.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he will obtain exactly the number of extra police employed in police protection?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have just told the other hon. Member that I will cause inquiries to be made.

### LAW AND JUSTICE—THE KENTISH TOWN MURDER.

MR. SHIRLEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Doncaster) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is the intention of the Government to offer a reward for the apprehension of the perpetrators of the recent Kentish Town murder, as recommended by various members of the Coroner's Jury?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The question of offering a reward in the case of this murder is still under consideration; but, as the hon. Member may be aware, rewards are only offered by the Home Office under very exceptional circumstances.

### ARMY ESTIMATES—THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN (Stirling, &c.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can inform the House when the Motion will be made for the appointment of a Select Committee to consider the Army Estimates?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): It is the intention of the Government, so soon as the necessary Votes have been taken in the Navy Estimates, to move to refer the Army and Navy Estimates to a Select Committee, to report their observations on the several Votes to the House.

### NAVY—THE DOCKYARD WORKS AT HAULBOWLINE — DISCHARGE OF WORKMEN.

MR. HOOPER (Cork, S.E.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether he is aware that a notice to the following effect was posted yesterday at Haulbowline Dockyard Works:—

> "On 1st June 80 men monthly to be discharged.—By order of Lords Commissioners of Admiralty;"

whether, in the event of the Motion to be made as to the subject of the disappointing rate of progress which is being made with Haulbowline Works, he will direct all steps in pursuance of this official notice to be held in abeyance pending a full debate on this subject in the House?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing), in reply, said, he quite sympathized with the hon. Gentleman's object; but the fact was that the notice in question was given because the work on which the men were engaged was just approaching completion.

### METROPOLIS—MAGNITUDE OF THE DEBT.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in view of the growing magnitude of the Metropolitan debt secured on the rates, and the great burden thereby imposed on the ratepayers, the Government will consider the desirability of introducing a Bill to limit the total borrowing powers on this security?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The borrowing powers of the Metropolitan Board of Works are granted by an annual Act of Parliament. The Treasury require that the Bill for this purpose should have attached to it tables showing over a series of years the borrowing powers, the progress of the debt and of the sinking fund, and the amount of rate levied, in order that Metropolitan Members and others interested in the question may have the means of forming a judgment upon the general financial policy of the Board, and may be in a position to discuss the whole question, or the particular provisions of the Bill, when it is before the House. It appears to me that it lies with the Metropolitan Members, rather than with Her Majesty's Government, to call the attention of the House to this question of Local Government, if they should consider that the indebtedness of the Metropolis is increasing at too great a rate.

## CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND) — THE RIOTS AT YOUGHAL — THE ATTACK ON THE POLICE.

MR. LANE (Cork Co., E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland the following Question, of which I have given him private Notice:—Whether he has seen the report in to-day's London papers of the proceedings at the inquest of the fisherman O'Hanlon, killed by the police at Youghal, at which Mr. Somerville, the police officer, swore there was no truth in the Chief Secretary's statement that 21 out of 22 policemen were severely injured, and that he (Mr. Somerville) had not made any such report to the authorities; and, if so, whether the Chief Secretary will state to the House from what source he received the information he conveyed to the House on Tuesday?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): As the hon. Gentleman is aware, I made the statement in answer to a Question put to me without Notice by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), and in making the statement I said I would not guarantee its accuracy. What I stated was that 21 out of 22 policemen were injured. What appears to be the fact is that 21 out of the 22 were hit, that 15 of them were hurt, and three of them were severely hurt.

MR. LANE: Has the right hon. Gentleman since seen the statement, sworn to by Mr. Somerville, that there was no truth in the statement he made to the House on Tuesday night?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, so far as he could make out, the statement of District Inspector Somerville was correct.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): Will the right hon. Gentleman state who first gave him his information?

[No reply.]

MR. LANE: I have given the right hon. Gentleman private Notice of the following Question: — Whether he is aware that at the inquest on O'Hanlon, now being held at Youghal, the Coroner has made frequent complaints about receiving no assistance from the police officer; whether the District Inspector refused to execute a warrant against a policeman who was committed for contempt of Court; and, whether he will telegraph orders to the police officer at Youghal to render the same assistance in this case as he would in a case in which the suspected culprit was not a member of the Constabulary?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have received no information to that effect; and, under the circumstances, I could not think of sending such a telegram.

MR. LANE: The information is in this morning's papers.

# STATEMENT

EXPLANATORY OF THE

# NAVY ESTIMATES, 1887-88,

AND OF THE

# POLICY EMBODIED THEREIN.

## Alterations in Form of Estimates.

IT will be observed that certain changes have been adopted in, and additions made to, the form in which the Appendices to the Estimates have hitherto been drawn up. The primary object of these alterations has been to place before the House in the simplest form the fullest possible information upon past and proposed future expenditure. Statements are also furnished in considerable detail of the capital stock of the nation in its Navy, Dockyards, and contents of the storehouses. These Statements will form the groundwork of a Capital Account which, it is hoped, may be presented in a more complete state next year.

In the detailed programme * of works to be undertaken during the year will be found under a separate heading for each vessel building particulars of her type, tonnage, load-draught, speed at mean-load draught, coal capacity, and armament as designed and approved. In the same column are shown the original estimated cost, as well as the outlay as at present anticipated, also the amount of the expenditure on each vessel during past financial years, with the probable actual outlay during the year ending on 31st March, 1887.

The total estimated cost of each vessel, including the estimated charge falling on Army as well as on Naval Votes, is also set out, thus affording information of the total outlay on the vessel complete for sea, exclusive of sea stores.

Hitherto it has not been customary to tabulate, in much detail, the proposed expenditure on the refit and repairs of vessels, it being impossible to give this information with the same approximation as with vessels building. Frequently the Estimates are provisional. They are made prior to the arrival and full survey of the vessel, and often the necessity for outlay only develops during the progress of the work. At the same time, this class of expenditure forms so important an item in the Naval Budget that the fullest possible details are now given of the amount proposed to be allocated to each vessel. The value of such outlays depends largely upon the character of the ship and her probable efficiency after alteration and refit as a vessel of war. Information is, therefore, now furnished which will enable an opinion to be formed upon these points.

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* Appendix to Navy Estimates.

The ordinary repairs and maintenance on the Channel and other squadrons and the estimated cost of miscellaneous Services are summarised separately. The Appendix also exhibits the proposed expenditure in the aggregate compared with the Votes.

The Vote for dockyard labour is taken in the present Estimates as a whole, and is not allocated, as has been the practice in past years, to the several Yards. The object of this change is to afford the Controller of the Navy more latitude in the distribution of work, and of the classes of labour, in a manner which may promote greater efficiency and economy in carrying out the varying requirements of the Navy.

The statement following the Appendices is the first of the series of Tables framed for the purpose of informing Parliament of the value of the property which the nation possesses in the Navy and the Establishments and Services connected therewith.

In the Table showing the cost of the Navy will be found the name of each effective ship in the Navy, with the year of her completion, original cost of construction, and subsequent total expenditure upon alterations, refits, and maintenance. Vessels which have become inefficient, but which remain on the list, or those not worth the cost of immediate repair, or which have become obsolete, are placed in a separate category in the Summary, as also is the cost of troop and harbour ships, as well as of yard and other craft belonging to the Service.

The "Explanations of Differences," which have been previously printed as a separate Parliamentary Paper, are this year included, for the convenience of Members of the House, in the Navy Estimates.

## PRESENT CONDITION OF NAVAL FINANCE.

### EXPENDITURE OF 1886-87 AS COMPARED WITH ESTIMATES 1887-88.

The expenditure (including both Original and Supplementary Estimates) borne by Naval Votes for the year ending 31st March, 1887, is £13,270,100.

The Estimate of Expenditure for the year ending 31st March, 1888, is £12,476,800, being a decrease of £793,300 compared with the expenditure of the preceding year. A reduction of expenditure generally implies a decrease of the effective strength of the Service with which it is connected. We are fortunate enough to be able to reverse this rule in the present instance. The reduced outlay during the ensuing financial year is accompanied by a material increase in the strength of the Navy, money being found for 62,500 officers and men in 1887-88 as against 61,400 in the preceding year, whilst the number and power of ships in the 1st Reserve, and ready for commission on 1st April, 1888, will be much in excess of any similar provision for many years past.

A diminution in the amount of liabilities for vessels and engines constructed by contract is another noticeable feature in the present Financial Statement.

These liabilities stood at £2,680,000 in April, 1886, and are estimated to be £1,030,000 in April, 1887; yet at the end of the financial year 1887-88, including the cost of new ships and engines contracted for during that year, they will stand at the low figure of £431,000. An almost similar reduction of liability for ships building in the dockyards can be shown.

The large augmentation in the fighting strength of the Navy which will have been effected simultaneously with a reduction of annual expenditure and incurred liabilities may be accepted as a proof that naval finance, so far as outlay and return are concerned, is now in a satisfactory condition, and that it will be possible, under a system of judicious management, to associate for some time to come a reduction of expenditure with an increase of efficiency.

## REVIEW OF THE LAST SIX YEARS' EXPENDITURE.

These satisfactory results have been obtained partly by policy, partly by improved methods of administration; but a careful review of the expenditure of the past six years is necessary in order that the significance of our present position, and the causes at work in establishing it, may be understood by Parliament and the country.

In the period between 1881 and 1885 every Naval Power in Europe, save England, largely increased its naval expenditure. The introduction of slow-burning powder, and the alterations in the design of heavy ordnance which it entailed, whilst giving increased velocity and accuracy to guns of all calibres, produced a corresponding development in the defensive power of armour-clads and protected vessels. Speed in the performance of naval tactics became an even more essential factor than before, and was so recognized abroad; and on vessels of comparatively small displacement successful efforts were made to realize, by engineering ingenuity, a speed wholly unknown to the smaller craft of a few years back.

These developments of speed and power necessitated increased expense.

England was the last Naval Power to recognize these new conditions. In 1885, under popular pressure, the Government of that day admitted the insufficiency of its previous arrangements, and, with the assent of all parties in the State, Lord Northbrook, the then First Lord of the Admiralty, proposed to expend, in addition to the ordinary shipbuilding programme, a sum of £3,100,000 in the building of ships by contract in private yards. An additional sum of £1,600,000 for guns was also proposed to be added to the Ordnance Votes of the Navy, which are included in the annual Estimates of expenditure of the War Office.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer estimated that this outlay would be spread over five years, ending March 31, 1890, and form a portion of the expenditure of the country for that period.

The work has been executed with such rapidity, that nearly the whole of this expenditure has fallen upon three, instead of five, years. Moreover, the sum of £3,100,000 was found to be insufficient to complete the work it began.

The following Tables show the difference between the estimate of time and outlay made in 1885 and the actual expenditure of the past two years, and the probable disbursements in the ensuing year.

## NEW CONSTRUCTIONS.

### *Special Programme.*

| | 1885-86. | 1886-87. | 1887-88. | 1888-89. | 1889-90. | Total. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Hulls and Engines (Contract Price) .. | 800,000 | 800,000 | 500,000 | 500,000 | 500,000 | 3,100,000 |

## *Expenditure—Actual and Estimated.*

| | 1885-86. (Actual.) | 1886-87. (Actual and Estimated.) | 1887-88. (Estimated.) | Balance remaining. | Total Cost. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hulls— | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Contract price .. .. | 701,150 | 861,701 | 518,023 | 74,093 | 2,154,967 |
| Completing .. .. | 1,572 | 71,721 | 154,470 | 64,032 | 291,795 |
| Propelling, &c., machinery | 341,428 | 274,437 | 127,331 | 52,546 | 795,742 |
| Gun-mountings .. .. | 12,282 | 68,289 | 118,555 | 25,628 | 224,754 |
| Torpedo apparatus .. | 16,551 | 43,384 | 78,957 | 969 | 139,861 |
| Total ... .. | 1,072,983 | 1,319,532 | 997,336 | 217,268 | 3,607,119 |

## *Comparison of Expenditure (estimated) with Programme.*

| | Programme. | Expenditure. | Difference. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ |
| Hulls and engines .. .. | 3,100,000 | 2,950,709 | —149,291 |
| Completing .. .. .. | .. | 291,795 | +291,795 |
| Gun-mountings .. .. | .. | 224,754 | +224,754 |
| Torpedo apparatus .. .. | .. | 139,861 | +139,861 |
| Total ... .. .. | 3,100,000 | 3,607,119 | +501,819 |

### *Memorandum.*

Lord Northbrook's special Shipbuilding Programme, as provided for in the Estimates 1885-86, included—

2 Armour-clads
5 Belted Cruisers.
6 Steel Torpedo Cruisers.
10 first-class Torpedo-boats (4 *subsequently added*).

The financial result of Lord Northbrook's special programme may be summarized thus:—

1. An excess expenditure of £502,000 on the original Shipbuilding Estimate, which provided for hulls and engines only.

2. An expenditure on account of ships building of £3,390,000 in three years, instead of an expenditure of £3,100,000 in five years.

3. An extra expenditure (under Army Votes), roughly estimated at £500,000, for the ammunition and torpedoes necessary for these ships, and for which no special provision was made.

### Vote of Credit of 1885.

Soon after the proposals for this increase to our naval strength had been assented to in 1885, the prospect of a possible war compelled the Government to apply for a large Vote of Credit, of which £2,000,000[*] was appropriated to naval purposes. A large additional sum was also granted for the manufacture of naval ordnance, and included in the Vote of Credit allotted the War Department.

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[*] Exclusive of £500,000 for transport (Army Department).

A considerable amount of orders and of work were given under these Votes of Credit, which were not covered by the sums allotted to them, and have since become a charge upon the annual Estimates.

These are the causes of the exceptional expenditure of the past two years, for during that period Navy Votes have had to meet not only the ordinary wants and wastage of a great Service, but the accumulated arrears of an antecedent period of insufficient provision.

### AVERAGE EXPENDITURE OF 1881-85 COMPARED WITH 1885-87.

The average annual expenditure upon the Navy (deducting the Transport Vote, which is for services rendered to the Army) of the four years ended 31st March, 1885, when all the Naval Powers in Europe, except England, were so busy, was—

| | £ |
|---|---|
| Navy Expenditure .. .. .. .. .. .. | 10,628,000 |
| Gun ditto † (Army Vote) .. .. .. .. .. | 738,000 |
| Total average annual expenditure for four years ending 1884-85 | 11,366,000 |
| In 1885-86 Navy expenditure was .. .. .. .. | 14,724,000 |
| Gun ditto † (Army Vote) .. .. .. .. | 1,600,000 |
| Total, 1885-86 .. .. .. .. .. .. | 16,324,000 |
| In 1886-87 Navy expenditure (estimated) was .. .. .. | 12,941,000 |
| Gun ditto † (Army Vote) .. .. .. .. | 1,685,000 |
| Total, 1886-87 .. .. .. .. .. .. | 14,626,000 |

being a total excess during the two years of £8,218,000 over and above the average expenditure of the four preceding years.

If this great sum had been spread over this period of six years more evenly, and if consideration and a continuous policy had attended its disbursement, the Navy at this moment would be far stronger than it is.

On the other hand, the increase of strength which this sum will ultimately give would have been more economically attained if hurry and scare had not attended its outlay.

The conclusion to be drawn will, I trust, not be lost sight of by subsequent Administrations and by Parliament.

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† Includes estimated value of services performed by War Office, beyond actual provision for Navy in original Army Estimates.

## SHIPBUILDING POLICY OF PRESENT BOARD.

Although three successive Boards of Admiralty have been in office since 1885, the policy pursued, so far as shipbuilding and dockyard administration are concerned, has been uniform and continuous. The enormous liabilities and the great number of ships ordered in 1885 induced the Board of July, 1885, of which I was the Head, to concentrate their attention to bringing to as rapid a completion as was possible the programme of shipbuilding they found prescribed, without enlarging it; certain gaps in it were filled, and the vessels laid down for that purpose were in most instances of small displacement, and absolutely necessary to provide for the reliefs of the next and subsequent year.

The following Statement shows the progress made both in the past and that contemplated in the forthcoming financial year.

### PROGRESS OF SHIP-BUILDING AS COMPARED WITH PROGRAMME 1886-87.

### Completed Ships.

In the Estimates for 1886-87 (Appendix No. 37) it was anticipated that the following new vessels would be "passed into the 1st Reserve" during the financial year:—

3 armoured ships.
1 protected ship.
13 unprotected ships.

According to the latest Reports, it appears that the actual figures for the ships named in Appendix No. 37, as to be completed in 1886-87, will stand at the end of March, 1887, at 1 armoured ship, 1 protected, 13 unprotected.

Two armoured ships—"Rodney" and "Warspite"—have not been completed as was intended; the "Warspite" because of changes in rig and certain details, resulting from experience with "Impérieuse" at sea; the "Rodney" because of delays in supply of guns and gun-mountings.

Three unprotected ships—"Fearless," "Lizard," and "Bramble"—have been delayed in delivery by contractors, and, consequently, have not been completed by the date they would have been had contract terms been kept.

Besides the ships that have been completed, or will be finished in 1886-87, it is anticipated that *thirty-five* out of the *fifty-five* first-class boats of 125 feet to 150 feet in length will be completed in 1886-87; the remaining twenty torpedo-boats are complete in armament, and will be ready for service in June.

Furthermore, it must be noted that out of the *sixteen* ships shown as to be passed into 1st Reserve in 1885-86 (Appendix 37, Navy Estimates for 1886-87), fully one-half (including 2 armoured, 3 partially-protected, 3 unprotected ships) had money spent upon their actual completion in 1886-87.

The whole addition * to the Fleet in 1886-87, excluding small craft, has therefore been:—

3 armoured ships.
1 protected ship.
3 partially-protected ships.
13 unprotected ships,

Under the Orders issued by the present Board, every vessel when passed into the 1st Class Reserve is supposed to be ready for sea in forty-eight hours, and the officers of the respective yards are held responsible that all vessels so passed are maintained in that condition.

### Advancement of New Ships.

The general character of the work done on new ships in 1886-87, besides the completion of those above named, may be best described as *rapid advancement.* For the dockyard work, the facts are set forth in the draft programme for 1887-88, the most notable examples of rapid progress being the "Trafalgar," "Nile,"

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* See p. 14.

"Immortalité," and "Aurora." Results have amply justified the decision taken in framing the Estimates for 1886-87 to make *liberal provision* for the expenditure on labour on each of these vessels.

### Causes of Delay on New Ships.

Some difficulties have arisen, as was anticipated, from the circumstance that so many of the armoured ships laid down previous to 1885 are very nearly in the same stage of advancement towards completion, requiring hydraulic machinery and gun-mountings simultaneously. Until the "Collingwood's" barbette-mountings had been actually tested, work on the corresponding mountings for other vessels of the "Admiral" class could not be taken in hand. When these trials were completed the orders given for other ships were of exceptional magnitude and urgency, greatly taxing the resources of the manufacturers.

The great exertions which the contractors have made to improve their means of meeting these special demands render it improbable that there will be in future a recurrence of delay from ships being in advance of their gun-mountings.

Delays in delivery of guns by the War Office have also affected the completion of some ships.

### Contract Work, 1886-87.

The work on new ships building by contract has been pushed forward with great rapidity, and the sums earned have exceeded those provided in the Estimates for 1886-87.

During the financial year there have been delivered:—

6 torpedo cruisers ("Archer" class).
1 torpedo cruiser ("Fearless").
4 composite gun-boats ("Rattler" class).

Four out of the five belted cruisers have been launched, and the fifth is to be launched on the 10th March. It is anticipated that the first of these vessels will be delivered early in 1887-88, and that all of them will be in the dockyards next summer, and it is hoped that they will all be completed by April, 1888.

The "Renown" and "Sanspareil" are also advancing rapidly. The former is to be launched in April, and the latter in May, 1887, two years from the date of signing the contract.

The "Benbow" has been delivered by the contractors, has made her steam trials, and is now being completed at Chatham.

The six torpedo cruisers of the "Archer" class recently delivered have given some trouble in their preliminary steam-trials, and their completion has consequently been delayed. It is hoped, however, that two of them will be practically completed this financial year, and the others advanced. It may be anticipated that their speed on the measured mile will be 17 knots.

The "Fearless," sister ship to the "Scout," was delayed by a fire at the contractor's premises, otherwise she would have been completed this financial year.

### Torpedo Flotilla.

Passing to the smaller vessels of the torpedo flotilla, the "Rattlesnake" has been delivered and tried, attaining a speed of 19½ knots, the estimated speed being 19 knots. It is probable that by changes in propellers a better performance will be obtained.

This vessel is the first of the "torpedo gun-boat" class. She was practically completed at the works of the contractors, and will speedily be ready for her sea trials, which will furnish very important information.

Now that her machinery trials are over, the other three vessels of the class building in the dockyards will be pushed on.

### Experimental Trials of New Ships, 1886-87.

During 1886-87 the sea trials of two important armoured ships, the "Colossus" and "Impérieuse," have been made. In the "Colossus" very few alterations have been suggested as the result of experience at sea. In the "Impérieuse," and following her, in the "Warspite," it has been decided to abolish the sails, and to depend entirely upon steam-power applied to twin screws.

With the important exception of being more deeply immersed than was anticipated, the "Impérieuse" in her trials fully realized the expectations of her design. Notwithstanding her deep draught, she is now, taking the essentials of speed, armament, and armour into consideration, if not actually the most powerful, one of the most powerful iron-clad cruisers afloat of her tonnage.

Sails have also been removed from the "Neptune" during her present refit, in order to increase her efficiency as a fighting machine.

The protected cruiser "Mersey" has been completed and sent on experimental service to test systems of submarine torpedo discharge. Her steam trials, and those of her sister vessels, "Severn" and "Thames," have shown the class to possess a smooth-water maximum speed of 18 knots.

The first of the torpedo cruiser class, the "Scout," has also been completed and commissioned in 1886-87, as well as the torpedo gun-vessels "Curlew" and "Landrail." Both of these represent new classes in the Navy.

### TRIALS OF TORPEDO-BOATS.

Some interesting trials have been made during 1886-87 with the various types of first-class torpedo-boats 125 feet in length. These trials led to a modification in the form of the bow and in the torpedo armament of twenty-five of the boats. Great exertions have been made to accelerate the completion of the boats, the work on the torpedo fittings being of a novel and delicate nature, and only *twenty* will, it is anticipated, be incomplete in small fittings at the end of March, the torpedo armaments of these being finished.

The 150-feet boat purchased of Mr. White is practically completed, and the 130-feet boat, by Messrs. Yarrow, will be delivered in 1886-87. These examples of larger-dimensioned boats will furnish useful information when tried at sea, as to how far they will comply with the conditions of a sea-going torpedo-boat available for use in all weathers.

### DECISION OF THE BOARD UPON SEA-GOING TORPEDO-VESSELS AND SECOND-CLASS TORPEDO-BOATS.

The Board have carefully considered the types and dimensions of the torpedo-boats, which experience and experiment have shown to be best adapted for sea-service or harbour-defence. The practical tests during recent evolutions imposed upon first-class torpedo-boats, that is, boats intended for open-sea service, and upwards of 100 feet in length, have shown that they could not, in actual warfare, stand the strain of the daily wear and tear to which they might be exposed. The discomfort and hardships which their crews have to endure in rough weather, the loss of speed to which, after steaming a certain number of hours at full pressure, they are subject, owing to the tendency of their necessarily-contracted boiler tubes to choke, disqualify boats of these dimensions from taking the prominent part in warfare in the open sea which their adherents claimed for them. The Board have therefore decided in future to build for sea-going purposes vessels of larger dimensions, capable of acting both on the offensive and defensive in torpedo warfare in the open sea. These vessels to be of the "Rattlesnake" type, capable of maintaining for many hours the initial speed of the ordinary torpedo-boat, armed with quick-firing guns, and another gun of a larger calibre, and affording adequate accommodation and protection to the complement they carry for sea-going purposes.

The Board have decided upon adopting a new type of second-class torpedo-boat, capable of being lifted on board ships of a certain displacement, and which would be carried by the ship for service in the place of the larger or first-class torpedo-boats which now are supposed to accompany a squadron.

The 125-feet torpedo-boats now building or built have, in most instances, been allotted to the defence of the great military ports and coaling stations, where they will remain.

Two improved boats of the second-class have been ordered from Messrs. Yarrow, and are to be completed in a short time.

Important experiments have also been undertaken with a view to determine the most suitable torpedo-armament for boats.

### DEFENCE AGAINST TORPEDOES.

During 1886-87, great attention has been given to the development of defence against torpedo attack. A Committee has been investigating net-defences; several of our battle ships are already fitted with this system of torpedo defence, and further experimental fittings are being tried on the "Hercules" and "Collingwood."

The torpedo experiments on the "Resistance" have also afforded valuable information as to the explosive power of the torpedo.

### ELECTRIC LIGHTING.

Electric lighting, for search-lights and internal illumination, has also been greatly extended. A staff of skilled supervisors and fitters for electrical work has been organized in each dockyard.

### PROGRESS IN SHIPBUILDING IN 1887-88.

The coming financial year will be very remarkable for the great number of ships which will be completed and added to the effective list. It may be anticipated that the following ships will be finished, and passed into the 1st Reserve, as ready for commission:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Armoured ships .. .. .. .. .. .. | 10 |
| 3 of "Admiral" class—"Rodney," "Howe," "Benbow." | |
| "Warspite" | |
| "Hero." | |
| 5 belted cruisers (contract-built) | |
| Protected ships .. .. .. .. .. .. | 2 |
| "Severn." | |
| "Thames." | |
| Torpedo cruisers .. .. .. .. .. .. | 7 |
| 6 of "Archer" class. | |
| "Fearless." | |
| Torpedo gun-boats ("Rattlesnake" class) .. .. .. | 3 |
| Composite sloops & gun-boats ("Buzzard" & "Rattler" classes) | 3 |
| | 25 |

At the end of 1887-88, another armoured ship, the "Camperdown," will be nearly finished, and so will be the protected cruiser "Forth." The "Anson" will be approaching completion.

The belted cruisers "Immortalité" and "Aurora" will be far advanced; the "Trafalgar" and "Nile" will be the great causes of further liability.

The "Renown" and "Sanspareil" are to be delivered, according to contract, in October, 1888, and if no unforeseen hindrances arise, there is good reason to believe this date will be kept.

Out of thirty-seven ships, building or incomplete, at the commencement of 1887-88, it is hoped twenty-six will be complete by the end of the year, leaving only nine out of the programme of 1885, and two other ships not belonging to this programme, to be finished in subsequent years.

### NEW SHIPS TO BE LAID DOWN IN 1887-88.

The new programme of works proposed for 1887-88 includes the following:—

| | |
|---|---|
| 20-knot steel-bottomed protected cruisers, at Chatham .. | 2 |
| 19¾-knot copper-bottomed protected cruisers, 2 by contract and 1 at Portsmouth .. .. .. .. .. | 3 |
| Composite sloop ("Buzzard") .. .. .. .. | 1 |
| Composite gun-boats (improved "Rattlers") .. .. | 6 |
| "Grasshopper" class .. .. .. .. .. | 1 |
| | 13 |

Of the "Rattlers" it need merely be said that they differ from the "Rattler" herself only in having a poop, being about 1 foot broader, and of about 40 tons greater displacement. The steam trials of "Rattler" and "Wasp" have been very satisfactory, speeds of $13\frac{1}{2}$ to $13\frac{3}{4}$ knots having been attained.

The new "Buzzards" are "repeats" of the "Buzzard" now building at Sheerness—speed on the measured mile, 15 knots.

Both the "Rattlers" and "Buzzards" have a fair amount of sail, and coppered bottoms. Rattlers have single screws; Buzzards twin screws.

To the ships included in the above programme should be added the "Daphne," composite sloop of the "Buzzard" class, which, although not forming part of the programme in the Estimates of 1886-87, has been already commenced at Sheerness. The preparations made in 1886-87, though involving small expense, will enable the work to be pushed on rapidly in 1887-88.

### POLICY TO BE PURSUED IN REGARD TO SMALL VESSELS.

These gun-boats and sloops have been laid down to make provision for the relief of small vessels on different stations during the next two years. A careful inquiry into the composition of our squadrons abroad has made clear that too large a proportion of our naval strength is absorbed by small vessels, which, however well adapted for police purposes in time of peace, or for operations in shoal water and rivers in time of war, would be of comparatively little value for the protection of our commerce on the high seas in time of war. I believe that, in course of time, arrangements can be contrived with the Foreign and Colonial Offices by which a limited number of larger and more powerful vessels, moving from place to place on the station, can be made to efficiently perform the work of the more numerous but less movable flotilla now employed. All the vessels now laid down have a speed equal to, if not in excess of, any of their class elsewhere, and will therefore be a match for anything of like displacement which they might encounter, and the new 20-knot protected cruisers about to be commenced will be faster than any ocean war cruisers in the world at present completed, and, consequently, of the highest possible value for the protection of our commerce.

### DESCRIPTION OF 20-KNOT PROTECTED CRUISERS.

The most notable vessels proposed to be laid down in 1887-88 are two 20-knot protected cruisers.

Their dimensions are:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Length .. .. .. .. .. | 265 feet. |
| Breadth .. .. .. .. .. | 41 „ |
| Displacement .. .. .. .. | 2,800 tons. |
| Sped on measured mile, with 400 tons of coal, and fully equipped | 20 knots. |
| Ocean speed .. .. .. .. .. | 17 to 18 „ |
| Radius of action at 10-knot speed .. .. .. | 8,000 „ |

The vessels will have a protective steel-deck extending from stem to stern, and sheltering the boilers, magazines, steering-gear, &c.

Vertical (inverted-cylinder) triple-expansion engines are to be fitted in the steel-bottomed ships, special arrangements of armoured-coamings being built for the protection of that portion of the cylinders.

Above the protective steel-deck the space will be minutely sub-divided, coal-bunkers, coffer-dams, &c., being built as is usual in vessels of the "protected" class.

A double-bottom on the cellular principle, adapted for water-ballast, will be fitted.

The armament will include—

6 6-in. B.L.R. guns on centre-pivot mountings.
9 6-pr. rapid-firing guns.
Machine-guns.
6 Torpedo-tubes (all under cover).

The bow will be strengthened for ramming in the usual manner.

In all respects the vessels will be made suitable for independent sea-service, and for being driven at high speed in rough water.

They will have only fore and aft steadying sails, being dependent upon their steam-power and twin-screws for propulsion.

### THREE COPPER-SHEATHED $19\frac{3}{4}$-KNOT CRUISERS.

It has been decided to vary the design in three of the vessels in the following particulars:—

1. To wood-sheathe and copper the bottoms, so as to make the vessels capable of remaining afloat for long periods without serious fouling and consequent loss of speed.

2. To adopt horizontal engines, placed entirely below the protective deck.

These changes involve an increase in displacement and a slight decrease in maximum speed which are accepted in view of the special services for which the vessels are intended.

In armament, protection, and all other qualities, the conditions are the same in these as in the steel-bottomed ships.

The trials of these vessels will be made under the new regulations, with all weights aboard.

### CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH SPEED TRIALS OF VESSELS ARE CONDUCTED.

The speed and other trials of the ships recently built, together with the working of their engines and hydraulic mountings, have on the whole been satisfactory. In most instances the anticipations of the Constructors have been realized, although difficulties have occurred in some of the earlier trials in obtaining from certain of the engines the speed of the contract. In one important particular there is a discrepancy between the estimate of the original design and its result, which, in the case of the "Impérieuse," and her sister-vessel, the "Warspite," attracted some attention, and which is likely to recur in the case of the belted cruisers, seven in number, the "Warspite," and the armoured vessels of the "Admiral" class.

The following statement, though referring to the belted cruisers alone, is typical of all the vessels whose draught is deeper than was designed; and it will also record the Regulations as to design and trial which the present Board have made. (See Appendix I.)

The designs for the belted cruisers were prepared in 1884, and the sketch design received the final approval of the Board of Admiralty during that year.

It was intended that, with all their legend weights on board, they should have a mean draught of 21 feet, and that 18 inches of the armour belt, which is 5 ft. 6 in. in width, should be above water.

After the designs were approved, tenders for the construction of five vessels were invited. Some of these tenders provided for the substitution of triple expansion engines of 8,500 horse-power in place of the compound engines of 7,500 horse-power originally contemplated, and the advantages of the offer were so manifest that it was decided to adopt this type of engine for all five ships.

To compensate for the increased weight entailed by these engines, and in view of the economy in fuel that would result from their adoption, it was decided to reduce the legend weight of coals to be carried by 60 tons; this placed the legend weight of coals at 440 tons, in place of the 500 tons originally approved.

The extra weight of the engines, of increased complements, and of armament, amounting in all to 186 tons, increased the draught of the ships by 7 inches, placing the top of the belt 11 inches out of the water.

It appears to have been decided, although the bunkers of these ships were constructed to hold 900 tons of coal, that 500 tons (afterwards decreased to 440 tons) should be taken as the amount they were to carry under ordinary conditions —in other words, as their normal supply of fuel.

It was calculated that this amount of coals would carry the ships about 4,500 knots at 10 knots an hour, and with this the Board of Admiralty at that time appear to have been satisfied.

The present Board, however, are of opinion that it is far preferable that ships should carry to sea with them the largest amount of coal they are able to carry.

If the whole of the 900 tons, with the additional weights alluded to, be placed on board, instead of 440 tons, the top of the belt will be, on the ships first going to sea, 6 inches below the water.

Thus, although the position of the belt may have been correctly calculated for the weight of coals it was at the time decided to carry, and which was adopted as their deliberate policy by the then Board of Admiralty, the same is undesirably low if coals to the full stowage (which is the policy of the present Board) are put on board.

Though the policy which placed the position of the belt so low does not commend itself to the present Board, it is right to say that some claim for it certain compensating advantages, their contention being—

(1.) That there would be above the armour belt, running along 140 feet of its length, when the full fuel supply is on board, a coal protection of 6½ feet in height and of 11 to 17 feet in depth.

(2.) That the coal protection would not be disturbed until, by the consumption of coal in the lower bunkers, the ship had lightened, and the armour belt had risen above water.

(3.) That a shot, which during a roll might have struck below the belt, would, in its present lower position, be deflected.

From the only trial under steam which has yet taken place with one of these vessels, there is every reason to believe that the speed for which they were intended will be attained, with the ships fully equipped and the bunkers full.

## LEGEND WEIGHTS.

The principle adopted by successive Boards of Admiralty since 1870 of selecting as their legend weight of coal, in new ships that they proposed to build, an amount considerably less than that which the bunkers were constructed to carry, originated when compound engines began to be used in Her Majesty's ships.

The substitution of improved engines for the older types effected such an economy of fuel in relation to the engine-power developed, that a very much less quantity would carry a ship so fitted the same distance as a ship of identical form and size with the simple engines previously in use.

This seems to have influenced the Admiralty to accept, when designing new ships, as the legend weight of fuel, a quantity which gave as great a radius of action which was possessed by earlier ships, though it was at the same time decided to provide for exceptional conditions by the construction of reserve bunkers.

## EXPLANATION OF DIFFERENCE IN DRAUGHT AND OF NEW REGULATIONS.

The difference, therefore, between the draught of the vessels enumerated, with their coal-bunkers full, and with all weights on board, and that contemplated in their original design, arises from two causes:—

1. Because it had been the practice that only a portion of the coal the vessel is capable of carrying should be on board at the time of her speed-trials. The present Board disapprove of this practice as misleading. The vessel in question ("Impérieuse") was officially stated to be capable of either steaming 2,000 knots at a rate of 17 knots per hour, or 8,000 knots at a lower speed. If all the coal were on board necessary to give the coal endurance for the longer distance, the higher speed could not be attained; if the coal were reduced to allow of the higher speed, the longer distance could not be covered. Directions have been given by which, in future, speed-trials will be for twenty-four hours with all weights aboard, in addition to the present trials of six hours with reduced weights.

2. The other reason for increase of weight is that, at the time the design was passed, sufficient allowance was not made for the number of complement,

weight of guns, machinery, and engines. If fuller consultation had taken place between the designer and the officers responsible for these weights and details before the ship was laid down a more accurate estimate could have been made, and the extra weights afterwards found necessary would have been anticipated. Regulations ensuring this co-operation have now been made, and will be found in Appendix I. attached.

### SUMMARY OF INCREASE TO FLEET, 1886-87 TO 1887-88.

The number of vessels added during 1886-87, and the contemplated increase during 1887-88, are given in the following Table:—

| Cost of Ship or Vessel. | 1886-87. | | 1887-88. | | Total. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number. | Tons.* | Number. | Tons.* | Number. | Tons.* |
| Armoured ships .. .. .. | 3 | 25,690 | 10 | 67,990 | 13 | 93,680 |
| Protected ships .. .. .. | 1 | 3,550 | 2 | 7,100 | 3 | 10,650 |
| Partially protected ships.. .. | 3 | 11,250 | .. | .. | 3 | 11,250 |
| Unprotected ships.. .. .. | 16† | 16,130 | 13 | 14,980 | 29 | 31,110 |
| Total .. .. .. | 23 | 56,620 | 25 | 90,070 | 48 | 146,690 |

This addition to our Fleet is abnormally great; but the Fleet previous to this increase was abnormally weak. Having therefore brought up our naval strength, so far as iron-clads and cruisers are concerned, to what is generally admitted to be requisite, we have next to consider the annual expenditure (for depreciation or wastage) necessary for the maintenance of the Fleet in that state of efficiency.

## VALUE OF FLEET AND ESTIMATE OF ANNUAL EXPENDITURE NECESSARY FOR REPLACEMENT.

The administration of the Navy cannot be satisfactory unless the approximate wastage or depreciation is so ascertained, as to afford reliable data upon which to predicate the extent of shipbuilding requisite in each year to maintain the Fleet at its present authorized strength. The advantages of such a knowledge, and of basing a continuous naval policy thereon, are manifest.

One obstacle to securing economical results from the dockyards has been the spasmodic action in regard to the extent of new work. The Controller of the Navy, as a great employer of labour, has, in consequence, been unable satisfactorily to regulate the employment of men and the distribution of work to the different trades. If the extent of tonnage to be laid down at each yard from year to year were known with any degree of accuracy, the necessary men of the several trades connected with shipbuilding could be employed, and the vessels could be commenced, in such rotation, and at such intervals, as would permit the men of a certain trade to move from ship to ship, as their particular description of work was completed.

The Table in the Appendix to the Navy Estimates which gives the cost and date of completion of each vessel affords a basis upon which to calculate the approximate annual percentage of depreciation on the value of the Fleet arising from decay or supersession, the latter being a most important factor.

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* Load displacement.

† Includes "Hearty" (1,300 tons), "Jackal" (750 tons), and "Bann" (250 tons).

It must be kept clearly in mind that this Table is drawn up so as to indicate the year of COMPLETION of each ship, and her cost is placed under that year, and is not distributed under the years in which the expenditure, as it progressed, was provided. This arrangement is necessary for the purpose of arriving at a proper conclusion, because a vessel cannot, as a rule, be regarded as subject to depreciation until she is complete for service. In calculating the depreciation, and the period for which it ought to be charged, regard must also be had to the value remaining in the vessel after the expiry of the given number of years of her probable life. Whenever a vessel is sold, her realized value should, therefore, be credited to Navy Votes in aid of new construction, in order to carry out the principle here advocated.

Subject to the foregoing considerations, the following is a reasonable scale upon which to fix the annual depreciation for the different classes of vessels which form the Fleet, and to provide the minimum sum which should be invested annually in the production of new tonnage, viz.:—

1. On armoured, protected, and partially-protected iron or steel vessels, for twenty-two years from date of completion, 4 per cent.
2. On corvettes, sloops, torpedo-cruisers, gun-vessels, gun-boats, troop-ships, and other vessels, for fifteen years, 6 per cent.
3. On torpedo-boats, steam launches, &c., for eleven years, 9 per cent.
4. On small vessels, tugs, and yard craft, for eighteen years, 5 per cent.
5. On guard, receiving, training, and harbour vessels, for twenty-two years, 4 per cent.

An element in determining the amount upon which depreciation ought to be calculated is the normal standard of strength at which the Navy is to be maintained. The leading feature adopted in the following Table is the special programme decided upon by Lord Northbrook in 1884, as sanctioned by Parliament, and his ordinary programme for the year 1885-86. These were framed on the proposition that the Navy was then much below the requisite strength, having regard to the protection of British interests. Therefore, in ascertaining the capital cost of the Fleet on the 31st March, 1887, all the vessels completing, which were commenced by Lord Northbrook, are regarded, *so far as depreciation for replacement is concerned*, as if finished on that day. The "Nile" and "Trafalgar" are, however, excluded, as their completion is somewhat remote, and the expenditure upon them may be viewed as a part of the ordinary charges for shipbuilding required in subsequent years. These propositions appear the more reasonable as no new vessels were laid down in 1886-87, thus assisting more clearly to draw a line between expenditure to make up prior deficiencies, and that necessary to maintain the agreed standard of efficiency.

Following the foregoing line of argument, and applying it to the cost of the Fleet, the following approximate results are obtained:—

| | | £ | £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Armoured, protected, and partially protected iron or steel ships— | | | |
| At present on strength of the Navy, at first cost .. | | 19,417,000 | |
| Add cost of new ships not yet completed— | | | |
| Expenditure to March 31, 1887 (probable actual) .. | | 6,240,000 | |
| Remaining to complete (estimated) .. .. | | 2,248,000 | |
| Total .. .. .. .. | | 27,905,000 | |
| Deduct— | £ | | |
| Cost of ships completed prior to 1865-66 | 378,000 | | |
| *Estimated value of gun-mountings, &c., included in above figures .. .. | 1,300,000 | | |
| | | 1,678,000 | |
| Net total capital cost of armoured, &c., ships necessary to maintain the Fleet at normal strength .. .. | | 26,227,000 | |
| Proposed annual depreciation for replacement, say at 4 per cent. per annum on £26,227,000 .. .. | | .. | 1,049,000 |
| 2. Corvettes, sloops, torpedo-cruisers, gun-vessels, gun-boats, troop-ships, and other vessels— | | | |
| At present on strength of the Navy, at first cost .. | | 7,386,000 | |
| Add cost of new ships not yet completed— | | | |
| Expenditure to March 31, 1887 (probable actual) .. | | 587,000 | |
| Remaining to complete (estimated) .. .. | | 443,000 | |
| Total .. .. .. .. | | 8,416,000 | |
| Deduct— | £ | | |
| Cost of ships completed prior to 1872-73 .. | 1,572,000 | | |
| *Estimated value of gun-mountings, &c., included in above figures .. .. | 200,000 | | |
| | | 1,772,000 | |
| Net total capital cost of corvettes, &c., necessary to maintain the Fleet at its authorized strength .. | | 6,644,000 | |
| Proposed annual depreciation for replacement, say at 6 per cent. per annum on £6,644,000 .. .. .. | | .. | 399,000 |
| 3. Torpedo boats, steam launches, &c.— | | | |
| At present on strength of Navy, at estimated first cost .. | | 1,500,000 | |

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* Gun-mountings, &c., are excluded from the above calculations, as provision has only of late years been taken for the greater part of them in the Navy Estimates, and is voted separately. If the cost is in future included in the cost of the ship, depreciation should be calculated thereon at the same rate as on the ship.

| | £ | £ |
|---|---|---|
| Proposed annual depreciation for replacement, say at 9 per cent. per annum on £1,500,000 .. .. .. | .. | 135,000 |
| 4. Small vessels, dockyard tugs, tanks, &c.— | | |
| At present in the Service, at first cost .. .. | 448,000 | |
| *Deduct* cost of vessels completed prior to 1869-70 .. | 202,000 | |
| Net total capital cost of small vessels, tugs, &c., necessary to be maintained .. .. .. .. | 246,000 | |
| Proposed annual depreciation for replacement, say at 5 per annum on £246,000 .. .. .. .. | .. | 12,000 |
| 5. Receiving, training, guard, and harbour ships, &c.— | | |
| At present in the Service, at first cost .. .. .. | 3,270,000 | |
| *Deduct* cost of vessels built prior to 1865-66 .. .. | 2,963,000 | |
| Net total capital cost of vessels built since 1865-66 .. | 307,000 | |
| Proposed annual depreciation for replacement, say at 4 per cent. per annum on £307,000 .. .. .. | .. | 12,000 |
| 6. First cost of ships completed since the commencement of the periods referred to for the several classes, which are at present laid up as obsolete, or for sale,* also of ships completed within those periods (excluding the older types of armour-clads of wooden construction), which have been sold, lost, or otherwise disposed of .. .. .. | 4,359,000 | |
| Proposed annual depreciation for replacement as if these ships still formed part of the strength of the Navy, say at an average of 4½ per cent. per annum on £4,359,000 .. | .. | 196,000 |
| GRAND TOTAL (ANNUAL DEPRECIATION FOR REPLACEMENT BY NEW CONSTRUCTION) .. .. | .. | 1,803,000 |

That this estimate of £1,803,000 as the minimum amount of new construction (exclusive of gun-mounting and special fittings) required to meet the annual depreciation or wastage of the Navy is fair and reasonable is confirmed by an examination of the data given in the Appendix before referred to.

The aggregate expenditure on vessels added to the Navy from 1865-66, and upon those now in course of construction in completion of Lord Northbrook's programme, on which £1,186,000 remains to be expended, is £39,119,100, or an average of £1,778,000 per annum expended on new construction. This is exclusive of the cost of gun-mountings, &c., and of all expenditure upon the "Nile" and "Trafalgar," which, although included in Lord Northbrook's programme, have, for reasons already explained, been omitted from the preceding calculations.

In many of the years preceding the adoption of Lord Northbrook's special programme in 1884, the rate of construction was much below this average; consequently, provision to meet these deficits has mainly fallen upon the Estimates of the three succeeding years.†

The Estimates for 1887-88 include the sum of £997,000 to be expended on account of the special programme undertaken, as already stated, to place the Fleet in a normal condition of strength, leaving a balance to be met in future years of £217,000. These sums will be thrown upon the taxpayer in excess of the amounts they would have been called upon to bear had previous Administrations provided year by year all that was needed. The contemplated expenditure upon new vessels (including the "Nile" and "Trafalgar," but excluding £396,000 for gun-mountings, &c.), beyond the sum of £997,000, amounts to £1,665,000, or £138,000 less than the annual requirement to meet wastage, as already explained.

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* Of the vessels built during the period of this Return, a number have already been sold, lost, or laid aside as obsolete, not being worth the cost of alteration to suit modern requirements in regard to speed, armament, &c. In order, however, that the Depreciation Fund may be adequate to maintain the normal strength of the Navy, the amounts expended on construction of such vessel must also carry a depreciation for the period set out in these Tables, even if, owing to exceptional circumstances, the vessels have been prematurely removed from the list.

† See page 5.

Considerations such as these prompted me last year to propose in Parliament that a certain portion of this exceptional expenditure should be converted into a terminable annuity, and spread over a period of years to afford some immediate relief to the taxpayer. The suggestion was not favourably received, the arguments directed against it being that during peace the income of each individual year must bear its own burden of expenditure. If this contention be sound, that no year is to be relieved of any portion of the expenditure properly debited against it, then Parliament, by enactment or otherwise, should insure the reverse of that proposition, that no year is to escape its fair annual share of the depreciation fund necessary to keep our Navy efficient. If this depreciation and wastage fund be fixed at the figure which, on the most careful analysis, is found to be by actuarial calculation necessary, and legally forms part of the annual charge upon the Exchequer, it would not be possible, hereafter, for the national capital invested in war ships to be deliberately reduced by a misappropriation or abandonment of the annual expenditure necessary to replenish it. A continuous and economical and efficient shipbuilding policy would be possible, and the waste and discredit, occasioned by periodical scares, would be avoided.

## DOCKYARD ADMINISTRATION.

The alterations commenced in 1885 for the purpose of securing a more efficient management and control over the employment of labour and the appropriation of material in the yards have worked well, and have more than justified the anticipations formed of their ultimate utility. The appointment of a Director of Dockyards has strengthened from an executive, and that of an Inspector of Yard Accounts from a financial point of view, the control of the Admiralty over dockyard business and expenditure. Simultaneously with the creation of these offices, a system of improved local management has been inaugurated, whereby the Admiral Superintendents have been furnished with competent professional assistance in the management of the Dockyards. Arrangements have been made by which the professional officers are enabled to obtain rapidly, and, if necessary, direct from the contractors, the supplies they may require, and they will be made responsible for proper check and account of the outlay incurred under their superintendence. An improved and more accurate form of estimating repairs has been instituted, facilitating a detailed check over this class of expenditure. Substantial savings have been made in this annual outlay. Steps have been taken whereby the incidental expenditure, at one time forming almost a third of the outlay of the yards, will be regulated and classified; numerous obsolete but expensive Returns have been abolished, and an inquiry into the number of the clerical staff and those employed in writing duties has been instituted, which should lead to a considerable reduction of the present establishment. In the meantime, I have given directions that no vacancies in the Admiralty and dockyard clerical staffs should be filled, as there is reason to believe both are redundant.

In the course of these inquiries it has been made clear that the number of workmen in the various yards are in excess of the work to be performed. The Board have therefore commenced to bring down the establishments to the necessary level; it is, however, satisfactory to know that though the number of employés has diminished, the output of work per man has increased, and the demand for, and consumption of, material used in proportion to the men employed, is on the increase.

### COST OF REPAIRS OF SHIPS.

A considerable proportion of dockyard expenditure is absorbed in the periodical repairs of vessels in commission. A close scrutiny of the list of defects sent in by officers commanding ships, and forwarded for sanction to the Admiralty, showed that a certain amount of the work proposed to be done in the dockyards might have been performed by the carpenters and artificers forming part of the complement of the ship. In other cases, sufficient care had not been exercised in criticizing the list of defects before being sent to the Admiral Superintendent. The attention of officers has been directed to this practice by a Circular dealing specially with this subject, and which will be found in Appendix II.

### YARD ESTABLISHMENTS.

At the close of the financial year 1887-88 the liabilities outstanding on new construction will be small compared to those of recent years. Careful prevision will, therefore, be necessary as regards the programme of work for 1888-89 and subsequent years, and arrangements will be made to utilize, as far as is possible, the existing dockyard establishment, though the cessation of the building of armoured and protected vessels of large displacement will necessitate some ultimate reductions. Provision in the present Estimates is made for fifty-three instead of fifty-two weekly payments to all employés in receipt of weekly wages, as within the 366 days of the financial year such a number of weekly payments become due.

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## NEW WORKS, &c.

Upon the average annual sums hitherto expended for the maintenance and extension of the buildings, basins, and graving docks of the home and foreign dockyards, a considerable reduction has been effected this year, the object of the Board being to secure the thorough utilization of all existing buildings before giving their sanction to an enlargement of the present accommodation.

### GRAVING DOCKS ABROAD.

The policy of subsidizing Companies to build docks abroad capable of taking in and repairing men-of-war of large dimensions has been favoured of late years by successive Boards of Admiralty, and considerable sums have in this manner been spent in past years. The dock at Esquimalt, thus assisted, will this year be open and ready for use; at Hong Kong the final instalment for a similar purpose will this year be paid; and at Halifax arrangements have been made by which it is hoped like advantages will hereafter accrue, on the completion of the dock.

The multiplication of graving docks in colonial territory in different parts of the world will greatly advantage the ships of the Navy, as it facilitates the execution of repairs and cleaning, which, if undone, might incapacitate a man-of-war from active service.

The conditions under which Government assistance towards the construction of docks is given is that, when constructed, payment shall only be made for services of work rendered.

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## NAVAL ORDNANCE.

There is a large increase in that portion of the Estimates taken by the Army for the supply of Naval Ordnance for 1887-88. This is attributable to a necessary provision of ammunition for quick-firing guns, the amount being £313,429 as against £42,150* in the approved Estimate of 1886-87. This increase is mainly due to the provision of ammunition for quick-firing guns being reduced in last year's Estimates. By the postponement of this liability from last year the Navy has been compelled to make inconvenient demands this year upon Army Estimates, it being impossible to allow a large number of guns provided to be useless for want of ammunition; a large increase in the expenditure upon Naval Ordnance, and a consequent advance in the requirements of the Navy have, in the last two years, taken place, and the naval armaments of this country now compare very favourably with those of foreign countries. Until 1880 the muzzle-loaders of the British Navy were about equal in accuracy and penetration to breech-loading guns of foreign nations. Since then the development of slow-burning powder has necessitated the production of a breech-loader different in shape from, and far superior in the high velocity it imparts to the old breech-loader. The only breech-loaders in the British Service, with the exception of a few 40 and 20-prs., are of the most modern type; the great bulk of the breech-loaders in foreign Service are of the older type, and fairly comparable to the old muzzle-loader of similar calibre.

The Table attached shows the yearly increase since 1886 in modern breech-loaders and quick-firing guns, and torpedoes available for service:—

| Date. | B.L. Guns. | 6-pr. Q.F.G. | 3-pr. Q.F.G. | Torpedoes. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| April, 1886 .. .. | 711 | .. | .. | 1,224 |
| ,, 1887 .. .. | 1,019 | 315 | 298 | 1,514 |
| ,, 1888 .. .. | 1,281 | 342 | 448 | 1,818 |

The question of transferring the cost of providing naval armaments from Army to Navy Votes has occupied the serious attention of both Departments during the past year. A Committee of the officers of both Departments carefully considered the bases of a transfer. Every information and assistance was given to the Admiralty by the War Office with the object of facilitating such a change. So extensive a transfer involving the annual expenditure of upwards of a million and a-half of money ought not, in our opinion, to be made until the machinery for the administration and control of this outlay are so perfected at the Admiralty as to enable the assumption of this responsibility to be discharged without effect and without increased charge. To place one Government Department towards another in the relation of purchaser and manufacturer is no easy matter. The proportion of establishment charges to be added to the cost of labour and material on different articles of manufacture varied from 10 to 40 per cent., according to the class of work performed. Any mistake in fixing prices between Woolwich and the Admiralty would affect all contract work done elsewhere, as Woolwich prices regulate the price of gun manufacture in this country. Further difficulties also arose in reference to the storage, issue, and testing of the stores proposed to be transferred. For these reasons we pressed upon the War Office the desirability of postponing the proposed change, until sufficient time had been afforded for the full consideration of the many complex details involved in this question.

## PERSONNEL OF THE NAVY.

The reports of the efficiency of officers and men are satisfactory. The number of Courts-martial has diminished, whilst the amounts deposited and number of depositors in savings-banks have increased. The health and physique of the men have improved. By the Return of the wastage of men (blue-jackets, 19,000 in number), we find during the last four years a continuous decrease in the annual waste:—

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* A further sum of £100,000 for this service has been taken in the Supplementary Army Estimates, 1886-87.

| | |
|---|---|
| 1882-83 .. .. .. .. .. | 2,446 |
| 1883-84 .. .. .. .. .. | 2,368 |
| 1884-85 .. .. .. .. .. | 2,062 |
| 1885-86 .. .. .. .. .. | 1,942 |

This diminished waste has upset the previously-accepted calculations, by which provision, through the entry of a certain number of boys, in the training-ships, is made to keep the number of seamen up to the authorized strength. There is a certain excess over that number, but steps have been taken to reduce the number of boys entered for training.

The Navy now seems to be a very popular Service. A high standard and restrictions on number of entries have been imposed to prevent an undue influx of boys, but the competition is, notwithstanding, considerable. It is worthy of note that, simultaneously with the growing popularity of the Navy with parents as a career for their sons, there is a dread of dismissal from the Service which previously did not exist. Mutilations and misconduct not unfrequently in the past were deliberately adopted for the purpose of insuring dismissal, whereas the present tendency is in the opposite direction.

During the last ten years, owing to the multiplication of engines and machinery in ships, a large increase has taken place in the artificer, engine-room, and stoker complements. Comparing the year 1876 with 1886, it will be found that the combatant class has decreased, so that the proportion of non-combatants to combatants is much larger than before:—

| | 1876. | 1886. | Difference. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Officers, executive .. | 2,300 | 2,120 | — | 180 |
| „ non-executive | 1,955 | 1,718 | — | 237 |
| Warrant officers .. | 903 | 952 | + | 49 |
| Blue-jackets .. | 19,586 | 18,667 | — | 919 |
| Artificers* .. .. | 2,420 | 2,569 | + | 149 |
| Engine-room staff .. | 4,279 | 6,983 | + | 2,704 |
| Others † .. .. | 4,474 | 5,269 | + | 795 |

Steps have, therefore, been taken to have all stokers trained to the use of arms, the same reward being held out to them to become trained men as had been given to seamen and marines; arrangements have also been made to substitute marines for the civilian butchers, barbers, and lamp-trimmers now afloat; this will entail an increase of marines corresponding to the number of men they replace.

## EDUCATION OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS.

The Report of the Committee on Education has been considered, but not accepted in its entirety. The age for entry in the "Britannia" has been advanced six months, and in a year's time will be advanced six months more.

A Council of Education has been instituted to consider certain questions connected with this subject, and to recommend necessary alterations from time to time. It is intended to revise the seamanship examination, to bring it in accordance with the requirements of the present day, and to lay more stress on the acquirement of a knowledge of steam machinery, and of French and other modern languages. The education and training of a young officer lasts from his entrance into the "Britannia" to his passing out of the College at Greenwich, an interval on the average of about seven and a-half years. During a large proportion of that time he is afloat, discharging responsible duties. The desire of the Board has been to insure, as far as is possible, continuity of instruction and training during the whole of this period, so that at no time it may be necessary for an officer to relearn that which he had acquired and forgotten.

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* In 1876 blue-jacket class included 500 masters-at-arms and ships' corporals, now included among "Others."

† Masters-at-arms, ships' corporals, stewards and cooks, writers, sick-berth staff, &c.

An improved curriculum of study and practical work has been passed for the Engineer Students at Portsmouth and Devonport.

### NAVAL RESERVES.

The Regulations both for officers and men of the Royal Naval Reserve have been revised and consolidated. Provision has been made for bringing the Royal Naval Reserve into closer association with the Service by allowing officers and men to volunteer for service in the Navy, either in sea-going ships or for a course of instruction in the Gunnery and Torpedo Schools. The officers who undergo a year's training in a sea-going ship are to receive, while they remain on the Active List, an annual retaining fee of £20 to £25 a-year. Both officers and men are showing readiness to avail themselves of these opportunities, and in order to facilitate their doing so, it has been arranged that the Sub-Lieutenants, Royal Naval Reserve, who are of a certain age, shall, in order to enable them to mess with officers of similar age, be granted the temporary rank of Acting Lieutenant.

An important alteration in the Regulations has been introduced, by which men can, in time of emergency, be allowed to volunteer for service without being called out by Royal Proclamation.

The enrolment of stokers for the Royal Naval Reserve has not hitherto proved so successful as was anticipated, but this was owing, probably, to insufficient advertisement of the new scheme.

Some alteration in the Regulations, combined with a fuller knowledge of the advantages held out, will, it is believed, lead to a great increase in the number of firemen coming forward to enter the Reserve, especially under the stimulating influence of the arrangements recently made with the White Star and Cunard Companies.

## DEVELOPMENT OF INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT.

Although many of the component and complementary parts of the Navy are in themselves satisfactory, it has long been felt by naval men of experience and foresight that in the event of war, unless an improved system of co-operation and preparation were devised, the nation would not obtain, in the earlier stages of such a contest, the full advantage of its great naval resources. This opinion was confirmed by the experience of 1885. Confidential reports of what then occurred proved that our power of naval mobilization was most defective. A rapid concentration of strength, and an immediate and effective use of the force thus brought together, have in recent years decided within a few weeks of the outbreak of war the ultimate issue of that war.

Important as it may be for a great military nation to be thoroughly prepared for possible contingencies, the necessity for thorough preparation is even more incumbent upon a Power that is supreme at sea.

A mobilization of land forces is local and territorial in its operation; the mobilization of naval resources must be concentrated at a few naval arsenals capable of fitting out and commissioning the ships of which they are the complement. A great Naval Power has no frontier; the limits of its operations are confined by the ocean alone, and the plan of campaign or of operations which it may have to carry out would differ in every quarter of the globe, according to the strength and geographical position of the enemy against which it was contending. On land, the plan of campaign or strategy to be adopted is regulated by the physical conditions of the country, which do not change, and by the fighting strength of a population, which does not shift. All well-organized Military Powers have derived infinite advantages from a properly-constituted Intelligence Department; but the need, as I have shown, for such an organization, is greater for naval than military purposes. This country has the largest fleet afloat, yet hitherto it had no central organization by which that fleet could be thoroughly utilized in emergency.

The Board therefore determined to enlarge and extend the functions of the late Foreign Intelligence Committee, and place it upon a basis equal to the work which in future it will be required to perform.

During the short period it has been in existence it has done good work. The Reserve and other subsidiary forces have been territorially mapped out, and each district has been assigned to one of the three great naval arsenals in the country. Much work, necessarily of a confidential character, has also been done, and although the continuance of such a Department will entail a certain increase of expenditure, there is no outlay connected with the Naval Votes which the nation or the Navy could less afford to dispense with than that which will enable the full strength of our naval resources to be put forth in as short a time as possible, and will give prompt and efficient co-operation to all the component parts of a Navy stationed in the necessary performance of its duty in all quarters of the globe.

The Intelligence Department will be under the personal superintendence and control of the First Naval Lord, but all questions will be referred to the other Naval Lords, which relate to, or affect the Departments for which they are respectively responsible.

The Naval Lords will meet periodically to discuss and review what has been done, thus making themselves acquainted with the nature and extent of the enlarged duties, which, in an emergency, they and the Departments they administer would have at once to undertake.

## UTILIZATION OF AUXILIARY RESOURCES.

The inquiries, which an Intelligence Department must needs make, brought before the Board in forcible contrast the great disproportion between the volume of floating commerce of the Empire to be protected and the force at present available to protect it, compared with the mercantile and war marine of foreign nations. To bring the British Navy and commerce into the same relative proportion as that which exists elsewhere in Europe is neither needed nor practicable. To carry out a plan which, at the approach of war, would immediately convert our fastest and most powerful merchant vessels into effective war-cruisers, and thus turn the assailed into assailants, seemed a natural solution of the difficulty; but there were various obstacles to its realization. The cost of retainers, the difficulty of providing crews and stokers, the delay in the alterations necessary, the contingency that when wanted the vessel might be at the other end of the world—these difficulties in combination deterred previous Boards from making the experiment.

The enormous sums spent in taking up vessels in 1885, many of which never left harbour, and the long delay in getting the guns and fittings into the "Oregon," the only vessel thoroughly equipped of all those hired, impressed upon my Colleagues and myself the duty of taking some action in the matter. Exceptional speed and strength are the only desiderata of a mercantile cruiser. It occurred to us that the Post Office expenditure might be utilized, and that if we worked in combination, postal contracts could be associated with conditions by which the use of the vessels carrying the mails might under certain contingencies be economically secured to the State. The revision of the North American contract was a most favourable opportunity for a trial of the idea. The White Star Company, one of the tenderers, had, in August last, expressed their willingness to build two vessels to be approved by the Admiralty, of a speed and strength superior to any merchant-ship afloat, with engines and boilers below water, with fittings for guns built in during construction, and, when manned, with half crews of Naval Reserve men.

In return for their use, the Company requested an annual subsidy which would recoup the owners a portion of the larger outlay the exceptional construction of the vessels required.

The Cunard Company, another of the tenderers, has the fastest English ships afloat. A large portion of the officers and men in the employ of the Cunard Company are Naval Reserve men. Their ships are never more than eight days distant from Liverpool, and, therefore, always obtainable at short notice.

The Admiralty, after full consultation with the Treasury and Post Office, commenced negotiations with these two Companies.

They were influenced greatly by this consideration, that merchant-vessels, when armed, to be really serviceable, should have exceptional speed and coal capacity, enabling them to overhaul the weak and to escape from the strong.

Such exceptional speed entails a primary cost in engines and boilers, and a consumption in coal that renders the remunerative employment of the vessel very difficult. Only a few of the richest and best-conducted passenger Lines can afford to build such vessels, and the profits derived from their employment in recent years has been small.

Unless some inducement is given by the English Government to continue the building of such vessels, they must diminish in number, whereas abroad, by subsidies, their construction is directly encouraged. It is neither to the credit of the country, nor for the advantage of our Marine, that vessels of this class should mostly be under foreign flags.

The arrangement made with the two Companies differs in detail, but is the same in principle.

By the payment of an annual subsidy, reduced one-fourth so long as the mail contract lasts, the Government obtain from the Cunard Company the use of the "Aurania," "Etruria," and "Umbria," in time of emergency at a price fixed both as regards hire or sale. The necessary platforms and fittings for carrying guns are to be put in at once; the crews of the ships to be half Naval Reserve men; the owner to take charge of the gun-mountings required. Under this arrangement, it is believed that within a week all three vessels could be fitted, armed, stored, and manned as armed cruisers. The use, at fixed prices, of the remainder of the Fleet, if required, was a secondary condition of the contract.

With the White Star the arrangement was practically the same, except that no payment was to be made till the two new ships to be built were ready for sea.

By this arrangement the Admiralty have obtained, at a moderate annual cost, the use for five years of the three fastest steamers afloat, and two even faster, when constructed.

Negotiations with the Australian Colonies have for some time past been carried on, which, though not concluded, will, we hope, result in those countries contributing towards an extension of the Imperial Navy, and maintaining, as an integral part of the Fleet, an Australian Squadron, in addition to the force which has hitherto been stationed in those waters.

## CONCLUSION.

The past year has been one of unusual activity. Many of the changes and reforms I have enumerated have been prompted and carried through by the personal interest taken in them by individual members of the Board. The Heads of the Departments have heartily co-operated with the Board in their endeavours to place naval administration on a more business-like and efficient footing.

What has been done makes apparent how much still remains to be effected before the condition and organization of our Navy can be said to be thoroughly satisfactory. The completion of the large iron-clads and cruisers mentioned before renders that portion of our Fleet more efficient, but by contrast makes still more apparent the obsolete and unserviceable condition of the great majority of our gun-boats and sloops.

The very improvements that recent changes have made show how large a field for reform there still remains in parts of our naval system which have not yet been touched.

GEORGE HAMILTON.

*February* 28, 1887.

## APPENDIX I.

### PROCEDURE TO BE OBSERVED WITH REGARD TO THE PREPARATION OF DESIGNS OF HER MAJESTY'S SHIPS.

1. CASES having recently been brought to the notice of my Lords in which the immersion of a ship when complete for sea will be seriously and prejudicially affected by reason of introduction during construction of additions and alterations to the hull, machinery, complement, armament, &c., the procedure hereafter defined is to be strictly observed.

2. When a design for a ship is required, the Controller will furnish the Board with a general idea of the class of vessel required.

3. The Controller will, after conferring with the First Naval Lord, and obtaining his written approval as to the speed, armament, complement, and sail power, if any, instruct the Director of Naval Construction to prepare a sketch design for consideration embodying such features as may have been decided upon by the First Naval Lord and the Controller.

4. The Director of Naval Construction, after conferring with and obtaining the opinion in writing of the Director of Naval Ordnance and the Engineer-in-Chief as to the armament and machinery respectively, is to prepare a sketch which shall be submitted to the Controller, who will bring the same before the Board.

5. If the sketch design is generally approved by the Board, orders will be given by the Controller that the design is to be worked out in detail, or modified with a view to its ultimate adoption. (The sketch design will be prepared in accordance with the following Board Minute of the 21st September, 1886, relating to load draught).

6. The Director of Naval Construction will, in consultation with the Director of Naval Ordnance, and the Engineer-in-Chief, complete the design, and submit it, with a full and careful description of the expected qualities and capabilities of the ship, for the concurrence of the Controller, by whom it will be sent to the Secretary for circulation to the several members of the Board, before being considered at a Board meeting.

After a design has been approved by the Board, and has received the Board stamp, not any alteration or addition either in hull, machinery, armament, complement of men, boats, or stores, or other details, shall be permitted without the concurrence of the Board.

7. The Controller shall be responsible that not any deviation from the designs approved by the Board shall take place which would in any way affect the immersion of the ship when completed for service.—(Board Minute, 15th February, 1887.)

### REVISED METHOD OF CALCULATING LOAD DRAUGHT OF SHIPS.

The load draught of a ship is to be regarded as the draught at which she will float when laden with her full complement of sea stores, water, provisions, ammunition, coals, &c.

The whole quantity of coals that may be decided to be necessary for all sea-going and fighting requirements, whether carried in the bunkers or in the form of coal protection, is to be included in the full complement at the load draught, and the particulars of a design as described in the ordinary legend form, or in any other manner, are always to be given for the load draught as thus defined.

The full speed of a ship is to be estimated or obtained at measured mile, at the same draught, and the full speed at sea is to be determined by the average speed that can be maintained over a continuous run of four days at sea when the vessel is laden at her load draught at starting.

The legend forms that are used for stating these particulars should be corrected so as to distinctly indicate that they apply to the fully-laden condition of a ship.—(Board Minute, 21st September, 1886.)

## APPENDIX II.

### DEFECTS OF SHIPS IN COMMISSION.

*Admiralty, S.W., February* 5, 1887.

Sir,

NUMEROUS instances having been recently brought to the notice of my Lords in which officers in command of Her Majesty's ships have sent to the Dockyards lists of defects to be made good which contained items of work that could and should have been undertaken by artificers of the ships; as well as proposals for alterations of a nature which, while not adding to efficiency, would fritter away money which might be more profitably applied, my Lords direct the attention of Commanding Officers to Article 1220, p. 392, of the Queen's Regulations, and impress upon them the necessity of a cessation of these practices, tending as they do to the performance of unnecessary work in the Dockyards which ought to be devoted to maintaining and strengthening the fighting efficiency of the Fleet.

2. Having thus pointedly called attention to the matter, my Lords expect that Commanding Officers will realize the paramount importance of the ships under their command being kept as free from defects and ready for service as the means on board will permit, requisitioning from the Dockyard only for such repairs as are undoubtedly beyond their own resources.

3. Attention is also called to the fact of ships' books having been supplied to Captains to inform them of the previous history of their ships, thus enabling them to watch and influence, as far as possible, expenditure on repairs.

4. Any failure or neglect to comply with these directions will not be viewed with indifference by their Lordships, and will influence their decision as to the merits of officers and their fitness for the command of Her Majesty's ships.

I am,
Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
EVAN MACGREGOR.

To the Commander-in-Chief
on the Station.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

—o—

### SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

### SHIPS OF WAR (DESIGNS).

#### MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

**MR. GOURLEY** (Sunderland), in rising to move the following Resolution which stood in his name on the Paper:—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the designs upon which ships of war are now being built, and how far they are in harmony with the transition in Naval construction and tactics, and also the necessity for an organized system of harbour and coast defence,"

said, that on several occasions requests had been made for the appointment of a Committee upon the ship-building policy of the Admiralty. Lord Brassey, when in that House, had asked first for a Royal Commission, and subsequently for a Committee. Other Members had done the same thing, but the Government of the day had always refused. Three grounds had been put forward for their refusal—in the first place, that it would be impossible to find enough Members who would be able to deal with a subject so difficult; secondly, that such a Committee would delay Admiralty work; and, in the third place, that it would remove the responsibility from the proper shoulders. Now, he denied that the first of these objections applied at the present time, when there was a larger number of Naval officers, Artillery officers, and Engineer officers in the House than ever before; and also Members engaged in every kind of iron manufacture and shipbuilding—men who had built ironclads themselves. As to the second objection, would such a Committee, he asked, have delayed the progress of vessels like the *Inflexible*, which took eight years to build, and cost some hundreds of thousands of pounds more than the estimate; the *Polyphemus*, which took seven years to build; or the *Colossus*, which all last year lay in the waters of the Solent, a monument of Admiralty folly in regard to her guns? If there were a Royal Commission or a Committee of this House to inquire into the policy of the Admiralty, it would not, he was confident, delay progress with regard to those large types of vessels or any other type; but, on the contrary, promote efficiency and progress. In answer to the third objection, about removing responsibility from the officers connected with the Admiralty, he was bound to say that at the present moment, though there was every kind of official at the Admiralty, it was extremely difficult to fix responsibility when anything went wrong; in his opinion, all responsibility should attach to the First Lord. The objections hitherto raised by the Admiralty against his proposal, therefore, held no longer, as the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Government could easily find a sufficient number of hon. and gallant Members quite fit to deal with all the technical problems involved in designing and completing ships of war. The report of Lord Dufferin's Committee, appointed 12 or 13 years ago, after the capsizing of the *Captain*, was the only detailed Report the House possessed with regard to our designs of ships, with the exception of the Memorandum issued the other day by the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton). That Committee—which, by the way, was a Departmental Committee appointed to inquire into the line of policy pursued by the Admiralty itself—in other words, appointed by the Admiralty to sit in judgment on the Admiralty—considered that the *Devastation* was the strongest type of iron-clad then afloat; and is even yet—subject to slight additions to her bow armour—considered by experts to be the strongest type of iron-clad yet designed. But the question he would now like to ask was this—how far the policy recommended by Lord Dufferin's Committee with regard to iron-clad armour had been carried out by the Admiralty? Now, it appeared from the Report of the noble Lord that in the case of the *Warspite* and the belted cruisers, instead of the armour being, as recommended by Lord Dufferin's Committee—and endorsed by Parliament two years ago—18 inches the water, it was actually (although designed to be 18 inches above the water) found, on completion of the ships with their complement of coal on board, six inches below the water. If there was nothing more than that against the designers of the Admiralty, he contended that he had made out a case for a Committee. What must be the consequence if these vessels went into action? The consequence must be that they would be in a worse plight than if they had been built without armour at all. What applied to the *Warspite* and to the belted cruisers applied also to the *Admiral* class. These vessels were built on the citadel principle, a large part of the vessel fore and aft being entirely without armour. He could not help thinking that the millions of money expended on those ships had been spent on the wrong type of vessel altogether. If he was correct in his information, Herr Krupp had already invented a gun which could throw a shell five miles, and designed for the very purpose of destroying, if possible, these unarmoured iron-clads. The shell which would be thrown from the gun carried a very heavy charge of powder, and, being fitted with a sensitive fuse, was certain to be very destructive. He thought that, in regard to the differences of opinion regarding the *Devastation* and the *Admiral* class of ships, a case had been made out for inquiry; and he did not think that any hon. Member would hold the opinion that vessels of this class could now be considered fit for ocean fighting. They must be kept within the range of their coal supply. Only fancy a squadron of these vessels having to proceed to New York; how could they reach that side of the Atlantic on an emergency, seeing that they only carry four or five days' fuel? Why, they would have to be conveyed with huge colliers or become targets for swift belted cruisers, provided with speed, coal endurance, and long-range Krupp shell guns. Another type of ship to which Lord Dufferin's Committee referred was the *Vanguard* class, which was too weak in the lower structure. The Committee recommended that the lower structure of vessels of this class should be strengthened. What happened subsequently proved the correctness of the statement of the Committee, because the *Vanguard* was shortly afterwards sunk. Another type of vessels regarding which Lord Dufferin's Committee made inquiry was the *Inconstant* class, built for the purpose of cruising. But these vessels were built for ocean cruising; yet, strange to say, without any coal endurance, and the Committee recommended that in future that type of ship should be smaller, and constructed with more power, with large heavy guns, and efficient coal endurance. How did the Admiralty rectify the defects which were pointed out in regard to the *Inconstant* class? They built two ships, the *Iris* and the *Mercury*, to steam 18 knots; but what was the result when they were completed? During the progress of the Egyptian war, the Peninsular and Oriental Company's fleet beat the *Iris*, which was engaged as a despatch vessel, by between 12 and 24 hours, and this at a time when the *Iris* was conveying Lord Wolseley on an emergency for the purpose of taking the command of the Army of the Nile; the truth being that these vessels cannot steam more than 14 knots in place of 18 as originally intended. The Board of Admiralty intended to build a number of quick vessels to steam 19 and 20 knots. Judging from past experience, he feared that when these vessels were completed they would find that the Admiralty had made mistakes with regard to these new vessels similar to those which they had made in the past in regard to other types of ships. Seeing that the Admiralty made such grievous mistakes between the inception of their designs and the completion of them, how could they expect the House to have confidence in the present system; he had no confidence in the present system; and, therefore, he asked for the appointment of a Committee, not for the purpose of thwarting the work of the Admiralty, but for the purpose of assisting and enabling it to come to right and proper conclusions with regard to the designs which they were preparing for the defence of the Empire. He also wished to know who was responsible for the defects which were said to exist with regard to the *Agamemnon* and the *Ajax*? Who was responsible for the present condition of our Channel Squadron? He believed that on the last occasion on which the Channel Squadron was manœuvred at sea, it was not possible to manœuvre it at more than six miles an hour. In the face of an efficient enemy, the squadron would have but a poor chance of escaping without injury at such a miserable speed as that. Without in any way depreciating our Navy, he believed that, owing to the numerous defects in our naval administration with respect to ships and designs, in the event of war, our chance of success would have to rest mainly, if not entirely, on the bravery, ingenuity, and pluck of our seamen. The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty and his practical coadjutor (Lord Charles Beresford), believed in grouping and in organization. He maintained that if they grouped the ships of all classes and all types, and exercised them in the game of war, there would be a much better chance of discovering the defects than by sending them on such cruises as was at present the practice. The Admiralty had a splendid opportunity of doing this at the present moment. They had the Channel Squadron at Gibraltar, and the Mediterranean Squadron in the Mediterranean. In his judgment, it would be a wise policy if the Admiralty enabled both squadrons to come together, in order to test both men and ships by exercising them in the game of war--a policy about to be illustrated by the French in a sham attack upon Gibraltar. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Motion which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the designs upon which ships of war are now being built, and how far they are in harmony with the transition in Naval construction and tactics, and also the necessity for an organized system of harbour and coast defence,"—(*Mr. Gourley*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) said, his hon. Friend the Member for Sunderland (Mr. Gourley) had made a most interesting speech with regard to the vessels of the Fleet. He (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) did not intend to follow him at any great length; but he would shortly state to the House why he did not think it wise at the present moment to follow the advice of his hon. Friend and appoint a Committee to investigate the matters to which he had referred. If the hon. Member had moved for a Royal Commission to inquire into the subject there would have been a great deal more to be said for it at the proper time. A Committee of that House would not at all be a good tribunal to enter into a subject of that kind. It would be altogether wanting in that technical knowledge which was so important, and he did not think its conclusions would carry weight with the country on a subject of such importance. But the question was whether the present was a good time for appointing such a Royal Commission. Nearly all the large vessels now building in the Royal Dockyards had reached a point of their construction when it was almost impossible to make alterations in them, and therefore such an inquiry could not have an effect on their construction. As to the vessels now proposed to be laid down in the programme contained in the Memorandum of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), there was no iron-clads and no vessels of a very large type. It was proposed to lay down five protected cruisers to steam at a rate of 20 knots. With regard to those cruiser vessels there would be no dispute generally that they would be very useful vessels, and, therefore, they might leave it to the constructors of the Admiralty to construct them. But if it had been intended to lay down any large vessels or iron-clads and protected vessels he should have suggested that there should be a Committee of Inquiry appointed—not a Committee of that House, but one similar to Lord Dufferin's Committee. Such a Committee of Designs—always on the supposition that it was intended to lay down any new iron-clads—would be very useful and would be very advisable before laying down any such vessels of a large type. Last year he had recommended the appointment of a Committee on two vessels, the *Nile* and the *Trafalgar*, which had not then reached a point at which it was impossible to make an alteration in their design; and he had thought it was desirable that a Committee having technical knowledge and the highest skill should examine and report on the designs of the vessels which ought to be built of that type. He (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) desired to point out that they were to cost no less than £1,000,000 each—if not more—and he said that he had every reason to disbelieve that their designs were disapproved both by the then Constructor and the late Constructor of the Admiralty, and that all the Constructor's staff had expressed doubts, if not disapproval, of the design of those two vessels. The late and the present Chief Constructor had joined in a Report to the Admiralty, stating that those vessels should not be built of that design, and that a Committee such as he suggested should be appointed to consider what the designs should be. Mr. Hibbert—late Secretary of the Admiralty—told him that there was no such Report as he had adverted to existing at the Admiralty, and the noble Lord who followed would not admit that any such Report existed. But since the debate on that occasion there had been a good deal of correspondence in the newspapers on the matter; and there appeared in one of them a Report purporting to be signed by Sir Nathaniel Barnaby and Mr. White on the subject, and as it was not contradicted he must suppose it was the Report he had referred to. How that Report got into the newspapers he knew not. Sir Nathaniel Barnaby, whom he had lately seen, assured him that he had sent no such Report to the newspapers, and for himself he could only suppose that Reports of that kind got into the newspapers in the same way as the noble Lord stated the other day was the case of another Report—namely, through the waste-paper basket, because that seems to be the channel through which communications were made from the Admiralty to the newspapers. Whether that was the origin of this Report reaching the newspapers he knew not. But the Report was an extremely interesting one, and having been made public and not being denied by the Admiralty, he thought he was justified in referring to it. Sir Nathaniel Barnaby and Mr. White began by saying—

> "Before any new first-class armour-clads are ordered it is desirable to appoint a new Committee on designs, of which the construction should resemble the Committee of 1871;"

and they ended with a very remarkable paragraph to the effect that—

> "Should their Lordships decide to order the two vessels to be built we would suggest that the plans be signed by the Chief Constructors who have prepared them and marked by order of the Board."

They declined altogether the responsibility for those two vessels. He (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) asked whether there had ever been such a thing before in the history of the Admiralty as that two such vessels of such costly construction should have been decided upon by the Admiralty against the advice of their Naval Constructor. That Constructor altogether repudiated the responsibility. It would seem that that last paragraph had been acted upon, because in this year's Estimates a list of ships building was given, and it was stated that these vessels were not designed by the Chief Constructors, whether late or present, but by Mr. Barnes and Mr. Morgan; but he understood that both these gentlemen repudiated having given any approval of the designs, and that they merely obeyed orders in designing vessels. Shortly after the appearance of that Report, there also appeared a letter by Sir Nathaniel Barnaby in *The Times* stating at great length his reasons for objecting to those vessels, and in the course of that letter he said—

> "I should wish it to be understood that I think these two vessels to be badly conceived as designs, and therefore wasteful of money. I believe, moreover, that if there had been an inquiry by a good Committee these ships would not have been undertaken."

It was a most serious matter that the money of the country should be spent on two vessels of such costly construction against the advice of men like Sir Nathaniel Barnaby and Mr. White. The question, however, which he wished to raise now was not whether those gentlemen were right or wrong. It was quite clear that there was a difference of opinion on the subject in the Admiralty. If he might judge from the dates of the various letters and documents to which he had referred as having appeared in the newspapers, it would appear that those two vessels were ordered by the noble Lord the present First Lord of the Admiralty and his Board within a very few days of coming into Office in 1885. He had always thought the present First Lord of the Admiralty was remarkable for quickness and intelligence on questions of an official kind; but, quick and intelligent as he might be, he could not within a very few days master the highly technical subject of ship-building to an extent that would justify him in giving his own approval to vessels of that size and type against the advice of his own Naval Constructor, and therefore he must presume that the noble Lord had acted on the advice of his First Naval Lord, who it was known was the officer who gave his sanction to those two vessels. For all that he knew the First Naval Lord might be right and the Chief Constructor wrong. But he said that where a great controversy of that kind had arisen in the Department between the naval authorities on the one hand and one of the highest scientific authorities on the other, it ought not to be decided offhand and at short notice without giving the House an opportunity of expressing an opinion upon it; but it should be referred to a Committee comprising the highest intellect of the country, which should consider and determine what was to be done in the case. He brought this question last year under the notice of the House; but, unfortunately, he was not then able to make use of the Report which he had now read to the House. On the former occasion he could only give a very vague statement in reference to it. He must say he thought the noble Lord assumed a very grave responsibility in withdrawing that document from the Admiralty and not treating it as an official document. It would appear that the noble Lord had treated it not as an official document but as a private one, and had withdrawn it from the cognizance of the Admiralty and his Successors. When he (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) brought this subject forward last year, the discussion took place on the night when it was announced that there was to be a Dissolution of Parliament. He was not then able to carry the House with him; but it was his conviction that if he had been able to read the Report to the House it would have been impossible for the House to refuse a Committee of Inquiry such as he suggested. In the meantime great progress had been made with these two vessels. He was informed that more than one-fourth, and nearly one-third, of the whole cost had been already undertaken in material and labour, and that it would be impossible now to alter the designs without losing all the expenditure already incurred. Consequently he was not prepared to re-open the question to the extent of asking for a Committee of Inquiry into these vessels; but he did hope that if the noble Lord contemplated, between now and next year, recommending the construction of other large vessels, he would permit the question of design to be referred to a Committee of Design similar to that which was presided over by Lord Dufferin. He desired now to advert to the remarks made by his hon. Friend the Member for Sunderland with reference to the *Warspite* and the *Impérieuse*. The designer of those vessels said it was never intended that they should have a coal-carrying power of more than 500 tons. It was true that bunkers were constructed for 900 tons, as in some circumstances it was desirable that they should carry a larger quantity of coal. The reason for this was, he believed, stated by his right hon. Friend (Mr., now Sir George, Trevelyan), who described those vessels in moving the Estimates five or six years ago. His right hon. Friend stated that they were only to have a coal-carrying capacity of 500 tons; and he believed the real reason for that was that French iron-clads of the same size had no greater coal-carrying capacity.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham) said, the most novel and interesting feature in the statement laid before them by the First Lord of the Admiralty was that which had reference to the depreciation fund——

MR. SPEAKER said, he must remind the hon. Member that the specific Amendment before the House related to the designs of ships. The hon. Member was not at liberty to go beyond that.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN said, in that case he would defer his remarks.

SIR EDWARD REED (Cardiff) said, he had no expectation, nor had he any desire, to see the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Sunderland (Mr. Gourley) carried, although he believed that one of the most beneficial things which could happen to this country in respect of its Navy would be the appointment of a Select Committee of the House; and he believed that such a Committee would do more good on behalf of the country and of the Navy than half-a-dozen Royal Commissions. And more than that, he believed that the condition of the Navy would never be thoroughly understood, and the interests of the Navy never be thoroughly protected, until a Committee of the House had sat and inquired, in the closest and most searching manner, into some of the facts which the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord

George Hamilton) had so frankly placed before the House. He thought, also, he might perhaps be allowed to say that they ought not to altogether lose sight of the public service rendered by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) in taking the step which had brought about the publication of the Paper which the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty had placed in their hands. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington had done good, not only in causing such a Paper to be produced, but also because, apparently, some of the spirit animating him in making the suggestion had been infused into the document itself. He (Sir Edward Reed) remembered that on the last occasion he had an opportunity of speaking on the Estimates the right hon. Gentleman the present Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) fancied that he discerned something of a Party character in his observations. He, however, claimed never to have spoken in a Party sense on the Navy of the country. He thought the subject was vastly too important to be dealt with in that way. And the House would find that his observations on the present occasion would not be of a Party character, as he intended to speak very plainly as to some of the transactions of the Liberal Government in regard to the Navy. It was only due to the present Board of Admiralty to say that in the short time it had been in existence the Members had taken general steps which, he believed, in the end would have the result of converting the Navy from an amateur force, played with by politicians, into a Public Service, existing and operating on behalf of the country. He was not satisfied, sitting on that Bench, with the part the Liberals had taken as a Party with regard to the Navy of the country; and he could hardly imagine what his right hon. Friend (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had in view when he on an occasion like the present—which he (Sir Edward Reed) considered to be of the most serious character—made the kind of speech the right hon. Gentleman had just delivered. The right hon. Gentleman brought as an accusation against the Government that they did not allow a Committee to sit upon the designs of the *Nile* and the *Trafalgar* because Sir Nathaniel Barnaby and Mr. White had opposed those designs. His right hon. Friend passed very lightly over the fact that gentlemen at the Admiralty—every whit as competent as those two gentlemen—had designed those two vessels, and he also passed very lightly over the fact that when those two gentlemen objected to the designs they gave the very strongest possible inducement to the Admiralty to go on with the vessels, because their own designs had been for years past a series of disgraceful failures, to the serious injury of the country. What sort of a state of things had they presented to them in that statement of the noble Lord? He felt rather strongly on the question of the belted cruisers, which had been referred to by the hon. Member for Sunderland. It was due, he believed, to his own action that those cruisers were built—seven of them had been built—and now they were told that they had been so designed and so built that when the coal supply was on board and they were equipped for sea they would either have no armour at all above the water line, or, when they had it, in an infinitesimal degree. Indeed, the noble Lord told them that when they had a proper cargo on board the armour would be six inches below the water. It was very meritorious on the part of the noble Lord to have said that; but he could not accept the explanation of the fact which was given. He would illustrate what had happened by relating what had occurred with regard to two other vessels—the *Warspite* and the *Impérieuse.* When those vessels were first projected Lord Northbrook desired Mr. Trevelyan—then Secretary to the Admiralty—to ask him (Sir Edward Reed) to go and look at the designs. He went and looked at them, and found, to his amazement, that they were intended to be fast armour-belted cruisers for service in the most distant seas, and that, instead of having a coal supply adapted to the objects for which they were to be called into existence, they had a coal supply of about half that which any and every other iron-clad vessel in the Navy possessed. One was inclined to distrust his eyes and his senses when he read that those armour-belted vessels were destined for distant seas and were of 8,000 horse-power, yet only were supplied with 500 tons of coal. He found, however, that the designers of those vessels had adopted an ingenious, though, at the same time, a disingenuous, device for assigning to each of these vessels an additional supply of coals. They provided some more holds in which a further supply of coals could be placed. The position was this—That a ship with a capacity for carrying only 500 tons of coal was given a nominal supply of 900 tons. Mr. Trevelyan—when he was Secretary to the Navy—came down to that House and stated that the coal supply of each of these vessels was 900 tons. That was to say, he gave the merely nominal or fictitious coal supply, and he stated that in a manner so as to lead to the belief that the speed of the ship and other peculiarities of her build would not be interfered with in consequence of this nominal coal supply. The House of Commons was quite deceived by the statement, and afterwards he (Sir Edward Reed) remembered an hon. Member speaking to him in the Dinner Room with regard to the matter. He said—"Did you ever hear of a vessel working up to 8,000 horse-power having only 900 tons of coal on board?" But he (Sir Edward Reed) replied—"But what will you think when you find that the 900 tons of coal are a fictitious estimate of what each vessel is to carry, and that she will not carry more than 500 tons of coal at her designed draught?" Afterwards he had something to say to Mr. Trevelyan on the subject, and what passed between them was not very pleasant. He informed Mr. Trevelyan that the Controller of the Navy should not have allowed the building of two such useless ships as the *Impérieuse* and the *Warspite.* Those who designed them were competent to design a good as well as a bad ship, and both the vessels ought to have been made efficient, which they were not. Those two ships were built at a cost of £1,250,000 of public money, and Mr. Trevelyan should have known, Lord Northbrook ought to have known, and the Controller of the Navy must have known, that those ships would fail, as they had failed. The noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) who now presided over the Admiralty had explained the serious failure of both vessels in the frankest and most honourable manner. There could be no doubt whatever that £1,250,000 of the public money had been deliberately and knowingly wasted. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) said that they could not make much saving on the Navy—that naval economy was a difficult thing to bring about. He said there were no means of saving money. First, he said there was the *personnel* which had to be kept up; there were the pay and the half-pay and the pension list, and, sure enough, they had enough of those who depended upon the Admiralty. It was a list long enough to almost justify the remark of a great and eloquent Member of that House—the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright)—that one of the Services, at least, afforded a system of out-door relief for the aristocracy. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer went on to say that they could not save upon the material of the Navy, because one Government began the building of ships and another completed them. Men who spoke like that were ignorant of the economies possible in the Navy, and ignorant of that economy which the country wanted to see adopted. What he (Sir Edward Reed) should have liked to have seen was the £1,250,000 which was wasted upon the *Impérieuse* and the *Warspite,* and upon other cruisers, saved to the nation, and five useful vessels built instead of seven that were of no use to the country. For these seven new belted cruisers were simply traps in which to take officers and men to destruction, and traps in which to destroy the reputation and power of this country. Indeed, it would have been vastly better for the Navy if those cruisers, the *Impérieuse* and the *Warspite,* and the other useless belted cruisers, had never been constructed, when they could not perform efficient service. The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty had, no doubt, made out the best case that he could for the Department over which he presided, and even went so far as to indulge in apologetic remarks in regard to the *Impérieuse* and the *Warspite.* He also stated, after describing frankly enough the condition of the vessels, that while some authorities disapproved of the belted cruisers, yet others claimed a certain compensation for them, because they had a coal protection of 6½ feet. But this was an argument which would not stand examination. He might just as well say that a floating water-tank of thin iron would keep afloat longer if filled with coal. The fact was, it would sink all the sooner. But this was, unfortunately, the sort of logic to which the Naval Service of the country was committed. The Government had been warned that some of these vessels would, if constructed, prove failures; but they had gone on with their construction after reasonable warning. Both vessels had proved signal failures, and the country had lost the money invested in them. But he could not understand the line taken by his right hon. Friend the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), when he attacked the only two ships being built that the Navy, and some people not in the Navy, were said to approve of, and this was the first time that difference of opinion had not existed on such a subject for several years. Well, it was the duty of hon. Members, no matter on what side of the House they sat, to consider, in dealing with the construction of vessels for the Navy, only the honour and well-being of the State. Led on by high officials, the Government had built vessels of the *Admiral* type against his (Sir Edward Reed's) protest, and the protest of others, from the first, and they were in the same condition as to the cruisers of which he had been speaking. The hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney) had been making a great speech in another part of the country, in which he denied that there had been any decay of public spirit in this country. For his (Sir Edward Reed's) part, he thought that if there had not been an alarming decay of public spirit, those responsible for these failures, including the then First Lord of the Admiralty, would be brought to the bar of the House as, under the guidance of these gentlemen, the country had been brought into an exposed and dangerous condition, and had been paying for a Navy which it had not got. The First Lord of the Admiralty held out no hope that the defects of the ships would be remedied. He would like to ask the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty, did he intend to put British seamen into such ships as he had been describing? If he did so, it was certain that they must meet with disaster. The least that the Admiralty ought to do was to take the armour off these vessels, so that they might become, at any rate, as efficient as unarmoured ships. Better still, perhaps, they might cut them in two, and lengthen them 50 feet or more. The noble Lord had said that a particular course was now pursued in designing vessels; and he (Sir Edward Reed) had always said that one of the great secrets of the failure of ships built for the Navy was that a great deal too much was placed upon the shoulders of the designer. That was the impression he formed when he was at the Admiralty himself. The Controller should receive from the Board instructions as to the qualities and construction of the vessels he was to design. But they had had Constructors who initiated things out of their own heads, and with the bad and unfortunate results which they had all seen. The Constructor, having designed his ship in his own fashion, generally found that it had to be altered, and this increased the expense and caused inefficiency; and in this matter he (Sir Edward Reed) thought that Parliament should assert its authority over the Admiralty. He should like to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty, whether he was not going to do something to remedy the disastrous and dangerous condition of the belted cruisers? There was one question which, when he put it to the noble Lord, always caused him to get angry and excited in a peculiar degree. He generally got up and explained that what he (Sir Edward Reed) stated was true, but did not seem to see that there was anything bad in it. There had lately been a great scandal, and they had heard a great deal about Mr. Young Terry, who had sold some designs and tracings to some other State. But the Director of Naval Construction was connected with a private ship-building firm, and would remain so for a year or so to come, and that firm could point to Foreign Governments and say that the Chief Constructor of the British Navy belonged to their firm, and that he was in possession of the latest information as to the construction of vessels in the British Navy. The noble Lord said that he appointed Mr. White under these circumstances, because he was a most useful and valuable man. But he would tell the House why Mr. White was appointed. When the Conservative Government came into Office, in 1885, Sir Nathaniel Barnaby was told plainly that many of his recent vessels were most objectionable, and Sir Nathaniel Barnaby being then in very indifferent health, and very much harassed—and not unnaturally—with many things which had occurred, retired, from ill-health, upon his pension. Then the noble Lord asked Sir Nathaniel Barnaby who was the best person to succeed him?

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): The statement is utterly devoid of a word of truth.

Sir EDWARD REED said, he thought he must challenge the noble Lord on this point. Would he say that he did not confer with Sir Nathaniel Barnaby about the appointment of his successor?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Not until after he was appointed.

Sir EDWARD REED said, that almost made the matter worse. At any rate, there had been great discussion as to the ships designed by Sir Nathaniel Barnaby. There was an uprising in the Navy against these ships, and a resolve that they would have no more of them. There had been only one man in the country to apologize for these ships in *The Times*, and that was Mr. White; so, while the Naval Lords were declaring in one room that they would not have such ships as Sir Nathaniel Barnaby designed; the noble Lord in another room was appointing the only apologist for these ships the Director of Naval Construction. He (Sir Edward Reed) had not a word to say against the professional competence of either Sir Nathaniel Barnaby or Mr. White, but both of them were off the rails in this matter. They persisted in designs which raised distrust in the Naval Service, and signally failed to command the confidence of the Navy; and so long as the principal constructing officer in the Navy was the private adviser of a private firm, he would not have the confidence of any member of the Naval Service, either in the House or elsewhere. He had said just now that a great scandal had been created by someone at Chatham Dockyard having sold some drawings; but he believed that anyone could have bought the designs of Her Majesty's latest ships for a few pounds for years past. Certainly this could have been done with respect to all the ships built by contract, because, when the Admiralty wanted ships, they invited tenders from private firms, who sent their draughtsmen to study the designs and specifications. Any impecunious draughtsman might obtain a knowledge of them, and in this way the designs of Her Majesty's ships had come into the hands of men who had no interest in the Naval Service, but were merely draughtsmen in the City of London. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood) had on one or two occasions claimed credit for having put a stop, in a large degree, to the extravagant expenditure in many of Her Majesty's Dockyards upon the completion of ships. But he (Sir Edward Reed) thought he was right in saying that there did not exist at the present moment a complete specification of all the work to be done upon any ship in Her Majesty's Navy. What happened was this—that ships were built very often by contract, and then sent to a Dockyard to be finished, or sometimes even built in one Dockyard and then sent to another to be completed. They were sometimes sent to Yards where they lay for days and weeks without anyone in the Dockyard knowing what they were to be done with or what work was to be done upon them. When the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) was at the Admiralty he saw that this state of things was not satisfactory, and thereupon he came down to the House and proposed that there should be a Director of Dockyards appointed to the Navy, with civil assistants under him at the Dockyards for purely Dockyard purposes. That was to say, they were to be employed in seeing that the work was done and that no waste was incurred in the money voted. Well, a few weeks ago he (Sir Edward Reed) went to Devonport Dockyard, where he saw three ships of the *Archer* class—the *Archer* herself and two built by a private firm on the Clyde. He looked at the *Archer*, and inquired what ship she was, and he was told that they were all the same class of ships. But when he looked at the *Archer* she seemed to be altogether different from the other two, and then he discovered that very much of the upper part of the *Archer*, built on the Clyde, had been pulled down and then built up again at the Dockyard. To such an extent had this been done that he did not know that the *Archer* was, or could be, a ship like the others. Thousands of pounds were being expended in this way upon her. And then he discovered that the other two ships were to undergo the same transformation. That was to say:—Here we are in 1887 paying one set of workmen on the Clyde to build ships up, and then we are paying a set of workmen at Devonport to pull them down. Then he asked where the civil assistant to the superintendent was—the superintendent's elbow adviser, to whom we were to look to see that these things were not done and to save waste? Well, he was told that this gentleman had not been at the Dockyard for weeks, and that he was not likely to be there for weeks to come, for he was away on the Clyde, seeing the ships building there, and finding out what was to be done to them when they came to the Dockyard. The Government certainly ought not to ask for that gentleman's salary in the present year, for it was obtained previously on false pretences, for the performance of necessary duties which he had left undone in consequence of his services being otherwise employed. There was gross inefficiency at the Admiralty Office. Surely before the Government asked that House for money they ought to know what ships they were going to produce. There ought to be a complete description of what was to be produced given to the contractor who was to build the ship and to the Dockyard which was to furnish it. When the proper Vote in Committee came on for discussion, he should ask for some assistance on this head. He should want to know what the Admiralty were now doing to prevent money being spent and wasted in the constant and expensive alteration of ships, and whether they were yet able to describe the ships they wanted? The present Board of Admiralty undertook on entering Office to make a great reform. They said—"We will separate the designing from the building department;" and he (Sir Edward Reed) approved the idea as one likely to make Dockyard building more economical. When he was at the Admiralty he could design a ship, and then could go to the Dockyard and alter it about as much as he pleased. Other Constructors would do the same, and in that way large sums of money were spent which might be saved if the ship were in the first instance designed as she was to be built, and that design were adhered to. The Conservatives promised to put an end to that state of things; but they had not carried the work out, for it was quite inconsistent with any good plan that a Dockyard official should be going about to do work on the Clyde, or that while the work of the Admiralty Constructors was neglected they themselves should be attending launches and making speeches there, and doing other things of the same kind. He (Sir Edward Reed) was losing all heart in this matter. He never felt so disheartened as he did to know that, although he had a seat in that House and had some knowledge of this question, his remonstrances and arguments were all in vain, and, in spite of the promises that were made by successive Governments, he was still obliged to witness the wholesale waste of public money that was going on. It was not satisfactory to know that the first change was due to the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington. Why was it left to that noble Lord to initiate economy? The noble Lord did not, as he understood his speeches, mean to attack necessary expenditure. But the fact was that the noble Lord knew the things which were going on, and which he (Sir Edward Reed) had then indicated. He (Sir Edward Reed) believed that when the noble Lord made the speech to which he had referred he knew that this extravagance was going on, and that the time had come when a stop must and should be put to it. He hoped that in the course of the evening they would have some opinion from the Government on this point. At present it seemed as if, after spending £1,250,000 on the *Impérieuse* and the *Warspite*, and a larger sum on the belted cruisers, we were almost as badly off as we were before.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. FORWOOD) (Lancashire, Ormskirk) said, he thought that many of the reflections of the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed) upon the mode in which the business had been done at the Admiralty were just. These reflections, he believed, arose from circumstances similar to those pointed out by the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Gourley) in reference to defective designs. No one would gainsay the importance of the question raised by the hon. Member for Sunderland, nor would anyone deny the propriety of bringing before the House the system under which our ships of war were designed. He did not intend, even if he were prepared, to defend the design of each and every vessel that had been adopted by the Admiralty. Mistakes had, no doubt, been made, and would continue to be made, in those designs; but when constructing fighting machines that had to be worked under so many and such varying conditions of service, he thought they were yet a long way off making a perfect fighting ship. When he used the term "mistakes," he did not impute blame to anyone, or mean that the errors were errors that should have been apparent to the designers. They were not errors by the light of the information that the designers had at the time that they designed the ships. Experience and use daily developed alterations and changes in the type of vessel required. He could not do better than quote from the Report of the Committee of 1871—Lord Dufferin's Committee, viz. :—

> "A perfect ship of war is a desideratum which has never yet been attained, and is now further than ever removed from our reach. Any near approach to perfection in one direction inevitably brings with it disadvantages in another."

As he understood the object of the hon. Member, it was not so much to raise questions as to the suitability of this or that vessel, but rather to consider whether the principles on which designs were prepared and adopted by the Admiralty were such as to enable the country to obtain the best form of battle ship. Naturally those who supported the formation of a Committee on Designs illustrated their arguments by reference to failures in vessels that had been constructed. But, to his mind, the real question to be determined was, not whether certain failures had occurred under the existing system, but whether, under any other arrangement, we should obtain, on the whole, a more serviceable Navy than the one we at present possessed. He believed that the general system adopted in regard to approving and designing of vessels by the Admiralty was good if worked out on plain, proper, sensible business lines. No doubt, in theory, a "Committee on Designs" sounded most attractive; but in practice he was inclined to believe that it would be found, not only unworkable, but prejudicial. What was required in a vessel, especially in a fighting vessel, was a homogeneous design. The scantlings, dimensions, displacement, power, armament, should all proceed upon one common basis. This uniformity could best be secured by intrusting the work to one competent and responsible designer. In no science was there greater room for differences of opinion than that of the naval architect, and two experts were but seldom found to agree on any one point. Therefore, if a Committee of experts was called together, and that Committee was composed of men of strong minds, the probability was that each would have some special point in construction to which he attached importance; that he would force his particular hobby upon his colleagues, with the result that a patchwork ship would be designed, one that could not possibly fulfil in a satisfactory manner any one requirement. A design prepared under such a Committee would be no one man's production. There would be no individual responsible, and if it did not succeed there would be no one to whom blame could be personally attached. In his judgment the Admiralty system of preparing and approving designs was, as he had said, if conducted on business lines, a more satisfactory form of Committee with individual responsibility than could be devised by any plan of a Committee. No Navy in the world required such a variety of type of vessels as did England. In addition to the necessity of maintaining a powerful fighting fleet, provision had to be made for the naval police of the globe, and for a fleet to protect our extending and ever growing commerce. We required ships for deep sea service, for river service, and vessels that would keep the sea for a lengthened period without loss of speed, or the necessity of being frequently placed in dry dock. The depository of all this knowledge was the Admiralty. The information daily gained from the officers in command of our numerous stations was alone in the possession of the officials of the Admiralty. They alone were able to watch the performances of each and every type of cruiser, and by the vast experience thus gained they were in the best position to know their faults and defects, and to guard against similar errors in new vessels. The Admiralty possessed, in addition, a full knowledge of the progress of naval construction of all other nations. This, combined with their own experience, placed the Department in a position that could not be attained by any Committee of experts composed of gentlemen not daily in touch with the naval operations. The Admiralty had a highly trained Constructive Department, presided over by a gentleman who had attained European note as a designer of war ships. It was at the earnest request of the noble Lord now at the head of the Admiralty that Mr. White was induced to leave the Elswick Works and place his services at the disposal of the Government. When objection was raised last year to Mr. White continuing to act as consulting engineer for a certain period to the Elswick Works he determined to cease his connection with them, and in September such connection terminated. During the period after Mr. White had left Elswick and come to the Admiralty, he believed that gentleman had never once been consulted by the Elswick firm as to work which they had had in hand; but it would not have been possible for the Admiralty to obtain his valuable services had not the First Lord allowed him to be consulting adviser to that firm for a short period. With regard to the general question, he had already stated that in his opinion the machinery and system of the Admiralty for providing efficient war vessels was good. He had qualified that statement by the stipulation that it must be carried out in a businesslike way, and he was bound to admit that this had not always been the case in times gone by. The Construction Department had brought forward designs and vessels had been ordered without the designs being properly referred to the officers responsible for the manning, arming, and machinery of the vessels. The Chief Constructor had stated on his designs his views on these matters, and had estimated the displacement of his vessel for a certain weight of armament and engines, and an estimated complement of crew. These conditions had not always been examined by the officers best acquainted with these details. Proposals had thus been accepted without being properly examined. Subsequently, from time to time after the vessel's construction had commenced, serious alterations had been made in these important details, adding largely to the weight to be carried by the vessel beyond her original design. Vessels had also been kept an undue length of time under construction, and, as improvements developed in naval appliances, alterations and additions had been made to such ships incompatible with the ideas of those who designed them. In illustration of this absence of procedure on business lines, to which the mistakes were almost entirely due, he might cite one or two examples from vessels included in the Estimates now before the House. The *Mersey*, for instance, was designed and partly constructed to be a flush-decked ship to carry 14 6-inch guns, four on her spar deck, and 10 on her between-decks. When, however, the vessel was completely framed, a change of idea had come over the Admiralty, and they had altered her from a flush-deck ship to a vessel with a poop and forecastle, and a deep open waist. Her armament was altered by placing one heavy 8-inch gun on board in lieu of two of the 6-inch guns. Her sea-going trim was quite altered, and the increased cost for completing this vessel had been £50,000. It had not infrequently happened that the Admiralty had allowed a ship to be commenced before they had finally determined the armament. The *Benbow* was an example of this. Her designer had proposed that she should carry two 63-ton guns in each of two barbettes; the Admiralty, instead of determining whether this armament was proper or not, contracted for the vessel at separate prices for the hull and barbettes, so that if they changed their mind as to the armament, they could more readily arrange with the builders the cost of such change; but the most important factor in the whole matter was overlooked—namely, that the lines of the hull were drawn to carry at a given displacement, and the question whether the vessel could carry at that displacement depended largely upon the weight of the armament to be put on board. What was the result? After the work on the ship had gone on for some time, there was no 63-ton gun ready, but there was a 110-ton gun completed which the Admiralty thought might be very well suited for the *Benbow*. Consequently, instead of the two barbettes being armed each with two 63-ton guns, it was determined to place 110-ton guns in each of the barbettes, rendering necessary serious alterations in the size of the barbettes. They also increased her armament by four 6-inch guns and 12 six-pounders; so that by the time the Admiralty had made up their mind as to the armament of this vessel, she was called upon to carry something like 500 tons of extra dead weight, or equal to one foot extra displacement beyond that at which she was originally designed to float. In a similar way, 250 tons had been added to the weight of the belted cruisers now building beyond their designed capacity. Allusion had been made to the ridiculously small coal capacity of the *Impérieuse* and the *Warspite;* but since these ships were designed, 430 tons of extra armament, machinery, and other things had been added to the weight after the lines of the hull had been determined upon. He gave these facts in order to bear out his contention that whatever fault there might be in connection with the designs of ships under construction, the blame did not lie with the system under which ships were designed, but was due to a want of business aptitude in giving effect to that system. When every effort was made to minimize weights in the ship, and the designer worked to the nearest ton, the importance of what he had stated would be realized. These matters had engaged the attention of the present Board of Admiralty from the day they came into Office, as the Report laid before the House by the First Lord would show. The policy laid down by his noble Friend at the head of the Admiralty and his Board, was to require that before a vessel was commenced there should be obtained in writing from the Director of Naval Ordnance and Engineer-in-Chief their opinion on the armament and machinery proposed. Then, after the design had been considered by the Controller, and before going to the Board collectively, a paper should be sent to members individually, so as to give them an opportunity of criticising and considering the design before the order was given for the vessel. As the Board included a number of most distinguished and experienced naval officers, he was satisfied that those designs would be closely and sharply criticized from the Naval point of view, as they ought to be; and the faults and defects which he had endeavoured to point out would be remedied by those gentlemen in the course of the careful examination they would give to the designs. Once passed by the Board, the order was most precise that no alteration or addition was to be allowed. When thus approved in every detail the designer could prepare the lines of the vessel, knowing exactly what she had to carry in weight, and what duties she was expected to perform. It would also be the policy of the Board not to be tempted to make alterations in vessels when once their construction was commenced, but to push on the work to completion, adhering to the original design. Such a policy would, he was satisfied, obviate the recurrence of many of the costly mistakes of the past, to which allusion had been made, and would be the best means of attaining the end which the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Gourley) had so much at heart, and with whose object the Board of Admiralty fully sympathized. The hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed) would be fully aware of the attempt made in 1871 to obtain the opinion of a Committee of Inquiry on the designs of vessels then being constructed. He would remember the variety of opinions expressed by Members of that Committee, and the difficulty of forming any reliable conclusion from their Report as to the best form of vessel to be built. In looking through the evidence given before that inquiry he was much struck by one answer given by the hon. Member for Cardiff, who, on being pressed to express an opinion favourable to the introduction of compound engines into the Navy, said—

> "My feeling is that I prefer to get actual experience rather than evidence—which, even when given from the best authorities, is not always to be trusted—before I would tamper with vessels of that kind."

Now, if a Committee were formed, it would have to deal with evidence. For his own part, he preferred the common-sense process recommended by the hon. Member for Cardiff—to be guided by actual experience rather than by evidence. Another point he should notice was that there had been more Committees upon these matters than the hon. Member for Sunderland was aware of. There was a Committee in 1865, the outcome of which was the construction of the *Captain.* In 1869 another Committee sat, and the *Devastation* and the *Thunderer* were produced; there was a third in 1871, after the *Captain* was lost; and he thought that, broadly stated, the result of these various Committees was that there were about as many opinions as there were Members on the Committee. It was true the Motion did not suggest the appointment of a permanent Committee on Designs, but was limited to an inquiry into the designs adopted within recent years. Such a proposal would have even a more prejudicial effect on the Service than the appointment of a permanent Committee. The inquiry would occupy months; it would distract the attention of officers; rival schools of ship-building would be heard before the Committee, each with its own theory. If upon so contentious and thorny a subject the Committee should by chance come to a unanimous conclusion, the effect might be to cramp the inventive and suggestive faculties of our naval officers, and to stereotype in our Navy some one system or type of ship. Men in official positions were not over partial to accept responsibility, and he thought the temptation would be great to the designers to shelter their future work behind the recommendations of such a Committee. The result would be that for some time there would be a stereotyped type of vessel, and the country would not keep up with that ever-growing progress which so marked the construction of our vessels in the last few years. It must not, however, be for one moment supposed that the present Board of Admiralty considered themselves or their advisers to be infallible, or that they lived in regions above and beyond the reach of outside advice. They were always pleased to receive suggestions, and in the event of difficulty or doubt there would be no hesitation in seeking the counsel of those from the outside who might be qualified to give a reliable opinion. For the reasons, however, that he had endeavoured to lay before the House, the Government could not accept the Motion of the hon. Member—a Motion which, if carried, would make it compulsory upon the Board to appoint a Committee. They hoped by using the machinery they at present possessed, and giving effect to the existing system on business lines, to arrive at the result the hon. Member desired—namely, to provide from time to time the most efficient ships of war that could be produced. The hon. Member for Cardiff had made allusion to his visit to Devonport the other day. What the hon. Member said he saw there was the outcome of the want of business aptitude in the past. The Admiralty at the time were in a great hurry to get the vessels referred to constructed, and he believed the Admiralty had not made up their minds as to the best form of the vessels when they ordered them. At the present time, however, the Admiralty had made up their minds, and they knew what they wanted in respect of the vessels they ordered from truck to keel, and he believed that was the only way to avoid the mistakes which had occurred in the past. There was no doubt that much of the trouble that had arisen in ships now under consideration, had arisen from the overpace at which the work was pushed on. A very large number of ships were put in hand at once, and he was afraid that that care and attention were not given to them which would have been given if the demand had not been so great and oppressive. He was afraid public opinion was somewhat to blame for that state of things. There had been some sweeping remarks by the hon. Member for Cardiff as regarded certain ships which he had named, and, although he had pointed out the differences between their designs and what they would be when they were completed; still he did not wish the House for one moment to suppose that those vessels would be anything but first-class men of war. They might have been better, but there was no hesitation on the part of naval officers of the Board in saying that they would prove good and efficient fighting ships; and if ever the time unfortunately came for their going into action they would be found as good and efficient fighting ships as a British seaman could desire.

Sir JOHN COMMERELL (Southampton) said, what Naval men complained of was that the designers of ships were always in a hurry, but after being in such a hurry to lay vessels down they were not in the same haste to launch them. The speech they had just heard from the Secretary to the Admiralty amounted to this:—"We acknowledge there have been tremendous mistakes in the past, but we mean to do better for the future." What they complained of in the Navy was that they did not get value for their money.

They went down to the Yard, and they saw the money wasted right and left, and he would tell them why. The Admiralty would not make up their minds, and would not send out proper specifications and proper information to the contractors and to the Dockyards before they commenced their work. They were aware that the Admiralty knew how to construct vessels, but what they complained of was that the Board would not make up their minds. He did not agree with the hon. Member for Sunderland, and thought the appointment of a Committee would be a great mistake. It would remove the responsibility from where it should rest—on the Board of Admiralty. What was wanted was that the outside world should be taken into confidence. Tenders should be invited for the construction of vessels from outside contractors, and then they would have designs from all parts of the country, which would result in England being put in a very much better position in respect of her Navy than she was at present. He had been rather averse to the *Nile* and *Trafalgar* being built, because he had come to the conclusion that it was like putting too many eggs into one basket, and that smaller vessels would have served the purpose, but still he believed they would be the two most powerful vessels in the world. The right hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) was mistaken in what he had said, for Mr. Barnes and Mr. Morgan had both told him that they approved of these two vessels very highly.

Sir CHARLES PALMER (Durham, Jarrow): I would not have risen to take part in the debate, but for the sweeping accusations which have been made respecting very estimable men by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed). I consider that the remarks of my hon. Friend have reference to the period when he was at the Admiralty, rather than to the present time. Personally I have some knowledge of these matters, the firm with which I am concerned having lately completed vessels of an important character. I am bound to say that the designs and specifications which were sent in before the tenders were made were of a most complete and perfect character; indeed, they proceeded from the lines laid down and recommended by the Committee of which I had the honour to be a Member, and over which Lord Ravensworth presided. That Committee recommended, amongst other things, that vessels should not be laid down before the designs and specifications were complete, and the result has been that vessels since built have been so with perfect satisfaction. Complete designs have been placed in the hands of the contractors, the work makes steady progress, and, instead of ships being behind time in delivery, I believe that, in almost every case, the time of delivery has been anticipated. My hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed) has asked me if the contractors have delivered the vessels complete? My answer is that the contractors have delivered them complete in all but armaments. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) has referred to the building of the *Nile* and the *Trafalgar*. The right hon. Gentleman is right, in my opinion, in bringing the question before the House, because as the action of the Government was of a somewhat extraordinary character, when you have men of such high intelligence and position as the Chief Constructors of the Navy sending out a protest against the building of certain ships, great attention should be paid to their representations, and a proper investigation should be made. I am myself opposed to Committees in such questions as a rule. I am opposed to the Resolution of the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Gourley), because I feel that if we are to have a Board of Admiralty that Board should take upon itself the responsibility of conducting the affairs of the Navy, and experts should not be brought in from time to time, and Committees should not be appointed to supersede the Board and take the responsibility out of their hands. I am also of opinion that the Constructors Department ought to have more responsibility thrown upon it independent of what I may call the Naval Department. The Constructors Department ought to take the responsibility of designing and building the ships which the Admiralty require, and the Naval Department ought not to interfere until the vessels are put into their hands for navigation. I am aware that naval officers fancy they can instruct the Naval Constructors; but such is not my opinion. But I rose chiefly to express my regret that sweeping condemnations should have been made against certain gentlemen, because I am satisfied the country owe a great deal to those gentlemen for having so efficiently carried out the construction of ships of war. The progress made year by year in ship-building and marine architecture is such that it is very difficult to keep pace with it; and I believe that these men have endeavoured to the best of their ability to do their duty.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question again proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

### ADMIRALTY EXPENDITURE—COST OF CONSTRUCTION.—OBSERVATIONS.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Oldham): I think that the statement which the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) has laid before the House is especially interesting and valuable, because it deals, not only with the Estimates for the coming financial year, but because it lays down the principle on which our future naval policy ought to be based for a number of years to come. The First Lord of the Admiralty and his Colleagues have made an effort which I think the country will highly commend, to ascertain what should be the amount set apart year by year, before he holds out to us, not only the possibility, but the probability that the policy he advocates will be carried into effect—namely, that we shall have a reduction of expenditure with an increase of efficiency. No doubt that is a very pleasant prospect to hold out, but I am anxious to consider how far the promise of the noble Lord is likely to be redeemed. When we turn to that part of the noble Lord's Statement in which the proposal is made to set apart a regular depreciation fund to meet wastage and the cost of construction of new ships from year to year, we find that a very novel but excellent idea has been brought forward by the Board of Admiralty. It is proposed that the capitalized value should be taken of the Fleet as it at present exists. The Board assumes that when the present programme is carried out—as it soon will be—when all money Voted by Parliament during the last few years to construct new ships has been spent—we shall have a Navy efficient for all purposes of offence and defence; and the present proposal of the Admiralty is that a certain sum should be set apart every year to maintain the Navy as a Navy worthy of the Country, and the great interests it has to protect. What is the amount thus set apart? We find that a certain percentage is taken on the different ships constituting the Navy and the original outlay upon them, together with the annual waste, and the conclusion arrived at was that the annual amount to be set apart for depreciation was £1,803,000. It is said that such an amount is fair and reasonable to be set apart from year to year. Then, supposing that such a sum is set apart, we have to consider whether it is likely that we shall have that reasonable reduction in the Navy Estimates which has been held out to us as a fair and reasonable prospect by the Board of Admiralty. Turning to the Navy Estimates for the year, I find at page 77 that the total amount set apart in 1887-8 for the machinery and hulls of ships is £1,911,000; that exceeds by just £100,000 the amount which the Admiralty proposes to set aside for these purposes in all coming years. Now, that seems to leave a very narrow margin indeed in which to effect a saving in the Navy Estimates. But it does not represent the whole state of the case, because of the whole of this sum of £1,911,000, which is to be devoted to this purpose in the coming year, we find that there is a sum of £530,000 set apart for gun fittings and special purposes of that kind. That is an amount expressly excluded from the depreciation fund of the Board of Admiralty; and if we are to deduct that sum from the total sum set apart for the construction of new ships and for wastage in the ensuing year, there is only £1,400,000 left; so that the amount the Admiralty say is to be set apart in future years exceeds by £500,000 the amount really to be devoted to such purposes. We know that this year is to be the last of a series of years which has to be devoted to the special construction of new ships. The Estimates have been swollen in the last few years by the expenditure of £8,000,000 for special improvements in the Navy; and the taxpayers may naturally expect that when that work has been accomplished some reduction might be made in the annual demands upon the country. But if this policy is to be carried out, as far as I can understand the Estimates, we shall have to spend in the construction of new ships and machinery an amount larger by £500,000 than what we propose to spend in the coming financial year. That is a point on which I should like to elicit some information from the Representative of the Admiralty in this House. But then there is another point in connection with this depreciation fund which I think deserves the consideration of the House. There is no doubt that the Admiralty, in proposing to set apart this fund, are acting upon the analogy of what is done by men carrying on a large private business, who set apart a certain sum every year for depreciation. We know that private firms do set aside certain sums every year for depreciation—for special emergencies that may occur from time to time. But what would occur if the House of Commons were to vote, say, £2,000,000 every year for the construction of new ships, with the understanding that that sum was not to be allocated to other purposes? Do hon. Members believe that that sum would not be spent every year, whether it was wanted or not? The Department would feel itself bound to spend it, and would take advantage of every occasion for doing so. I should like to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty, whether it is proposed that this fund should be a permanent fund or not? Whether in some way it would be funded or reserved for great occasions, and that it would not necessarily be spent every year? There could be no security against the panics which arise periodically, or that the Board of Admiralty would not be required to ask for millions more because some other Board, which had been in existence for a few years, had obtained great credit for economy at the cost of the efficiency of the Navy. We could have no security that in one year all the money collected in this way from year to year would not be devoted to the purposes of the Navy in one single year. I do not intend to cast any reflection on the present Board of Admiralty; but this is how the matter stands. A new idea is set before the House, which is no doubt excellent in itself, but it is one on which we ought to have some clear and definite information as to the way in which this depreciation fund is to be employed, and we should also receive some clear assurance that the mode in which the Estimate is taken is the correct one, and that we shall not be asked in future years to vote a much larger sum as a regular Navy expenditure on new ships, than we may be actually voting for the coming financial year.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine) said, he recognized the value of the information given by the First Lord of the Admiralty in his able Memorandum, but desired that they should be afforded further explanations as to the armament of guns that were still required for the Navy. The noble Lord knew that for many years he (Sir George Balfour) had strenuously urged the Admiralty to undertake the supply of its own guns, instead of depending on the War Office. He had known the most ridiculous proposals to be made by the Navy with regard to guns. He had known ships to be built without the slightest information as to the calibre or the weight required for the armament of these ships. The noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton), in his Statement, had given the House some information as to the breech-loading guns already supplied by the War Office; but he had failed to give any information as to what the total guns for the Navy were to be. The noble Lord said 1,281 breech-loading guns was the number now available; but he failed to show how many more were required. In his (Sir George Balfour's) opinion, 3,300 was the lowest number which would be required. At all events, the calculation of the noble Lord was as entirely misleading as when he gave the cost of the ships at £39,000,000, without inserting in the Estimate the full cost of the guns required to equip the vessels. The amount of money provided in the Army Estimates for the supply of ordnance for the Navy was totally inadequate. He regretted extremely that the War Office was to continue to supply the Navy with guns and stores. No arrangement could be more unfortunate, and he hoped some understanding might be arrived at by which the War Office would be relieved of the task. If he were Secretary of State for War, he would not retain the post for a day without insisting on being relieved of such a responsibility. Another change he would like to see effected was that of the War Office having the duty imposed on it of providing its own transport. He saw no difficulty in carrying out that change under the superintendence of a capable officer. If such a change were brought about, it would have most beneficial economical results, as economy was by no means studied by the War Office in the matter of transport when they knew the Admiralty had to pay the bills.

Mr. PULESTON (Devonport) said, he joined in the congratulations offered to the noble Lord on the very lucid and able Statement with regard to the Naval Estimates which he had placed in the hands of Members. No such Statement had ever been issued before; but, although it was clear and conclusive, it was not beyond criticism and explanation. At no time had the responsibility of the First Lord of the Admiralty been greater than it was at the present moment. Although some of the Representatives of Dockyard constituencies might, perhaps, feel for the time being the effect of the reforms that were made, they would all unite in giving the noble Lord full credit for doing that which in his judgment and in that of the present Board was best for the country; and it was gratifying to learn that the saving of so much money was compatible with efficiency. The fact that we had 62,500 officers and men, against last year's 61,400, with a saving of nearly £800,000, was, of itself, a very important consideration. The Admiralty being one of the great spending Departments, it was right, and also of great advantage, that the head of that Department should be a Member of that House; and he trusted there would be no departure from that rule in future. Both the Statement of the noble Lord and the Navy Estimates bore clear testimony that there had been no extraordinary extravagance in the Dockyards, as was often assumed. Reference had been made to the ill effects of the changes made in ships while they were in course of construction, and in the Statement of the First Lord some importance was attached to the proposal that in future, when the building of a ship was ordered, the design should not be interfered with. He gladly admitted that that was a salutary decision for the Admiralty to come to; but, while in the past those changes might account for a largely increased expenditure in the case of various ships, on the other hand he ventured to suggest that there might be some disadvantage if they drew too hard-and-fast a line against any alteration of a ship until it was finished. It was quite possible to carry this new idea to an extreme. He considered that it was one of the great advantages of building our ships in the Royal Dockyards that we were able, when really necessary, to alter the designs of ships when in process of building; for it must be admitted, considering the frequent changes which were being made in the science of shipbuilding, that it might be highly desirable to make some alteration in the design of a ship whilst she was being built. It was the stitch in time which saved nine, and a judicious alteration might prevent a much very larger outlay after the ship had been completed. They had seen some ships which had been finished with great rapidity in private yards, and which it had been necessary afterwards to send to the Dockyards to be refitted or changed in several important particulars, involving much higher cost and outlay before she was perfected than would have been incurred had the change been made in her while the vessel was being built. It was well known that war ships became obsolete by reason of changes which were very rapid in the mode of construction, in speed, and in armament. There might, therefore, be times and occasions when it would be cheaper and better for the Admiralty to make alterations during construction. He thought there was reason to hope, from this Memorandum of his noble Friend, that they had come to the end of the policy of fits and starts, which was so very expensive, and so detrimental to the real and permanent interests of the country. The policy of fits and starts was to do nothing in times of peace, and then, when there was a war scare on, to rush and buy every vessel we could lay our hands on, from every country and belonging to everybody, at an enormous outlay, and thereby getting possession of a large number of vessels which were practically useless to us, and spending millions of money which would be saved if we adopted the sound and sensible plan of maintaining our Royal Dockyards always in an efficient state, so as to be ready to turn out any quantity of work on an emergency. He hoped this Memorandum was the first practical recognition of what was wanted to put our Navy in a state of thorough efficiency. He looked upon it rather as an earnest of what was to come, although in itself it was very good. Some hon. Members were always addressing themselves to the question of the disestablishment of the Royal Dockyards. The reforms and re-arrangements proposed by the Admiralty would, at all events, have this effect—that they would give no reason to those hon. Members to urge that plea in future. They would see that the alterations would facilitate the understanding of how and where the money went. It gave him great satisfaction to learn that it was intended to keep the plant and capital invested in the Dockyards employed, while giving them the greater part of the work instead of to the private yards. He knew it had become a confirmed opinion in some quarters that work could be done cheaper by giving it out to private yards; but he had made it his business to inquire into this matter, and he had succeeded in getting an illustration of the way in which the cheaper work sometimes done in private yards was brought about. It was said that the *Acorn* was built in a private yard for £10,000 less than it could have been built for in a Royal Dockyard. Well, he was assured, on the authority of the Secretary of the Company who built her, that the £10,000 saved to the Admiralty, comparing it with other ships of the same type, represented £10,000 lost to the Company. He contended that even if it cost more in the first instance, which he did not admit, to build ships in the Royal Dockyards, it would cost less in the long run, because they would be certain of the character of the work; they would be in a position to make any necessary alterations during the process of the work, if absolutely essential; and they would keep their Dockyards in a state of thorough efficiency, ready to execute work on any emergency, which might be of the very greatest importance to the safety of the nation at an important crisis. Nothing could be more opportune than the proposal as to the new Intelligence Department. It was a very good idea, and the cost, perhaps, was not too extravagant; though he understood a considerable sum would have to be added for retirement pay. No one, he believed, grudged officers and seamen any plums which might fall to their share; but, nevertheless, he thought it well that economy in practice should not be confined to the bottom, but should also find its way to the top. He was assured that nothing in the recent discharges in the Dockyards, which had, to some extent, been recognized as necessary, had made them so unpopular as the fact that at the same time that these discharges were taking place new offices were created with very large salaries—salaries of £1,000 a-year or so. He thought it would be admitted that Members who had for years represented Dockyard constituencies would have some knowledge of matters connected with Dockyards, and that, in advocating the claims of persons employed there, they were actuated by higher motives than a desire to get votes. There was one point in the Statement which, perhaps, the noble Lord would be able to explain. It was not quite clear whether more discharges were contemplated. He did not ask for specific information on a subject of that kind, as he knew the Admiralty must be guided by the particular circumstances of the time. There was no more honest, straightforward, loyal body of men in existence, taking them as a whole, than those employed in our Dockyards. Coming to particular branches, he pleaded, in the first place, the claims of the shipwrights, and submitted that their case was one deserving of very serious consideration on the part of the Admiralty. It was not fair, he maintained, to apply the strict principles of supply and demand to their public servants. The law of supply and demand ought not to influence their treatment of them; but, even as a question of supply and demand, he would not admit for a moment that they could get plenty of men to take the place of these most loyal and skilled workers in the Dockyards. He desired to see them have something like fixity of tenure. Then there were the engine-room artificers, whose cause he had advocated for years, in the face of considerable opposition. Their claims had been strongly presented, though the suggestions had not been adopted, because it would involve spending more money. These engine-room artificers were, practically, in the same position now as they were in the days of wooden ships. Their position was much more important than in days gone by, requiring more education and outlay, and he wished the Lords of the Admiralty would take that into consideration in dealing with their modest requests. The claims of the warrant officers were such as the Treasury could hardly refuse, because they involved almost no outlay, while to concede them would be to increase the efficiency of the Service. In the next place he urged the importance of improving the position of naval schoolmasters, which was below that of any other schoolmasters in the country, including even their brethren in the Army. And, lastly, in a special way he called the attention of the Representatives of the Admiralty to the petition of the Dockyard men, not to a reduction of the working hours, but to such a re-adjustment of the hours as would enable them to take advantage of the long summer evenings for recreation and education—an object which could be attained by fixing the hour from 7 to 5 all the year round. He urged these things not merely as representing a Dockyard constituency, and, therefore, knowing something of their management, but because he sincerely believed that if these suggestions were carried out they would promote the great interests of the country.

Admiral MAYNE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I agree with the hon. Member for Devonport (Mr. Puleston) that thanks are due from every professional man to the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) for the Statement which has been laid upon the Table, although there are some omissions in it. I only hope that the First Lord is right in saying that there will be a permanent change in the way of keeping the accounts. We have had so many changes, and there are so many difficulties in ascertaining what is going on with respect to work, whether under contract or in the Dockyards, that I am bound to say I have very little faith in any element of finality. We are told, practically, that the present Board of Admiralty have at last found out the one way in which all things are to be done aright. I trust that that may be so. Although I never had the honour of speaking on this subject in this House before, I think that anyone who has followed the manner in which the Estimates and the Accounts in regard to work done by contract and in the Dockyards has been carried out must have seen that there is room for very great improvement, and that no commercial firm, with the business-like capacity of which the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood) has spoken, would keep their accounts in the way our Navy Accounts have been kept. The hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Devonport has spoken most truly, and most properly, in regard to the Dockyard establishments. It is quite impossible for the Navy to be maintained by private contracts. In a time of war wages go up rapidly, and we were taught by bitter experience in the Crimean War that private contracts were not fulfilled as they ought to have been—that the work itself was scamped; that prices were high; and that an enormous amount of money was spent in a way that was wholly unjustifiable, and can only be accounted for on the supposition that everybody was too much frightened at the notion of war to consider what was being done. I entirely endorse, also, the remarks of the hon. Member for Devonport as to the Petitions presented to the Admiralty from the shipwrights, the warrant officers, schoolmasters, artificers, and other classes; and I regret with the hon. Member that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty has not seen his way to give a more hopeful answer than he has been pleased to give. These are times of great depression in Dockyard labour, and, as a Dockyard Member, I can bear testimony to the great distress and misery which have been caused by the discharges to which reference has been made. In the Dockyard I represent the distress has been especially great, because there is no other opening for work there; and I deeply regret that the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty has been unable to see his way to allow these men to die a natural death, so to speak, which would have been the case if they had been left alone. In Pembroke Dockyard more than 100 men leave the Dockyard every year from age, sickness, &c., in the natural course of events. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty has been asked and has answered several Questions during the debate; but he has not told the House who is responsible for the designs and construction of such vessels as the *Impérieuse*, and other vessels which have failed to meet the conditions as to speed, draught, and armour which were laid down for them? Why should ships be laid down and construced in such an improper way without anyone having responsibility for them? Who is responsible for not adopting triple expansion engines in the *Impérieuse* and *Warspite* of 8,500, instead of compound engines of 7,500, and for reducing the armour-belt protection from 18 inches above water to 6 inches below the water line? Although the bunkers of these ships were constructed to hold 900 tons of coal, they are only able to carry 500 tons. It has been shown by the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed) that they will never be able properly to carry the amount of coal originally intended. One vessel—the *Mercury*—is only able to carry a supply of coal for three days and a-half, and for some mysterious reason that ship has never been commissioned except for a short trip across Bantry Bay as an experiment. In the first page of this Statement, credit seems to be taken for the fact that Dockyard labour is not allocated in the present year, as has been the practice in past years. But I think that that is a great mistake, because if the money is allocated as an Estimate it enables the Constructors of the Yards to forecast, to some extent, what they would have to do in the course of the year, and thus to regulate their staff. I do not see why money should not be allocated in the Estimates, the Board of Admiralty having the power to change the allocation as the year goes on. That would enable them to do with Admiralty knowledge what commercial yards are able to do at this moment, and would show them what work they would have to turn out in the Dockyard in the course of the year. I am sorry to observe, in the shipbuilding policy of the Admiralty, that they propose to build ships calculated to steam only 13½ knots an hour. Under ordinary circumstances those vessels would not be able to keep up with the squadron, and they would only be competent, as was pointed out by Lord Ravensworth's Committee, to do the ordinary police work in a time of peace. Lord Ravensworth's Committee spoke of the construction of this kind of ship as a waste of the public money. I entirely concur in that opinion, believing that such vessels would be utterly useless for war purposes. The hon. Baronet the Member for Durham (Sir Charles Palmer) spoke at some length on the advantages of ships built by contract, and the hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Devonport mentioned the case of two small vessels, to show the advantage of Dockyard building as contrasted with contract building. In regard to the question as between Dockyard work and contract work there is no ground whatever for saying, if the accounts are kept in the same way in both cases, that ships can be built cheaper by contract than in the Royal Dockyards. Instead of two small vessels spoken of by the hon. Member for Devonport, let me take three large ships to illustrate this point—the *Audacious*, the *Invincible*, and the *Iron Duke*. The *Iron Duke* was built at Pembroke, and cost £208,000; the *Audacious* and *Invincible* were built by contract, and cost £256,000 and £249,000 respectively. In the one case there was an advantage of £48,000, and in the other of £41,000 in favour of the ship built at the Royal Dockyard at Pembroke. I may mention two later instances; those of the *Benbow* and the *Anson*. The cost of building and completing the *Anson*, of 6,640 tons, was £500,908. The contract price of the hull and extras for the *Benbow*—a sister ship—at the Thames Armour Works was £525,765. A further sum of £40,000 was provided to be spent on the *Benbow* at Chatham, making a total cost—according to official documents—of £565,765, or £64,857 more than the *Anson*, or at least, taking the contract price alone, £24,827 in favour of the Dockyard built ship. I am unable to account for these facts, clearly shown in the Estimates, on any other hypothesis than that the Dockyard ship is more cheaply built. I believe that I might adduce many other instances to show that it is a great mistake to suppose that a ship can be built cheaper in a private yard than in a Dockyard. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty has pointed out a case of failure of contract—I think it was a case of extra repairs—but it was due to the failure of the contractor under the conditions now imposed in a time of peace; and if such shortcomings occur now, what must we expect in time of war? In regard to Dockyard administration there is a defect in the existing practice which I hope the Board of Admiralty will be able to remedy. I refer to the appointment of the Superintendents of the Dockyards for varying periods. They may serve for one or two years, or for six months only. But, as a matter of fact, in most cases they are not allowed to serve sufficiently long to master the details of the work before they are superseded. I believe I am right in saying that this custom is disapproved of by those who have the immediate control of the Dockyards, and that its continuance is due to the Treasury's refusal to grant the requisite money. One would have thought that the Lords of the Admiralty would have had sufficient power to obtain what money the country requires for the Navy, and not allow any Lord of the Treasury or Chancellor of the Exchequer, who knows nothing of the details of the Service, to interpose a veto on its complete efficiency. I am afraid that is one of the methods by which the money of the country is wasted. It is altogether impossible to have the Dockyards properly regulated when the officers are liable to be changed every six, 12, or 18 months, instead of being appointed for at least three, or, better still, five years. Those hon. Members of the House who have read the Report of Lord Ravensworth's Committee will be aware that it has been laid down by that Committee that only under special conditions can ships of war be repaired by contract advantageously, and yet I see in these Estimates a large item for repairing ships by contract. I regret to understand that something like £30,000, in addition, I suppose, to the £18,000 put down now, is to be expended on the *Garnet*, a ship which never exceeded 8 knots an hour, and which certainly ought not to be repaired at anything like such a cost. I think there are many other points which are worth looking into, and I trust that if a Committee is appointed to go through the Navy Estimates altogether, it will not be too late, when that Committee is nominated, to stop some of the expenditure, which seems manifestly a waste of money. There are only two other points on which I will touch to-night. One is the position of the Commanders-in-Chief at the Home Ports. In relation to that matter, those hon. Gentlemen who take the trouble to look into the Navy Estimates will probably perceive with surprise that while the Estimates are presumably signed by the Lords of the Admiralty and the Secretary to the Admiralty, there is one signature which is conspicuous by its absence, and that is the signature of the only Naval Lord—the noble and gallant Member for East Marylebone—who sits in this House (Lord Charles Beresford). The noble Lord, who seems to be the itinerant exponent of the Admiralty views, has spoken on the question of shipbuilding at the Mansion House, and at public meetings elsewhere, and it is to be presumed that his views are more or less endorsed by the Board of Admiralty. I have been told that each Lord who signs the Estimates does not thereby take upon himself the responsibility of the whole of the Vote; but each is responsible for that particular Vote which it is the business of his own Department to look after. Now I think that such a practice is most misleading. The reason given is that it is impossible for each of the Lords to spare time to go through the whole of the Estimates; but that, in my humble opinion, is their own fault. Why have they not time; and why are my Lords so overworked? It is on account of the far too great centralization of work of all sorts and in great detail at the Admiralty, and that they will not allow anybody outside to do any work at all. There is a Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth, another at Devonport, and another at Sheerness, who are senior usually to the officers in the Admiralty, and often have been Lords of the Admiralty themselves; but such is the present system of conducting the Service that these Commanders-in-Chief have no power whatever, and have to refer everything to the Admiralty. It seems strange that when a man gets into an office he ceases to be the same naval officer he was before; but, somehow or other, when a naval officer gets into the Admiralty, he loses all his former views, and, believing himself omniscient, he tries to be omnipresent, and signally fails. I well remember a Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth answering my expression of surprise that he could not give some small order without reference to the Admiralty by saying—"The Commander-in-Chief here was once a great man, but now he is only a big midshipman." Lord Ravensworth's Committee came to the conclusion that it is detrimental to the interests of the Service that so much technical detail should be gone into at the Admiralty. They say—

> "There is too much centralization of detail at the Admiralty causing delay and unnecessary correspondence, much of which might be avoided if a larger discretion in technical and minor matters were allowed to the Dockyard officers."

If more discretion were allowed to the Commanders-in-Chief I believe that much labour might be saved to the Lords of the Admiralty. I will add the hope that the Committee now inquiring into the Civil Departments will also inquire into the Civil Departments of the Admiralty—an inquiry which was desired by Admiral Hornby. I think it would be well to employ some naval officers in those Civil Departments, in order to prevent the answers to Questions which are put in this House from being drawn up by civilians who do not know the meaning of the terms they write down. There is not a sufficient amount of technical information in the lower grades of the Admiralty, and a great saving both of money and time would be effected by employing officers on half-pay whose pay and pensions have at present to be provided by the country. I am certain there are half-pay officers whose employment at the Admiralty would supply that technical knowledge the lack of which is so often displayed by civilians receiving higher pay than need be given to the naval officers, already having half-pay of their rank and prospective pensions, and who would be glad of the employment. I have only one other point which I desire to bring before the House, and that is the question of naval education. I am afraid that I have already trespassed on the time of the House; but my excuse must be that this is the first time which I have trespassed upon its indulgence. I had hoped that hon. Members who have been in the House longer than I have would have spoken upon that subject, because it is one of considerable difficulty. The last Committee on Naval Education summed up all that has been done on the subject by two or three former Committees, and the result at which one arrives from reading carefully through the evidence is that naval officers are what they ought to be in spite of the system of education, and not on account of it. I know that great and useful changes have been made in the present system as it exists; and I hardly like, because I know I am going against the opinion of many officers who are better judges than I am—I hardly like to say I am absolutely in favour of those changes; but I should certainly like the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty to consider, among the improvements he desires to introduce, whether it would not be better to do away with the *Britannia* altogether. I feel very strongly that it would be better; and that, if we wish to get the very best material for the Navy, we should take that material from the great public schools of England—say, at the age of 15—and that we should then require the youths so selected to be restricted to an examination in what is taught at the schools, while special subjects should be studied afterwards. Admiral Ryder says cadets should be mainly drawn from the public schools, and that the subjects of examination should be those taught at the schools and no other, and he rightly lays great strength on physical qualities. I am sure that if the country wants, as it does want, officers with nerve sufficient to fight the enormous iron-clads of to-day as the ships of old were fought, it would be better to select youths of 14 or 15 from the public schools. Admiral Hornby says—

> "I object to competitive examination of boys as adverse to true expansion and invigoration of intellectual faculties, because, to succeed in them, a boy 'hath need of much cunning to seem to know that he doth not. If the entry is bad the next step confirms the evil. They are set to work far above their true capacity, and the natural result is made manifest as soon as they go to sea. Nineteen out of twenty who go to sea are reported as ungrounded, and the Naval Instructor has to begin to relay that proper foundation, which was broken when the boy was taken from his first school, and have to be taught from the point which was broken when the boy was taken from his first school."

I am afraid that this is the case with most of the young gentlemen who are now sent to sea from the *Britannia.* I am sure that if we take a boy from a public school, and then send him straight to sea, we should get a much better officer after he had been a few years at sea. We should then bring him home and send him to the Naval College, when at an age to understand the value of and necessity for serious study, and that his future prospects would depend upon the use he then made of his time and opportunities. Admiral Hornby—admittedly the best practical tactician in the Service—says further—

> "At present the country is burdened with a heavy expense, and the parent is relieved not only from that, but his natural responsibility of training his son. When once accepted, the training of these youths should commence as in the Scandinavian Navies—before the mast."

I believe that a system of this sort would be far preferable to the present one, and in this opinion I am strongly supported by many distinguished naval officers.

MR. R. W. DUFF (Banffshire) said, he must congratulate the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty on being in a position to ask for decreased Estimates with increased efficiency, but he thought the noble Lord would admit that the present satisfactory position was due very much to the fact that the programme of Lord Northbrook had been faithfully adhered to. He was glad the noble Lord had not to come down to them for those large Estimates which had pressed upon them last year, and he also rejoiced that he had not found it necessary to ask them to raise money by resorting to Terminable Annuities. The Naval Lord (Lord Charles Beresford) last year told the House that £5,500,000 were necessary to put the Navy in a satisfactory position; but he was glad to find that the noble Lord, in a position of responsibility, did not feel called upon to make that large demand upon the taxpayers of the country. The reduction was mainly due to the Shipbuilding Vote; but the whole reduction was very considerable and very satisfactory. He could not, however, help expressing his regret that the noble Lord had allowed something of a Party character to enter into the very able Statement which had been issued. The noble Lord had said that—

> "In the period between 1881 and 1885 every Naval Power in Europe, except England, had largely increased its naval expenditure."

Yes; but this led to one of two conclusions—that they never had a Navy at all before 1881, or else that it was kept up until 1881 and then suddenly allowed to run down. That was not correct, as the noble Lord would find if he carried his researches beyond 1881. The fact was that both sides had their scares; and after the Conservative scare in 1877, when several additional ships were added to the Navy, the supply of new vessels had been allowed to run down. From the years 1878-9 to 1880-1 inclusive, the expenditure on Votes 6 and 10 averaged £3,718,708. The then succeeding years of the Liberal Government 1881-2 to 1883-4 showed an average on these Votes of £4,166,850—being an increase of £448,149. He thought those figures sufficiently disproved the allegation in the noble Lord's (Lord George Hamilton's) Statement. He could not quite accept the noble Lord's statement as to the Ordnance Department. It was a difficult question. The old system was universally condemned, but it was difficult to decide on the plan to take its place. He was quite certain they must get their own guns, but there must be responsibility. The Admiralty ought to be in a position to say "We want a gun," and then, if it bursts, lay their hands on the right man and tell him—"You are responsible for this gun, and you must go." He should be very glad, therefore, to know from the First Lord of the Admiralty how he intended to carry out the change he contemplated, and also what was proposed to increase the facilities for the coaling of war ships at the home ports, these facilities not being at all satisfactory at the present time. With regard to the shipbuilding policy, he hoped that the vessels which the Admiralty were going to lay down would come up to the expected speed, and if they did, they would be very satisfactory vessels. He trusted, also, that the *personnel* of the Navy would not be neglected. The Report to which he proposed to direct attention was the result of the deliberations of a Committee appointed in 1885 by Lord Northbrook's Board of Admiralty. Dealing with the Report, he did not think it necessary to dwell upon the competency of the Committee to investigate the subject referred to them, because that would be universally admitted; but he might briefly remind the House that the Chairman, Admiral Luard, added to his other professional qualifications that of having occupied for a considerable time the responsible office of President of the Royal Naval College at Greenwich, and that he consequently enjoyed special facilities for forming an opinion on the working of our present educational system by being brought in constant contact with young officers at a time when they had almost completed their professional studies. The same might be said of Mr. Niven, who, for a considerable period, had occupied, with great advantage to the Service, the important office of Director of Studies at the College at Greenwich. Lord Dalhousie, as those who were in the House in 1880 would remember by the able speech he then made on the subject, had long given his attention to this question; and, having served for two years as Commander of the *Britannia*, might also be said to have had special opportunities of acquiring a clear insight into the working of our existing educational system. If Members would look to the other names on the Committee, it would be admitted that they were all Gentlemen well qualified to deal with the subject both from a naval and a civilian point of view. The subject dealt with in the Report was by no means a novel one. It had been frequently discussed in this House, and by competent naval authorities elsewhere. He would best consult the convenience of the House if he addressed his remarks principally to the recommendations contained in the concluding chapter, under head (f)—

> "To consider and offer opinions on any suggestions for the improvement of the education of executive naval officers."

The evidence before the Committee all tended to prove that the Navy of to-day had entirely outgrown our system of training young officers; that the changes we had already made in our system were not commensurate with the rapid changes which had taken place in the Navy, and which necessitated a higher and more scientific education—he would not say than we had aimed at, but than our officers generally had hitherto attained. The two main defects in our system were—first, that we entered our cadets too young; and, secondly, that we endeavoured to combine school work with the teaching of the duties of our officers—two branches of education which, in the opinion of the Committee, ought to be kept separate. But before referring to the objection to the early age of entry mentioned by the Committee, he wished to revert to their objection to the present system of nomination to cadetships. At present the system was one of close nomination subject to a limited competition. If the present system was to be continued, much might be said in favour of the existing distribution of patronage; but if the age of entry was raised it would lead to a much better system, as the Admiralty would then be able to open the Service to public school competition. On this the Committee remarked—

> "That the system of nomination, however admirably worked, limits the choice of candidates, and places artificial difficulties in the way of getting into the Navy."

He did not think that, while the officers of our Army and the Civil Service were selected by a system of open competition, the country would be satisfied while an equally popular branch of the Public Service was recruited by a system of nomination. So long as they continued their present system of entering boys between 12 and 13½, he was perfectly aware that open competition was impossible. Competitive examination at such an age, as had already been proved, was no test of fitness. But let them adopt the recommendations of the Committee—enter their cadets at the age of 15, and throw the competition open to the public schools of the country—and they would then get rid of the difficulty—some First Lords had even called it the "nuisance"—of nominations, and they would have a far wider field from which to draw the material for their future naval officers. Let him briefly say what the course of a young officer's training was from the time of his obtaining his cadetship till he became a sub-lieutenant. He entered the *Britannia* between 12 and 13½, the average time of entry was 13. After two years, in passing out, he became a midshipman, in which capacity he had to serve five years in a sea-going ship, unless by special merit he had gained time in passing out of the *Britannia*. He was then examined in seamanship, and, passing, became an acting sub-lieutenant, went to Greenwich for six months, and was examined in navigation, if successful joined the *Excellent* for a three months' course of gunnery and torpedo instruction, followed by an examination, and then a two months' course of pilotage, also followed by an examination, completed the officer's education for a lieutenant's commission. It would thus be seen that the compulsory course of study was from seven to eight years. Under favourable conditions this should be a long enough period to give us efficiently educated officers. But, in the opinion of the Committee, this object was not attained. One of the chief causes of failure was the early entry. On this point there seemed to be a general consensus of opinion, even among those who did not agree with all the recommendations of the Committee. Mr. Aldous, Chief Instructor of the *Britannia*, said—

> "After the rush through various subjects, by which a certain standard is attained, I do not think it possible that any but the most extraordinary young minds could have so learnt the subjects as to retain them for future use. Two conditions are required to produce a thorough knowledge of this course of study—advanced age in the pupil when entered and a longer time under instruction."

If hon. Members would look at the examination required both for entering and passing out of the *Britannia*, given by Mr. Aldous, they would see that the standard, especially in mathematics, was a very high one indeed for boys at the ages of 13 and 15 respectively. But the opinion expressed by Mr. Aldous was entirely confirmed by the evidence of the young officers themselves. Lieutenant Wilson told the Committee—

> "That it is the general opinion of the Service that a cadet, on leaving the *Britannia*, passes a better examination than a sub-lieutenant entering Greenwich."

A statement confirmed by the evidence of Lieutenants Burney and Evan Thomas. He would ask the House for a moment to consider the real significance of the opinion he had quoted—that a young officer, on going to Greenwich, knew less than one passing out of the *Britannia.* It was the severest possible condemnation of the present system, because it showed that the most important years for educational purposes — the years from 15 to 19 or 20—had been completely wasted for all purposes of scientific education; while, at the same time, owing to the altered conditions of the Service, there had been no advance in purely professional education which would in any degree compensate for the loss in scientific knowledge, and this at a time when it was universally admitted that science in almost every branch was revolutionizing our Navy. Ten sub-lieutenants out of 24 recently failed at Greenwich. Now, the early entry had an important bearing on this point, as it was maintained by the Committee that if boys entered the Navy at a later age, when they had been well grounded in general education, they would be far better able, in after years, to retain the learning they received on board the *Britannia* than they were now. He wished now to refer briefly to the second main objection he had mentioned—namely, the attempt to combine school work with the teaching of our officers. The Committee said—

> "Each part of a naval officer's training ought to be given him under the most favourable circumstances possible, in order that when there is so much to learn there may be no want of force in learning it. Hence school work should be got over on shore, and seamanship and the detailed duties of our officers learnt afloat. It would be as great a waste of power to attempt to teach practical seamanship to school boys on shore as it is to teach elementary mathematics to officers afloat, and for the same reason."

However desirable it might have been in past times to combine the two branches of education, in the present day it was impossible—first, because the scholastic education required was far more scientific; and, secondly, because there was not the same means of acquiring seamanship and general professional knowledge while serving afloat as there was 30 or even 20 years ago. Sailing vessels, especially small craft, where midshipmen frequently performed the duties intrusted to lieutenants in larger vessels, were very much reduced in number; consequently the same opportunities were not now afforded to midshipmen as formerly, when they often had charge of a watch, and were sent away for weeks together in charge of boats while suppressing the Slave Trade. All these duties, as, he might say, he knew from personal experience, 30 years ago gave a young officer a sense of responsibility. It gave him self-reliance and that readiness of decision so essential to a naval officer at a much earlier age than those qualities were to be acquired by a midshipman, the greater portion of whose time was now spent on board an iron-clad, often in harbour. But, concurrently with losing many opportunities of acquiring seamanship and general professional knowledge from actual service afloat, there came greater demands on the officer's scientific knowledge. The Committee reminded us that we were not living in an age when we could say, as Nelson could, that the only branches of knowledge indispensable to an officer were that "he should dance and speak French; all the rest would come by instinct." Steam, iron-clads, improved artillery, torpedoes, electricity, and complicated machinery of every description had sprung up since those times. Mr. Tims, Naval Instructor, gave us some of his experiences. Speaking of the time the midshipmen had for work, he said—

> "I consider 12 hours a-week a good average; owing to many interruptions it was often much less."

Then, as to the conditions under which the instruction had to be given, Mr. Tims went on to say—

> "The great difficulty the Naval Instructor has to contend with is the want of a suitable place for study. Sometimes the captain will allow the use of his cabin; then matters go comparatively well. The only obstacles to study are sea-sickness, heat, cold, and the thumping of the screw. But when relegated to the half-deck the school is held at a very insecure table, in a place about as private as an underground railway station. All noises and smells to which the ship is liable seem to be concentrated round that table. . . . . I have a very lively recollection of the torpedoes being charged with compressed air just ahead of our school, so that the copper tube from the air pump was led under our table among our feet. Under such circumstances privacy is impossible."

In no Navy but our own was there an attempt to combine the school teaching with the professional duties of an officer. Let him now turn to the recommendations of the Committee, suggested to remove some of the defects. First, with regard to admission to the Service, they recommended that our future naval officers be drawn from the public schools of the country; that a first selection of candidates at about the age of 15 be made by means of the examination for lower certificates conducted by the Oxford and Cambridge School Examination Board; that the selected candidates be then specially educated; that at the age of 16 they be again examined by Civil Service Commissioners; that the final selection be determined by adding the marks gained at the first examination to those obtained at the second; that the successful candidates be appointed as cadets to the *Britannia* for one year; that the *Britannia* be moored in the Solent in the vicinity of Portsmouth, and that training brigs and one steamer be attached to her; that at the age of 17 the cadets join a sea-going ship as midshipmen for three years; that theoretical instruction now cease to be compulsory and be distinctly of a professional and practical character; that at the age of 20 or 21 the midshipman, on passing in seamanship, become an acting sub-lieutenant, and go to Greenwich and to the *Excellent* much as at present. Our officers, in point of scientific education, were far behind the best educated officers in Foreign Navies. That might seem a strong statement to make, but it was one which was fully supported by the evidence of Captains Kane and Nicholson before the Committee. These officers had held appointments as naval *attachés*, and had, therefore, had the best possible opportunities of forming an opinion of the relative merits of our own and foreign officers. Captain Kane said—

> "In certain of the Foreign Navies the officers from 20 to 30—that is, the sub-lieutenants and the lieutenants—are better educated, and, I think, are better officers, taking them all round, than ours are. Do you think they are more efficient as officers?—Yes; I think they are more efficient as officers—that is to say, in certain Navies."

While Captain Nicholson characterizes the state of education in the Navy as "deplorable," Professor Soley, in his Report to the Secretary of the United States Navy, said—

> "The high scientific and professional attainments of many English naval officers are not in consequence but in spite of their early education."

A perusal of the evidence given by the lieutenants before the Committee certainly justified Professor Soley's opinion, for the system of education was, perhaps, more strongly condemned by them than by any other witnesses. He could not, however, refrain from reminding the House of the gallant manner in which those officers performed their duties while employed with the Naval Brigade during the Egyptian Campaign. He was sure the noble Lord opposite, his gallant Friend the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford), who himself took such an active and honourable part in those engagements, would bear him out when he said that the rate of mortality among the officers of the Naval Brigade was enormously high, and that this was due to the lieutenants sticking to their guns against overwhelming odds, and that the manner in which they died at their posts was the best evidence that in their fighting qualities the rising generation of officers were well qualified to maintain the reputation of the Service. There was another point bearing on the general recommendations of the Committee which the Admiralty would not be able to overlook—namely, that many of the vessels they were now building, such as the fast cruisers, as noticed in Captain Nicholson's evidence, had no accommodation for midshipmen; and they must, therefore, of necessity be educated elsewhere. The Service would gain by this change, for the duties midshipmen had frequently to perform were little use to them as an education. Those duties were chiefly confined to keeping watch, often walking the deck in harbour, to seeing the decks swept, to speaking down tubes, and to seeing the ashes thrown overboard. It seemed absurd to sacrifice an acquirement in scientific knowledge for the performance of trivial duties which could be equally well performed by petty officers. Exception had been taken by some high naval authorities to the recommendations of the Report on the ground that too much of the young officers' time would be taken up by study, and that their practical education in seamanship was going to be sacrificed to mathematics; but with training ships attached to the *Britannia*, and with three years afloat after the age of 17, he thought there would be ample time to learn seamanship. Lieutenant Cecil Burney, in his Paper given in Appendix 3, pointed out that the age for entry of boys in our training ships was between 15 and 16½. Surely, if this were considered young enough to commence the training of our future seamen, who would not be drafted into regular sea-going ships till they were 19 or 20, and then have practical seamanship to learn, 17 was not too late to send our future officers regularly to sea. Another objection had been taken on the ground that the age was too advanced to obtain candidates, and that when obtained they would not take to a sea life. But on these grounds the Committee entertained no apprehensions. They pointed out that boys now entered the Navy at an age when they were quite incompetent to select a profession for themselves—that many, when so entered, found out when it was too late that Nature never intended them for naval officers. On the other hand, there were many boys well qualified for a sea life who at the age of 14 were prevented from joining the Navy because they were too old. The Committee were satisfied that whatever might be lost by postponing the age of entry would be more than compensated for by securing increased intelligence, and they were confident that the popularity of the Navy as a profession would secure an ample number of candidates from our public schools. They reminded them that when sea life was far rougher than it was now many officers went to sea at a more advanced age than they now did, and became excellent officers. Perhaps the most conspicuous illustration of the success of a late entry into the Navy was to be found in that of the first Flag officer he served under—the late Lord Dundonald — the brilliancy of whose naval career he believed stood second alone to that of Nelson. Yet we were told by Lord Dundonald in the *Autobiography of a Seaman* that he originally entered the Army, and did not go to sea till he was 17½ years old. Yet so impressed was Lord Dundonald of the importance of education for the due performance of the duties of a naval officer, that we found him, eight years after he had entered the Navy, employing his time while on half-pay by studying at the Edinburgh University, where, along with the late Lord Palmerston and a brilliant group of men who subsequently became famous as statesmen and men of letters, he was a student of Dugald Stewart's. He thought the critics of the Committee's Report would do well to bear this illustration in mind before condemning the recommendations as pedantic. Before bringing his remarks to a close he desired to say a word on a subject constantly referred to by the witnesses examined before the Committee—namely, the desirability of continuing the *Britannia* at all. For his own part, he thought a College on shore at some naval port, with training vessels attached, would be far preferable to this old hulk. It would, undoubtedly, be healthier in every way. It would give greater facilities both for study and for obtaining exercise. That was the opinion of Captain Bowden-Smith, the captain of the *Britannia*, and Mr. Aldous, the Chief Instructor, and of most of the other witnesses. The idea when the *Britannia* was established was that it was desirable to accustom cadets as early as possible to a sea life. But he had always failed to understand how sea life was to be acquired on board an old hulk moored head and stern, and with no rigging but an old jury mast. He considered the system pursued at Greenwich School, where many of our future seamen were educated—although, of course, the standard of education was much lower—to be healthier and better in many respects than that on board the *Britannia.* But he might remind the House that this question was decided by the Admiralty more than 12 years ago, when the late Mr. Ward Hunt announced, in introducing the Estimates, his intention of abolishing the *Britannia* and substituting for her a College on shore. That step was approved by his right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), who held the Office of Secretary to the Admiralty in the Government which preceded Mr. Ward Hunt's, and who told the House that it was the intention of the First Lord of the Admiralty (the present Chancellor of the Exchequer) to abolish the *Britannia* had he remained at the Admiralty. He hoped that in his present Office his right hon. Friend would assist in carrying out this necessary reform. It only remained for him to assure hon. Members that he had only been induced to trespass on their patience because he was deeply impressed with the importance of the subject alike to the Naval Service and to the country. It was also a subject of deep interest to aspirants for naval cadetships, as well as to their parents and relatives. On these grounds he thought he was entitled to claim for it some share of public attention. There was abundant evidence that at no previous period of our history had the country been more deeply impressed than it now was with the necessity of maintaining unimpaired the efficiency of our Navy. It was because he believed that on the early solution of this question in the manner indicated by the Committee's Report much of that efficiency ultimately depended that he had ventured to trouble the House with these observations.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) said, he was desirous to add his humble meed of praise to the thanks already accorded to the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) for his labours in the re-organization of the Department and for the changes he had brought about. Still, he was constrained by a sense of public duty to criticize in some degree the acts of the noble Lord and of some of his Predecessors. He thanked the noble Lord for the answer given to his Question about the want of dock accommodation at Bombay, and he hoped that that serious want would soon be supplied. It was a public scandal that the Indian Government and the Home Government should have a petty squabble as to which of them should pay for this work, which was so greatly needed. He would remind the House that there was no dock in which ships could be repaired nearer than Malta, a distance of 4,000 miles from that part of India. While at Bombay a few years ago he had closely examined this question, and all he could say was that it was a shame the work should have remained so long unexecuted. He also hoped that certain rumours which he had heard respecting the non-completion of Haulbowline Dock at Queenstown were not correct, for he was sure that naval men earnestly desired that that dock should be completed. Indeed, the work should have been carried out long ago. He could not pass by one or two observations which had fallen from the last speaker (Mr. Duff). He thought the contests between the two Front Benches about expenditure for naval and military requirements were very trivial indeed. The country did not complain about the amount of the money, but only wanted to get the money's worth for the money which was spent. He noticed that one or two hon. Members had argued in favour of the abolition of the *Britannia* training ship. For his own part, he was strongly opposed to its abolition, and the substitution of a Naval College in its place; and he was also opposed to open competition for the Navy, as the present system of competition of three candidates for each vacancy was very good and useful; therefore, when it was found that naval men in that House were divided on those burning questions, he hoped the Admiralty would take its own line and come to a compromise. In his opinion, the Memorandum of the First Lord of the Admiralty on the state of the Navy ought to be supplemented by a Report from each Naval Lord who was placed in charge of a particular Department. At present the Naval Lords were unable to make known to the public what their opinions were. If the present First Naval Lord, who was responsible for the *personnel* of the Navy and partly for the *matériel*, were to make a Report and tell all he knew, the eyes of the country would be opened, and salutary changes would soon be effected. Under the existing system the Naval Lords were muzzled, and compelled to confine their opinions within the four walls of the Admiralty. In 1884, at the time of the Russian scare, the condition of the Navy was such that naval men were really alarmed. He appealed to the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone, the Junior Naval Lord of the Admiralty (Lord Charles Beresford)—as a young naval officer—to say whether he was satisfied that England could have entered into that contest and come out of it satisfactorily; and if he did not share the doubts so freely expressed by older ones? The great evil in this country was the want of continuity in naval administration and policy. First Lords went in and out with one side or the other, and there was no continuity or system in our naval policy. Why, on a change of Ministry, should Naval Lords be sent about their business, perhaps just when they were becoming accustomed to their work? The Board of Admiralty was undermanned in respect of Naval Lords. It was still short by one Naval Lord of the number which Sir James Graham, the Duke of Somerset, and other distinguished men thought the right one, although the requirements of the Service were now much greater than they were in the Duke of Somerset's time. Every Naval Lord was now greatly overworked. This accounted in a measure for the blunders that had been committed. A First Naval Lord, he had heard, used to take a file of papers home from the Office and study them until 1 o'clock in the morning. It was true that an improvement had now been introduced by the institution of a strong Intelligence Department. The Board would henceforth be compelled to think out a naval policy and to form plans of campaign—[*Home Rule Cheers*]—good plans of the right sort—he hoped, not bad ones—with the Plan of Campaign of hon. Gentlemen opposite he had no sympathy. The First and Second Sea Lords ought each to have the assistance of a Post Captain as secretary. In France, Germany, and Russia a rule of that kind prevailed. Fifty to 60 naval officers were employed at the French Admiralty, whilst our Service was starved for want of technical skill and intelligence. He regretted the re-constitution of the Board of Admiralty in 1869 by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers). He had nothing but respect for the ability and strong will of the right hon. Gentleman, though, at the same time, he deplored the results of that strong will. But the right hon. Gentleman did not always follow up his own opinions. Before he left Office he told Sir Sydney Dacres that the first thing which ought to be done in certain events was to appoint another Naval Lord; but he did not do it. However, his Successor did, and, so far, there was something gained, though still the executive authority should be strengthened; whereas, by the unhappy Order in Council of 1869, it had been greatly weakened; before that date it was exercised by six Lords and a Controller, but since then by only four Lords and a Controller, until 1872, when it was augmented to five Lords and a Controller. There was, moreover, this further drawback—that the Naval Lords were not responsible as formerly. The Board, whose history dated back to the time of Henry VI., was re-constituted under an Act passed in the Reign of William and Mary, 1690, and being thus constituted by an Act of Parliament it ought not to have been made to undergo change by the operation of an Order in Council. What the right hon. Gentleman could not do directly he ought not to have done indirectly. The then existing Board of Admiralty was practically abolished by the right hon. Gentleman in 1869, and the First Sea Lord was reduced to the position of little better than a chief clerk's. This change was in opposition to the views expressed by more than one Parliamentary Committee, and notably to the views of Sir James Graham — the creator of the Board of Admiralty as it was known before 1869—who said, before a Committee of the House of Lords in 1872—

> "It is my opinion that the Board of Admiralty never could work, unless the First Lord were supreme, and does exercise controlling authority . . . . I have made it my study to make myself master of the origin of the power exercised by the First Lord at the Board, the constitution of the Board, its powers, and its legal origin; the more I have investigated the matter the more I am satisfied that, like the Common Law in aid of the Statute Law, the power exercised by the Board of Admiralty and the different Members of it rests more upon usage than upon the Patents—uninterrupted usage from a very early period; and, my conviction being such as I have stated, I am led to view with increased apprehension any great change that will supersede that usage and prescription. . . . . I am of opinion that there will be great danger in attempting to touch the Patents. . . . . I infinitely prefer, therefore, upon the whole, the maintenance of the existing Patents in concurrence with the established usage of centuries."

His complaint was that at the present moment there was no Naval Board really acting as a Board of Admiralty. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh abolished it when he introduced his Order in Council. There was no reason for abolishing it except the right hon. Gentleman's will. They admired men of strong will in the Navy. He admired a man with a strong back—in the Navy they did not care much for weak or limp men—but whereas in the Navy a man before he could be in a position to do any harm had to pass through 20 years' training, a politician could go to the Admiralty perfectly raw, and if he were a strong man of resolute will he was like a certain animal in a china shop. He challenged the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone to deny that he was speaking the sentiments of the Navy. The Naval Lords should be administrators *de facto* as well as *de jure*, or else they should abolish them altogether and rule the Navy entirely by civilians. All they asked in the Navy was that there should be a little modesty on the part of those distinguished men who came to rule over them, and who were ignorant of the feelings, the traditions, and he feared sometimes even of the history of the Service. He (Admiral Field) would refer to the evidence of Sir Spencer Robinson to show that under the existing system the naval element was not sufficiently represented on the Board of Admiralty, and that under former systems matters were better conducted. If each Sea Lord or Head of a Division of the Admiralty were obliged to make a Report, to be laid on the Table of the House of Commons, the public would see what the Naval Lords thought ought to be done, and he thought that the House would then insist on the requirements of the Navy being met. They had irresponsibility now, because that odious Order in Council had made the Sea Lords responsible only to the First Lord. That Order ought to be withdrawn, and the naval business of the country conducted upon the system under which our great naval battles were fought and won. What gave force and validity to the orders emanating from the Admiralty was the fact that they were supposed to embody the views of distinguished naval men, and not the views of a civilian First Lord. Naval men believed that in time of war the present system would break down and end in disaster. The Naval Lords ought to be made responsible for their own work, not to the First Lord, as to their master, but to the House and the country. The First Lord was supreme, and they did not deny that; but, in the name of all that was fair and just, they ought not to be treated in this way by ambitious politicians. The Chairman of Committees some time ago said—"When men enter this House they ought to try and imbibe something of its Parliamentary spirit." He would say when Civil First Lords, knowing nothing of the Service, were made the nominal head of it, they, too, might try and drink in something of the naval spirit. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer, when First Lord of the Admiralty, said that whoever was at the head of that Department ought to try and carry the naval opinion with him, and he did so, and the Service honoured him for it. The right hon. Member for South Edinburgh had abolished the office of Storekeeper of the Dockyards; but the present Chancellor of the Exchequer had felt bound to restore that office. The right hon. Member for South Edinburgh had abolished the office of Captain of Steam Reserve at Sheerness Dockyard, and shortly afterwards the *Megæra* was lost. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer restored that office, and had also felt bound to replace the Naval Lords of the Admiralty whom the right hon. Member for South Edinburgh had swept away. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had reversed many other steps that the right hon. Member for South Edinburgh had taken. But he supposed that he did not like to hit his Predecessor too hard, and therefore he did not withdraw the Order in Council of 1869, but modified it by that of 1872. He wished it to be understood that he did not desire in any way to supersede or to interfere with the authority of the First Lord. All he asked was that there should be sufficient naval men at the Board to give the assistance and advice which was absolutely necessary if the Navy was to be maintained in a continuous state of efficiency. The First Lord of the Treasury and the First Lord of the Admiralty knew the feeling of the Navy upon this question as well as any men; and he said if his brother officers were worthy to be Naval Lords let them be Naval Lords *de facto*, and if they were not worthy let them be turned out altogether. There were no men in the country more capable or more loyal to authority than naval men. Sir James Graham said naval officers were the very best instruments of Governments; and Lord Palmerston once stated that if he had a difficult job to get done, and was in doubt as to who should carry it out, he always sent for a naval officer. Hon. Members might ask how it was that the Naval Lords sat tamely under that Order in Council? It was because the Naval Lords were loyal to the authorities which existed. They did not like the way in which they were treated; but, like the eels that were skinned, they made no complaint—because they could not help it. They were asked why they did not agitate outside the Admiralty. The fact was that discipline was the pivot upon which the whole Service turned, and naval men did not approve of discussing these naval questions out-of-doors; and it was unseemly, improper, and contrary to the Regulations for them to write to the newspapers. The only place in which naval opinion could legitimately make itself felt was in that House. He did not pretend to set himself up as the exponent of naval opinion in that House; but if he had made no impression upon any hon. Members in the speech he had just delivered he had been wasting the time of the House. He could assure hon. Members that nothing but the strongest sense of duty would have induced him to speak upon that occasion. The point he desired to make clear to the House was that if the Admiralty, which was the central Departmental power of the Navy, was faulty, everything connected with the Navy would be faulty. The fact was that the Naval Lords had been unfairly treated. He was on the Retired List, and so was not speaking for himself, but was doing what he could for the good of the Profession. He was on the Retired List because of the Rules of the right hon. Member for Edinburgh. He (Admiral Field) did not bear the right hon. Gentleman any ill-will for that—the right hon. Gentleman did it with the best intentions for the good of the Service. Captains in the Navy had to retire at the age of 55, but politicians thought that they could be first-class politicians and statesmen right up to and over 70; but he ventured to say that a naval man of 55 had more nerve about him than a politician at 75, and would make a better public servant in any capacity. He could not be of any service in the Navy, because the turnpike bar had been thrown across his path; but he thought that he might be of some service to the Navy in that House. He knew that he could not be an Admiral on the Active List in the Navy by the time he was 55, so he took up politics—worse luck. [*Laughter.*] He said worse luck, because he would tell them frankly the Navy had no great respect for politicians. He, however, had a good deal of respect for a certain class of politicians, but not for all. But, humble individual as he was, having taken up this kind of life—he had been 13 years at it now—he had stood four contests and had been successful in two of them—having once got into that House he intended to remain there for years, and do what little good he could for the Naval Service in which it was the greatest honour of his life to have served. He intended to do the best he could for his brother officers, who could not speak for themselves, and he would never rest until this burning injustice to his Profession was removed. The history of the Navy covered the most glorious epoch in our national life, and its opinions and susceptibilities ought not lightly to be set aside or disregarded by politicians. He hoped, therefore, the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty would attentively consider the evidence given by Sir James Graham, the Duke of Somerset, and the others which he had quoted, and would endeavour to bring the administration of the Navy into accord with naval sentiment.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (A LORD of the ADMIRALTY) (Marylebone, E.): As one of the Naval Lords, perhaps the House will allow me to say a few words on the question which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. M. Maclean) has brought forward. There are other questions which I should also like to speak upon; but the hour is late, and this subject is of so much importance that I will confine my remarks to it. For a long time there has been a general feeling in the country that the system of organization in the Admiralty is not so good as it ought to be. I will endeavour to show how it has been brought about. It is the penalty we pay for Party government—a different policy is pursued by different Parties when they come into Office. One Government may think it necessary to reduce the Estimates, and the next Government, on coming in, perhaps goes on with the Estimates for the moment; but when there is a possibility of war they consult naval experts as to what is requisite, and the result is that very large Supplementary Estimates are brought in. In other words, large Estimates are necessary to pay for what the country wants in consideration of receiving it in a time of panic. The system of the Admiralty has always been based on the principle of Party government, and seamen—experts—have really had nothing to do with the government of the Admiralty. Let me explain what I mean. Take the question of shipbuilding. The men who have to fight the ships know exactly what they want, and understand modern requirements—what guns they ought to have, where they should be placed, what speed the vessels should have, what coal they should carry, what horse-power is required, and what complement of men is necessary to fight the ships and take them into action. But the seamen on the Board have very little to say to it. The scheme my noble Friend has brought in is, I think, as nearly perfect as it could be. The seamen are to say what is required for a ship, and each will put a Minute on the design that will be submitted to them by the Constructor, showing where the guns are to be placed, and the arc of range they are to have, and the scheme will then be passed on to the Controller, and so each individual will be individually responsible for the ships built. It would then be referred to the Board; they would order the vessel to be constructed, and by these means the country will have a proper fighting ship turned out quickly. The construction of a ship in this way would take two years and five months, instead of seven years, like the *Inflexible*, and you will get it for a considerably less sum of money than under the old *régime*. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Eastbourne (Admiral Field) has made one mistake as to the Order in Council made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. He will find that the wording of the Order is that it should be rescinded, and he is wrong in thinking that the Order of the right hon. Gentleman is in force at the present moment. My noble Friend the First Lord has gone further. He has added to the responsibility of each Member of the Board of Admiralty. Every Member of the Board will put a Minute on the Paper and sign it, so that each Member will be individually responsible, instead of there being the sort of haphazard system of organization that formerly prevailed. With respect to the question brought forward by the hon. Member for Devonport (Mr. Puleston), some people have been good enough to give me credit for the institution of the Intelligence Department. It would be better to give the credit to the Board. In my opinion, this Department will be of the utmost importance to the Admiralty. I will give my reasons. Ships are built, and seamen are paid that they may be ready in time of war. War in these days is a question of electricity. In the old days there was no kind of organization whatever. I am not blaming our Predecessors, but the system. Time after time seamen have represented the necessity for a Department such as the Intelligence Department; but there has been nothing in this country resembling the Naval Intelligence Departments in Germany, France, Russia, and other Continental countries. An organization was required which shall enable the Navy to be prepared for time of war. When war is declared, a country like England, with a vast Empire which can be assailed at so many points, requires a complete organization, and for that purpose the Intelligence Department is of the utmost importance. With reference to this question of Party government, I will mention one circumstance which will illustrate clearly its working. The discharges of Dockyard workmen which we have heard of were the result of Party government. One Party said they could not turn the men off because of the Vote; but the State should not make the Dockyards a charitable institution. If you had a continuation of policy, you would not get rid of the Dockyard men as you do now. It is very hard on the men to be turned off suddenly; and if there were a continuity of policy in everything connected with the Naval Service, instead of the weathercock policy that now prevails, there would be no necessity for turning men off suddenly. During the course of the debate many remarks have been made, and no doubt many remarks of a similar description will be made, as to officers of the Navy wishing money to be spent. That is not the case at all. Officers in the Service do not wish to spend money. They wish so to organize the Service that the country may not have to spend more than is necessary. What occurs at present? When war looms on the horizon, Parliament says to the experts —and it is the same at the War Office— "What do you want?" The officers then represent what they do want, and they get the credit of asking for the money which is spent, as it often has been in times of scare, in a wrong way. I maintain that each individual in the Board should be allowed the right of expressing his opinion on the large questions affecting the Navy. The hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed) made a remark with reference to seamen and shipbuilding. I am delighted to hear the remark, because I remember a publication of the hon. Member's which appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine*, in which he said—"Seamen must bow their proud heads at the altar of science." I am disposed to remark on that, that "Seamen have often shaken their wise heads at the altar of doubt;" because many ships have been turned out without the opinion of Members of the Board having been obtained—without the opinion of men who have to use these ships for the benefit of the country. The hon. Member for Banffshire (Mr. R. W. Duff) taunted me regarding an expression of opinion to which I gave utterance last year in the House of Commons. The hon. Gentleman has not quite gathered my meaning. What I said was this—To put the Navy in the state of defence in which the taxpayers thought it was would require £5,000,000. I elaborated this view in detail. That was my opinion in order to reduce the danger to our trade, our floating wealth, our food supply, and the defence of our ports to a minimum. I adhere to every word which I uttered on that occasion. In time of war the country would be most severely hit during the first three weeks of the outbreak, and in order to reduce the danger to a minimum, I adhere to the view I previously took on the subject. Of course, the hon. Gentleman knows that when a Member of Parliament is in Office he cannot do all that he wished when out of Office. [*Laughter.*] My hon. Friends laugh; but the First Lord of the Admiralty will bear me out when I say that not only in private, but in public, I have persistently put forward my ideas with the view of strengthening the Navy, and placing it in that condition in which it ought to be placed. I therefore cannot agree with the hon. Gentleman opposite that it is all Party judgment.

Mr. R. W. DUFF: I referred to the statement which had been made as to the condition of the Navy from 1880 to 1884, and I pointed out that the Estimates for 1881 had been omitted.

Lord CHARLES BERESFORD: But from 1881 to 1884 and 1885 we were living on our capital. It is when we come to a time of panic that we find so many stores which ought to have been replaced by the Estimates for the year are deficient. Recent occurrences in the Navy have been due to want of system, want of organization, and want of responsibility on the part of individual Members of the Board to the Board. An hon. Member has asked how it is that my name does not appear on the Estimates. The reason is, because the Estimates were brought to me too late. I told my noble Friend that I would not sign them. My noble Friend replied—"You must do what you think proper." And the reason why I did not sign the Estimates was because each name on the Estimates, I think, should mean that the individual is responsible for the whole Estimate, or if such individual is only responsible for his Vote, it should be clearly put in black and white for what he is responsible. Next year I shall probably get the Estimates in time to study them thoroughly, and then I will sign them. The object of the Board is to have a Fleet as efficient as it can be made, not to spend a shilling more than is necessary, and to let the public know, as far as possible, how that money is spent. I believe in publicity. The new system which my noble Friend has inaugurated will be greatly for the benefit of the country and of the Service. It will enable the Navy to do what the taxpayer expects it to do for the money he pays—namely, to defend the country in time of war.

**Mr. CHILDERS** (Edinburgh, S.): I should not have risen to address the House had it not been for the remarks of the hon. and gallant Member for the Eastbourne Division of Sussex (Admiral Field), who referred to some action of mine 18 years ago. In the few remarks I intend to make I hope the House will grant me some indulgence, on the ground that I have not had time to look into matters which occurred in 1869, and have no power to refer to the Papers on the subject. With regard to the general subject before the House, I most heartily join in the approval expressed by all sections of the House as to the general construction of the Estimates, and especially of the Minute with which the First Lord of the Admiralty has prefaced them. I entirely endorse, with all the approval I can give, the improvements which the First Lord of the Admiralty and his Colleagues have made, not only in the form of the Estimates and in the arrangement shown in the Estimates, but also in other matters which have been brought before the House by the Secretary to the Admiralty, whose speech to-night will be, I think, of great use. The hon. Gentleman has argued very forcibly on the advantage of making up year by year the waste of the Navy, and has spoken as to what that waste is and how it ought to be made up. When I was myself at the Admiralty in 1869, some figures were laid before me, and I urged on Parliament the necessity of constructing an even amount of tonnage from year to year, both of armour-clad, and unarmoured ships, and I pointed out that if we had constant changes from year to year, the effect would not only be bad for the Service generally, but also be bad economically. I am glad to find that the same idea is entertained by the present Board of Admiralty. I also entirely agree in what has been so well said as to the necessity of fixing on the type of the ships to be built after consultation, not only with naval officers and officers of gunnery, but with other officers, on whose advice, as well as that of the controller and the constructor, the design on which a ship is to be built should be determined. It is a cardinal feature of good construction in my mind, that those who have afterwards to be concerned both with the fighting and the sailing of the ship, through their representatives at the Admiralty, should be effectually consulted, and I am glad that the hon. Gentleman has enunciated that doctrine to-night as clearly as he has done. Therefore, as far as I am concerned—reserving the question of past expenditure, which I do not think worth carrying further at present—I cordially concur in what has been put forward by the First Lord in his Memorandum, and also by the Secretary to the Admiralty in his speech to-night. I turn next to the remarks of the hon. and gallant Member (Admiral Field), who has so much amused the House, and who has gone into the history of the Board of Admiralty and its methods of administration for a very long time past. I cannot carry my memory back, as far as reading is concerned, to the Reign of

Henry VII.; but I do know its history since the time when the system was so entirely changed by Sir James Graham under Lord Grey's Administration. Formerly, the whole affairs of the Admiralty were really carried on at Somerset House by different Boards, which managed respectively the shipbuilding, the victualling, the store-keeping, the medical service, and other matters connected with the Navy. The great change which Sir James Graham effected was to get rid of those Boards, and to establish at Whitehall one single Board for the transaction of all that business. He divided the business in this way. The Departments remained at Somerset House; but each Member of the Board was called a Superintending Lord, and in his capacity of Superintending Lord the business of each Department was brought to him, and he then brought it to the Central Authority. In establishing that system, Sir James Graham was as strongly attacked in Parliament by the naval officers of that day, as the hon. and gallant Admiral has attacked to-night what I did in 1869. The cardinal point of Sir James Graham's defence was this—that the Board could only work well, under his arrangement, if it was made as unlike a Board as possible. That was the principle on which Sir James Graham attempted to reform the old system, and to substitute one Board for three Boards. I do not hesitate to say that the system established by Sir James Graham, although, perhaps, good enough for doing the very moderate amount of business under Lord Grey's Government, utterly broke down when the business of the Admiralty became greatly increased some 30 years later. I am afraid I am the only person in the House at the present time who was a Member of the Board of Admiralty in 1864. Then, the Board met for four or five times a-week, or almost daily. When the Board met, each of the Lords of the Admiralty who was concerned in a particular Department, brought to the Board the whole of its work—that is to say, the different papers coming from the different Departments and requiring the Board's sanction, excepting, of course, very small matters. At the end of the discussion the Board's stamp was put on them, and that, without any signature, or perhaps the signature of the Secretary, carried the authority of the Board. Under that system, as I know to my cost, when a Junior Lord, I had three, four, or five hours' business to do in a Board room from day to day. Under the whole system a great deal of time was unnecessarily wasted, and it was absolutely impossible that a large amount of business could be transacted efficiently. The system was very bad; but the hon. and gallant Gentleman has not told the House anything about the condition in 1861. He spoke of the Committee of 1861, which collected a large amount of contradictory evidence; but there was also a Royal Commission in 1861, which condemned the system, and unanimously expressed the hope that it might be entirely altered. I was very familiar with the Report of that Commission. I had been a junior Member of the Board of Admiralty, and was not, therefore, uninformed upon these questions. When it was my duty, in 1868, as First Lord, to make improvements in reference to the Admiralty, which had been strongly urged by the Royal Commission, and the necessity for which was strongly shown by the Committee in 1867, I determined to recommend to my Colleagues a plan to meet the objections which had been put forward by the Royal Commission, and which had been so often discussed in the House. We did, at the Admiralty, the same thing that was done at the War Office. We divided the administration under three heads:—the first of which dealt with the military administration; the second with questions of finance. We divided the responsibility between the three heads, laying down, most distinctly, the responsibilities assumed by each—both with regard to the Minister and to Parliament. The system thus started has been in operation ever since, although, in other respects, some slight alterations have been introduced. For instance, an additional Lord has been appointed, who is a post-captain attached to the First Lord, and the first officer appointed was Captain, now Admiral, Willes. He has ceased to act, and a Controller has been appointed; but the system followed is practically that which was established in 1869, and which, I will undertake to say, has worked well. One thing has been referred to almost ludicrously—namely, the signatures to the Estimates, which are said to provide a certain security. Why, I established that system myself.

Lord CHARLES BERESFORD: The right hon. Gentleman has misunderstood what I said. What I said was, that I objected to the signing of a document, which those who signed it did not understand, because they had not had time to examine it. It gives a false impression to the public, who are under the impression that the official by placing his name upon it has examined it, and is satisfied with it. I objected to any official signing a document unless the person signing it had thoroughly looked into everything to which he attached his name.

Mr. CHILDERS: I think that is exactly what the Lords of the Admiralty are bound to do; and, as I have said, it was I, myself, who introduced the system. Now, Sir, I promised the House I would only speak for a few minutes, and I hope I have kept my promise. But there is one point to which the noble and gallant Lord (Lord Charles Beresford) referred, and upon which I should like to say a word. I was somewhat surprised to hear him speak of want of continuous employment of distinguished Admirals at the Admiralty by one Government and another, as a great vice of the new system. It is not a vice of my creating; because, when I was First Lord of the Admiralty, I offered the First Sea Lordship to the First Sea Lord of my Predecessor. He was, however, very anxious to go to sea; and, instead of so appointing him, I gave him the command of the Mediterranean Fleet; but then I offered the First Sea Lordship to the next Sea Lord of my Predecessor, for the express reason that I was anxious for the continuous character of the naval supervision. I think I have now answered the criticisms of the noble and gallant Lord. I have, I think, shown him that the change which has been made was a change rendered necessary by enquiries which had taken place in previous years. Then, when the noble and gallant Lord says—"Now that we are in a position, let us sweep all this away," I think he will find that the Party to which he belongs was really in power from 1874 to 1880, and that they made no change in this direction. I do not think the noble and gallant Lord's appeal is warranted by the facts; but I, on the other hand, appeal to both sides of the House to deal with this question in no Party sense, but as a matter of good administration. If any change is required, I do not object to it; because it is a change upon what I laid down in 1869. On the contrary, I shall never allow Party considerations in matters of this kind to influence me in the slightest degree.

Mr. CAINE (Barrow-in-Furness): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a few remarks to the House upon the Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the system of Purchase and Contract in the Navy—a Report which has excited some comment in the public Press, and created great public interest. The object of this Committee, as stated in the Instruction to the Committee, was to inquire into the system adopted by the Admiralty in regard to the purchase, supply, and examination of stores, contracts for hulls and machinery, including the organization and functions of the Contract Department, and its relations with the Executive Departments of the Admiralty, the Dockyards, Victualling Yards, and Medical Establishments at home and abroad. The inquiry was called for, and I think that many of the recommendations of the Committee are extremely good; but I wish to take exception to one or two points in connection with the Report. First of all, I wish to take some exception to the Committee itself. The Committee consists of the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood); the Accountant General, Sir Gerald Fitzgerald, K.C.M.G.; Captain C. F. Hotham, R.N., C.B.; and the Members for Mid Armagh (Sir James Corry) and North Worcestershire (Mr. B. Hingley) and the Govan Division of Lanarkshire (Mr. Pearce). It is to the appointment of the latter Gentleman as a Member of this Committee to inquire into the matter of contracts that I wish to take particular exception. I do not wish to dispute the fitness of the hon. Member himself to take part in this inquiry. We all know perfectly well he is at the head of one of the most distinguished shipbuilding firms in the world, and that his peculiar knowledge of the business which had to be inquired into fitted him very well indeed, other matters not intervening, to join in this inquiry;

but the reason I object to him having been placed on the Committee is, because he himself is a disappointed tenderer for many contracts. [" Oh, oh ! "] I do not say that in any disrespectful manner. He was disappointed his tenders were not accepted; surely, there is no objection to an expression of that kind. He was a disappointed tenderer for those contracts which form a very considerable portion of the inquiry of this Committee. Now, Sir, it seems to me that it is most unfair to the other firms tendering and contracting, for an hon. Member of this House, a leading partner in a firm which is, to say the least, a most dangerous opponent to them, to have access to all their confidential documents, and the plans which have been submitted, with the view of securing the orders of the Admiralty. If hon. Members would take the trouble to read the evidence, I think many would agree with me that, during the inquiry, the hon. Member subjected both the late and present Advisers of the Board to a cross-examination very much more like what you would expect from the counsel of a prosecution than from one who was really in the position of a Judge. As I read the evidence, the inference to be drawn from the hon. Member's cross-examination certainly is that the Board's Advisers had been guilty of gross and wilful carelessness and neglect of the public interest. And, in my opinion, the only object of the cross-examination was to show that the firm of which he is a member—Messrs. Elder and Co.—had been unjustly set aside in favour of the contractors who received the Board's orders in question. It seems to me that it would have been the easiest thing in the world to have found some other Gentleman to have taken a position on the Committee in place of the hon. Member for the Govan Division of Lanarkshire. There was one gentleman in particular who gave valuable evidence before the Committee, and who was described by the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood) as a most distinguished engineer in his profession—I refer to Mr. William Wallace, the engineer-in-chief of Messrs. Allan and Co. I think if he had been placed on the Committee, and the hon. Member (Mr. Pearce) had been called as a witness, it would have been very much more in accordance with the fitness of things than that which took place. It seems to me that the Report is virtually a severe censure on the whole shipbuilding and controlling departments of the Admiralty. It is proposed by the Committee to transfer to the Director of Contracts the duty of purchasing hulls and machinery, as well as contracting for all business in the Works Departments of the Admiralty. Now, I am glad to say that one of the Members of the Committee enters a strong protest against this recommendation. Captain Hotham, a very distinguished naval officer, concurs generally in the Report, with two important exceptions. He says—

> "I entirely dissent from the proposal to invest the Director of Contracts with any responsibility of making contracts for building or repairing ships and constructing engines. That official can have no knowledge whatever of the matter, nor can he be expected to understand the specifications on which contracts are based; and he must of necessity be guided by the opinion of the professional officers of the Controller's Department. The Controller is a Lord of the Admiralty, and he is provided with professional assistants, who may be considered, and who ought to be experts in their respective Departments; and I am of opinion that the Controller should make his own contracts (under the Board) for the supply of ships, and engines, and for repairs; otherwise delay will be caused, friction will arise between the Departments, and inefficiency will be the result. The same objection applies to the proposal to place contracts for works under the Director of Contracts."

I must say, Sir, that if the recommendations of this Committee are carried out, I should expect the present distinguished Admiral, who is the Controller of the Navy, to send in his resignation at once. Just let us examine for one moment the proposal of the Committee; let us examine the mass of work which is already undertaken by that Director of Contracts. No one who knows anything of the present Director of Contracts can speak in any other way of him but in the highest possible terms. When I was at the Admiralty, I had the opportunity of watching the way in which he conducts his business, and I have no hesitation in saying that, under his management, the Admiralty buy their stores cheaper than anyone else in the world. Before I entered Parliament, I was largely engaged in buying exactly the same class of materials that is bought by the Director of Contracts, and I can only say that, if I had had the services of the Director of Contracts, I should be a very much richer man than I am at the present moment. But what is the work which the Director of Contracts at present undertakes? He has to buy everything under Vote 2 — Victualling and Clothing — which amounts to £1,278,000. He has to buy all naval stores under Vote 10, and these amount in value to £1,370,000. He has to buy medical stores under Vote 12, amounting to £75,000; indeed, this official has positively to see to the contracting and purchasing, examining and testing of goods to the value of £2,730,000 in the course of a year. Now, if that is not enough work for one man, I should like to know what is. Well, what is it that is proposed to be added to the work of this already overworked official? It is proposed he should purchase hulls and machinery; and, under Vote 10, the Government ask this House for hulls and machinery for nearly £2,000,000—£1,911,000; it is also proposed that he should look after the Contracts Works Department. Positively, under this head alone, it is proposed, by one blow, to add to his responsibility the expenditure of £2,464,000. But that is not all. There is now under consideration—at least I believe it is settled—that in future the Admiralty is to buy its own guns. If that is so, I suppose that that also, as a matter of course, will be added to the work of the Director of Contracts, a very serious business in itself. It will more than double his work, adding, as Captain Hotham says in his protest at the end of the Report, to his duties matters of which he can have no knowledge, nor can he be expected to understand the specifications on which contracts are based. But this will not be the end of the additional work placed on the Director of Contracts. It is recommended in this Report—and I entirely concur in the recommendation—that, in future, those things which are now manufactured in the Dockyards should be purchased outside. I have no doubt a very large saving, indeed, will be effected if that recommendation be carried out. It is proposed to give up ropemaking and sailmaking at the Dockyards. I understand it is also proposed to give up the manufacture of biscuits and so on. There are some 2,000 hands employed in these works; and the purchasing of these articles, amounting in value to £250,000 sterling, will also be thrown on the overburdened back of the Director of Contracts. But that is not even all; for in Clause 42 of the Committee's Report, there is a recommendation of fresh work for the Director of Contracts. Clause 42 says—

> "It is most desirable that the Director of Contracts be relieved, as much as possible, of office work, in order that he may have time, subject to the instructions of the Board, to visit manufacturing districts and the Dockyards, and to keep himself fully informed as to the best centres of production and in touch with the wants of the Services."

It really seems to me that anything more ridiculous than these proposals I have never seen made in a Report presented to Parliament. A justification for the transfer of contracts under Vote 11, it is impossible to find from the evidence. As Civil Lord, I had charge of this Department, and I can appeal to the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Ecclesall Division of Sheffield (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), who succeeded me in that office, and who is now occupying it, as to whether Colonel Percy Smith, the Director of Contracts, is not himself capable of arranging for the various contracts under this particular Vote? Why on earth this duty is to be transferred to the Contract Department I altogether fail to discover. But, Sir, in regard to the proposal to transfer the buying of ships and machinery to the Contract Department, the Committee rest their recommendation almost entirely on the charge that in purchasing the two ships, the *Renown* and the *Sanspareil*, Lord Northbrook's Committee Board paid in the one case over £18,000 and in the other case over £17,000 more than if the work had been done by other firms tendering for the same work. I should point out to the House that these Estimates are based on the suggestion that the hulls and machinery had been purchased from separate firms, instead of under one contract. Now, what are the facts of the case? I will turn to Clause 23 of the Report, in which the Committee summarize what they think were the right proportions of the terms tendering. The Committee say that—

"Had the £8,000 proposed to be charged by the engine-makers for the additional indicated horse-power been abated by the professional officers from the accepted tenders, instead of their arbitrary valuation of £15,000, the tenders in order of price would have stood as follows."

So that the table which follows that remark is the table, as I understand it, which the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood) considers ought to have been presented to the Board by the officials responsible for these contracts. Now, it shows that Messrs. Palmer and Co. tendered for hull and engines £587,854; that Messrs. Elder and Co. for each of two ships tendered £590,000; that the Thames Shipbuilding Co. tendered £593,000, and that Messrs. Armstrong and Co. tendered £596,000. So that, on the face of it, the contracts having been given to the Thames Shipbuilding Co. and Messrs. Armstrong and Co., the highest of these tenders, it does appear that the Board, of which I was a Member, had given too much money for these particular ships. But there is a great deal of suppression of the truth in these two statements. Let us examine the matter more carefully. Messrs. Palmer and Co. tendered for one ship £587,854, or in round figures £588,000; but they only tendered for a ship of 9,000 horse-power. Messrs. Elder and Co. tendered £590,000 for two ships. But if the Board had carried out the recommendation of the Report, and accepted, in the first instance, the lowest tender—that of Messrs. Palmer and Co.—there would have been one ship only for Messrs. Elder and Co., who tendered £594,500 for one ship. And yet the Committee report that Messrs. Elder and Co. tendered £3,000 less than the Thames Co., as if it were for one ship. Now, it is true that Messrs. Elder and Co. tendered for 10,000 horse-power; but they wanted, if they were to put 10,000 horse-power into the ship, to add 100 tons to the weight of the machinery, so taking away 100 tons from the rest of the carrying capacity of the ship. Now, the Thames Shipbuilding Co. tendered £593,000, and we got 10,000 horse-power guaranteed; we also got a knot extra speed in consequence. We secured the same conditions in the case of Messrs. Armstrong and Co's tender of £596,000. I see many hon. and gallant Admirals on the opposite side of the House, and I appeal, without the slightest hesitation, to any of them, whether, in order to secure an extra knot in the speed of the two iron-clads in question, it was not worth while to pay, in one instance, £3,000 more, and in the other £6,000 more, rather than accept the tender of Messrs. Elder and Co., who wanted to load the ship with an extra 100 tons of machinery; or of Messrs. Palmer and Co., who only offered 9,000 horse-power. But now let me trouble the House for a moment more in reference to the prices. I must remind the House of what some may have noticed in the public Press, that when these orders were given to the Thames Shipbuilding Co. and Messrs. Armstrong and Co., these firms contracted that if they failed to produce 10,000 horse-power, they would submit to a fine of £12 per horse-power for every one they fell short of that amount, so that I maintain that, whether we got eventually a 10,000 horse-power ship, or 8,500 horse-power ship, from these two contractors, we paid in hard cash very much less than we should have done if we employed Messrs Elder and Co., or Messrs Palmer and Co., or any other combination that it was possible to be tendering for engines and hulls. I will suppose that we got the full 10,000 horse-power from either of the three firms who were able to supply it—Messrs. Elder and Co., the Thames Shipbuilding Co., and Messrs. Armstrong and Co. We should have paid £595,000 to Messrs. Elder and Co., for a 10,000 horse-power ship, plus 100 tons. Now, that 100 tons is an exceedingly valuable element. If you get rid of 100 tons in the engines, you can use it for coals, for armaments, for ammunition, or for a variety of other purposes, and I maintain that 100 tons space in any ship is worth an extra £5,000 or £10,000. The Thames Shipbuilding Co., were to get £601,000 for a ship of 10,000 indicated horse-power. The engines would have been 40 tons lighter than those tendered for by other firms; so that, as a matter of fact, the ship would have been 140 tons lighter or of less displacement than the ship which was tendered for by Messrs. Elder and Co., a fact which would have given a knot extra speed. There may be some comment made that Messrs. Armstrong and Co. were £3,000 higher than the Thames

Shipbuilding Co. That £3,000 was required; because the engines were manufactured on the Thames, and the ship was built on the Tyne. Suppose the ships, when delivered, only turned out to be of 9,500 horse-power. The price paid to Messrs. Elder and Co. would have been the same, £595,000, and the price paid to the Thames Shipbuilding Co., on the terms of £12 per horse deduction, would have been precisely the same as to that paid to Messrs. Elder and Co.; but the ship would have been minus 40 tons in the weight of the engines. Messrs. Armstrong, under the same conditions, would have been paid £598,000. Now, let us suppose the engineers had failed in their engagement to produce a full 10,000 horse-power, and had only given us 8,500 horse-power. It has been the contention of this Committee all through, that we ought to have considered, in giving out the orders, only the prices that were tendered for ships of 8,500 horse-power. The lowest tender for hull and machinery from two different contractors was £581,000. The Department object to buying the hull from one firm and the engines from another firm; and, therefore, they get one tender: That, in itself, was an objection to Messrs. Palmer and Co.'s tender of £587,000. But under the £12 fine, the Thames Shipbuilding Co. would only have been paid, if they had delivered a ship of 8,500 horse-power, £483,000, and the ship would still have been minus the 40 tons weight. Messrs. Armstrong and Co. would have been paid £486,000. So, taking these figures as you please, arranging them as you like, if you speak honestly, it is impossible to bring any charge against the Board of which I was a Member, to the effect that we did not purchase these vessels on the very lowest and best possible terms. There is a good deal in the Report of the Committee about the fancy value of a horse in a ship's engines. One authority places it at 30*s.*; another at £5 1*s.* 3*d.*; and another at £6 10*s.* I confess I do not understand the value of a horse-power in these engines, or know how it can be arrived at; but I do understand, and every naval officer perfectly understands, the value of an extra 140 tons of space. Naval officers know perfectly well the value of a knot. It is quite possible that one knot might turn out to be the value of a whole ship. I have no hesitation in saying that the charge brought by this Committee in their Report against the Board, of which I was a Member, that they bought ships at a higher price than they could obtain them for elsewhere, is absolutely without foundation. I strongly protest against the charge. If the Committee have no more basis for the charge than it has for taking away the contracting for ships from the Controller's Department, and adding it to the already overburdened Department of the Director of Contracts—if the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood) does not assure me that he will not persevere with the carrying out of the recommendation of the Committee, I shall be bound, at as early a date as possible, to ask the House to express its opinion in the Division Lobbies.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Mr. Speaker, I regret the Forms of the House do not enable me to raise the issue which is involved in the terms of the Motion I have on the Paper—namely,

> "That this House will not proceed to the consideration of the proposed expenditure for the Navy without having first learnt what steps have been taken to improve the system of Admiralty Contracts."

The particular Services to which the Motion I have read would direct the attention of the House are dispersed over a number of different Votes, and therefore it is impossible to discuss the question, except at this particular stage. This is a question of very great importance, and at the present time it is attracting a great deal of public attention. But were it not so, the fact of the amount of money involved under these Contract Services would secure for it considerable attention at the hands of, at any rate, a large section of the House. Now, Sir, on the present Estimates the amount under these Services is nothing like as great as it has been. On the Estimates now presented, the sum of £3,288,000 under one Vote alone will show the extent to which these charges go. But that is only under the original Estimate. The experience of the last year tells us this will probably be supplemented, as the original Estimate of last year was supplemented, by something which will raise the total considerably above the figure I have mentioned. Last year's figures will let the House see what the immense sums are which are covered by these Contract Services. In the 7th section of Vote 10, for the year 1885-6, on account of Machinery and Ships building by Contract, the original estimate was £2,126,000. The expenditure went up to £3,555,387. But the other section of the same Vote is hardly less involved, for the amount taken under it in Committee of Supply was £1,544,000. This is far from meeting the entire liability connected with timber, materials, coal, and other naval stores, which really amounts to £2,155,000. So that, on the whole, we have expended during a single year on this Vote £5,710,771. That includes £700,000 on account of the hire of armed cruisers and their appurtenances; but it does not include a still larger item on account of hired transports, which amounts to £1,113,000. This, with the sum I have mentioned, makes a total of £6,824,000 in round numbers. But even that immense sum does not represent the entire expenditure on Contracts in a single year, because it is dispersed over a number of items, which go to swell this total to something over £7,000,000. Therefore, it will be seen that the question which my Motion will raise is one, not only covering a large sum of money, but affecting a number of Services under the control of the Naval Authorities. The very easy way in which the authorities at Whitehall deal with these contracts is exemplified in a comparatively small matter which occurred during the period to which the figures I have quoted refer. It will be in the recollection of the House that some time ago Her Majesty's Government took it into their heads to occupy Port Hamilton. It has since been ascertained that this place is incapable of defence, except at a great expenditure, and that it is also of very little practical value as a coaling station. Under these circumstances, the Admiralty magnanimously resolved to surrender it to its rightful owners. But already a considerable expense had been incurred in connection with it. In view of the difficulty with the Russian Government on that and other accounts, it was thought necessary by the Admiralty to have telegraphic communication between Hong Kong and Port Hamilton in the first place, and, in the second place, between England and Port Hamilton. When this little piece of contract work was made known by the Admiralty to the Treasury, the submarine requirements for the service had already been purchased, at a cost of £218,000; the cable to Port Hamilton had actually been laid to the place which was subsequently abandoned. The other cable, however, still lay on the premises of the contractors, coiled up, ready for orders as to what should be done with it. What was done with it? It was not used. I do not know whether the House will recollect it or not, but it was sold at the first favourable opportunity, and the proceeds went to diminish the net charge on the Vote of Credit. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope), standing at the Table the other night, emphasized what we had already read in the Statement relating to his Department, and declared to the House that the appropriating of the proceeds of sale to the reduction of Votes was a dangerous system, and one which ought to be discontinued. The same system which has obtained in the case of the Board of Admiralty has obtained under the War Office. The price obtained for the cable is lumped with the proceeds of other stores sold, one of the principal items of which is the coal furnished for use at foreign stations, and which, of course, at some time or other, will have to be replaced at considerable expense to the country. The next point to which I ask the attention of the House I take from the clever and interesting Memorandum issued to Members as explanatory of the Estimates which we are now asked to consider. It will be seen, at pages 5 and 6 of the Statement, that in 1885 the Government, recognizing the insufficiency of previous arrangements, entered upon an expenditure, in addition to that of the ordinary shipbuilding programme, of no less a sum than £3,100,000 in the building of ships by contract in private yards. Besides this, £1,600,000 for guns was to be added to the Ordnance Vote, which is included in the annual Estimate of the expenditure for the War Office. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, we are told, estimated that this outlay would be spread over five years, ending on the 31st of March, 1890. The Expenditure for 1885 was to be £800,000; for 1886-7 it was likewise to be £800,000; while the balance was to be taken in 1887-8, 1888-9, and 1889-90, at the rate of £500,000 a-year, thus making up the £3,100,000. But what has really happened? In 1885, instead of £800,000, the Admiralty spent on this business over £1,000,000 sterling. In the year which is now within a fortnight of its close, instead of the second £800,000, they have spent £1,320,000; and instead of taking only £500,000 for the coming financial year, the First Lord tells us that he wants £997,336—or, in round numbers, another £1,000,000—and thus, before three years of the five years have expired, the Admiralty has expended more than £250,000 over and above the total sum stipulated for during the entire period. But, Sir, although the money has been spent, or will have been spent in a very short time, the work has not been done. Of the five belted cruisers included in the programme which the £3,100,000 was to cover, not one single cruiser has been delivered. The six steel torpedo cruisers included in the programme have been delivered; but we are informed that there has been some trouble in the preliminary steam trial, and their completion is, in consequence, delayed. Now, passing from that subject, I say that one of the points which must forcibly strike anyone attempting to elucidate the relations between the Admiralty and the fortunate contractors who happen to have dealings with them, is the very great indulgence which is sometimes extended to the contractors, especially when it suits the convenience of the naval authorities. For instance, we have it officially reported to the House that, last year, the contractors for some machinery had received advances to the amount of £38,140 beyond the sum which they were entitled to receive according to the strict terms of their contracts; and, in the same way, the contractors for shipbuilding had received, over and above what they were entitled to receive, the amount of £50,490. Similarly, Armstrong & Co. received £199,950 in respect of gun mountings for various ships in course of manufacture for the Admiralty, although, in the arrangement entered into with that firm, no provision for such advance had been made; and the curious feature of that particular case is, that of the immense sum so improperly advanced, £67,000 was paid on the very last day of the financial year—namely, the 31st of March, 1886. Of course, it is very easy to see that by so accommodating the contractors, the Admiralty were enabled to dispose of a large sum of money which, if they had kept it over to the following morning, they would have been compelled, under the law, to surrender as an unexpended balance. Again, under the arrangement of April, 1885, Messrs. Whitehead & Co. contracted for the supply of 200 torpedoes, to be delivered free on board at Fiume for £300,000. Fifty of these were to be delivered within six months from the date of contract, and 25 during each succeeding month. According to the contract, they ought to have delivered, by the end of March, a total of 175 torpedoes; but, as a matter of fact, only 100 were delivered, and they were paid for. But, besides the £30,000 to which the contractors were entitled on account of the torpedoes which they had delivered, they were paid the sum of £21,000 more on account, although the torpedoes were not delivered according to contract, and the contractors were actually in arrear with the delivery. We may usefully contrast this treatment with that we find to be the conduct of the Admiralty in respect of certain other persons who do not happen to be so favourably regarded as the particular individuals I have referred to. In order that I may not be considered as speaking without book, I confine myself to what is reported by the Committee specially appointed to inquire into the Contract Business of the Admiralty. That Committee was presided over by the hon. Member for the Govan Division of Lanark (Mr. Pearce), and his selection as Chairman was a very admirable one; because, at the time it was made, the Gentleman had not had time to allow all his good intentions to evaporate. The three Members of this House who were upon that Committee, whatever may be their professional occupations, are not only men of unquestionable ability, but men of unquestionable character; and I am bound to say that, although they sit on the other side of the House, and are opposed to me in politics, as I am opposed to them, I should feel positively ashamed if I could think myself capable for one moment of alluding to one of them as "a disappointed tenderer." I heard, with a feeling of disgust, that expression applied to the hon. Member (Mr. Pearce), than whom, I am perfectly certain, there is no more straightforward, honest, and useful man in this House, and I tender my hon. Friend the expression of my personal respect, having had, on many occasions, opportunities of judging of his qualities as Chairman. This Committee reported, among other things, upon this particular point—that more expedition is requisite in passing contractors' claims for ships and engines, the delays in connection with payment being at present unreasonable. That is the story, and it is a true story, with regard to the conduct of the Admiralty in certain cases. There is unreasonable and undue delay in certain cases; but in the case of other contractors, as I have shown to the House, there is no delay, but, on the contrary, they have given large sums of money before payment of those sums was due. The Committee, unquestionably, found itself compelled to point out what they termed many and grave defects in the general administration and system pursued at the Admiralty with regard to the matters referred to their consideration. I will not dwell upon the blots indicated in regard to the administration, such as the want of co-operation between the different Members of the Board; neither will I venture to go into matters which, as a layman, I do not profess to understand, such as specifications being complete or incomplete, alternative designs, and so forth; but in this Report there are things which any man of ordinary intelligence can understand; and certainly, I am surprised to read, as I do in page 19, that notice is taken of the apparent absence of a thoroughly practical Engineering department, the result of which is that there is no one at the Admiralty competent to design engines, and to bring the latest engineering science to bear upon designs. Anyone can see that there must be something very unsatisfactory in the administrative system at Whitehall, when it can be reported that large contracts were made in 1885, prior to the appointment of the present Controller of the Navy; that when a large number of contracts were concluded, in many cases the lowest offers were not accepted, and that designs were adopted quite at variance with the specifications sent out; that tenders were sent out for ordinary compound engines, and that designs had been accepted for those of treble expansion. We are told, further, that it has all through been the custom, after tenders have been received, to discriminate between the offers, on the ground of a supposed difference between the relative reputation and ability of the parties tendering; and when, presumably, they have only been invited to tender after the Admiralty had satisfied themselves of their capability for the work, elements of uncertainty have been introduced into the awards which have been based on personal feeling. That is rather a peculiar sentence to read; but, after the exhibition we have had to-night, there is probably some ground for it. "This, no doubt, is prejudicial in the minds of contractors and shipbuilders to the impartiality of the Admiralty." When such a system is adopted, it is no great wonder that the results obtained correspond with the system. One of the results is shown in the case of two vessels, the *Renown* and the *Sanspareil.* Tenders were invited in the early part of 1885 for hulls and engines to these vessels jointly, the holds to indicate 5,500 horse-power by natural draught, and 8,500 horse-power by forced draught, with a request for alternative designs. I will not read through the figures and details; but the end of it was that after some differences with regard to horse-power, and after several different firms had tendered, Messrs. Elder and Co. offered to provide this additional horse-power without extra charge; and Messrs. Palmer and Co. also proposed to increase the guaranteed power to 9,000 indicated horse-power free of cost. Ultimately, however, both by reason of the discussion with regard to horse-power, and the modification of the proposal originally put forth, and from the fact that the hulls and machinery were regarded separately, an offer was accepted from Sir William Armstrong, Mitchell and Co. for one ship at £18,500, and another from the Thames Iron Works Company for the other ship at £17,500, in excess of the proposals made by other firms for the same work. That is the way in which the money of the country is squandered. The further payments on account of the increased horse-power are put on page 11 of the Report. The Report, after speaking of the first contract for engines, goes on to say, that six months after it was concluded

> "Tenders were invited for engines of a facsimile character with boilers, to produce the same power for the *Nile* and *Trafalgar*. The lowest offer was from Messrs. Harland and Wolff £78,234 for each ship, or equal to a reduction of £16,500 for the two sets of engines from the prices above stated."

The tender of Messrs. Harland and Wolff for these engines was not accepted, though in submitting a list of the firms to be invited to tender—amongst whom was this firm of Messrs. Harland and Wolff—the professional Advisers of the Admiralty remarked—

> "These are the principal engineering firms of the country, and comprise all to whom it would be, in our opinion, desirable to entrust the construction of such important machinery."

The tenders were one for £94,000 and one for £78,215—the former being from the same firm who, in August obtained, by negotiation, £112,000 for that which in the February following they offered to competition at £94,000. I cannot understand why the contract was not given to Messrs. Harland and Wolff, who were willing to do the work for £78,000 odd. Having read the paragraph bearing on this matter, I thought it necessary to put myself into communication with a gentleman perfectly well acquainted with the firm, and a number of other firms throughout the country; and I enquired of him whether, as a matter of fact, there was any good reason why Messrs. Harland and Wolff should not have the contract, and whether they were really capable of performing the work. His answer was short and emphatic. "Most unquestionably," he said, "they were perfectly qualified to do the work." Under these circumstances, and looking at the matter from a public point of view, I cannot understand why, when a contractor has tendered to do certain work for £78,000—a contractor who has done work for the Government, and who is recognized as thoroughly qualified for such work—the contract should be given not to him but to another firm paid £94,000 to do it. So we see how payments in advance are made, even though they are not due; while in other cases, there is blameworthy delay in meeting claims which have fairly been put forward for work actually done; and so we see, also, that firms perfectly competent to do the work are passed over, and the tenders of other contractors are accepted at a very unnecessary increase in the cost to the public. But, Sir, even when tenders are accepted, are contractors bound to the terms on which they tender? It would appear from paragraph 27 of this Report that they are not—or, at any rate, not always. The paragraph is this—

> "A serious discrepancy was shown by the evidence before us to exist in some cases between the terms arranged with the contractor for engines and the conditions eventually embodied in the contract in regard to penalties and payments for extra indicated horse-power."

Well, Sir, this is the way in which the contract business of the Admiralty has been conducted in the past, and it is not a matter of wonder that the Committee report as they do in paragraph 39—

> "It is inexpedient that purchases amounting to something like £50,000 a-year should be negotiated by the Director of Contracts without superior authority."

I will not enter into the question of whether the Director of Contracts ought to be the sole purchaser on behalf of the Admiralty, though, I believe, the system has worked well in respect of the Army Services—at any rate, so far as the Director of Army Contracts is concerned. I do not see why it should not work equally satisfactorily in the Naval Service. But, surely, when the Director of Contracts can purchase on his own authority to the extent of £50,000 a-year, there ought to be some kind of check upon him—there ought to be some kind of higher officer who ought to be competent, at any rate, to look at the details of these contracts both before and after they have been entered into. I do not, for a moment, pretend to think that the system of contracts ought to be curtailed or diminished. It is equally true of the Navy, as it is true of the Army, that the Admiralty authorities are not able from their own Establishments to supply the needs of the Service even in time of peace. The War Office Establishments cannot supply in times of peace more than 50 per cent. of the requirements, and the Navy authorities, I suppose, find it difficult to provide even so high a proportion. It is, therefore, clear that the wants of these two great Services must be dependent to a large extent upon supplies by contract. And the more they are dependent on the contractors, I think, the better, because you cannot expect the contractors, if the sudden demands of war should come upon them, to be prepared to furnish what is required for such low charges and on such reasonable terms as they would if the demands regularly made on them during the time of peace were such as to make it profitable for them to keep efficient and sufficient machinery. Therefore I am by no means desirous of seeing the system of contracts curtailed; but I do say this, that there is evidence not only in this Report, but in the Reports of the Government itself, and in the Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty, and in the Reports made by the Comptroller and Auditor General to this House, with regard to proceedings in connection with contracts in the past—there is abundant evidence to show that the whole system of contracts under the Admiralty authorities does require a very complete overhauling. That has been recognized, but I submit that the Minute that is placed at the beginning of this Report, and signed by the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty, is altogether short of the requirements of the case. What he says is—

> "Since 1885 new regulations have been adopted, and a series of reforms initiated in the Comptroller's Department, which will, I hope, go far towards attaining the objects the Committee have in view, and for the accomplishment of which they have made numerous and practical suggestions."

That is all very well so far as it goes; but the House will probably wish to know how far it goes, and what does it mean? What are the regulations that have been adopted in order to prevent the blots and defects the Committee have pointed out, and how does the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty propose in the future to avoid these things which I have mentioned, and which certainly, in some cases, amount almost to a scandal?

Captain PRICE (Devonport): The discussion commenced by the hon. Member for Barrow-in-Furness (Mr. Caine) and continued by the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Mr. A. O'Connor) is one of very great importance, and if it had been commenced at an earlier hour of the evening I should have felt justified in going at length into it. I am quite aware, however, that the noble Lord has to take the first Votes to-night, therefore I will confine my remarks to a very few minutes. I should like, however, to say that I entirely—or almost entirely—agree with the remarks that fell from the hon. Member for Barrow-in-Furness, leaving, of course, out of consideration some rather personal remarks which fell from him, and which, I must say, I did not agree with. I endorse the opinions he expressed when he declared himself entirely opposed to the policy of leaving the giving of contracts to the Director of Contracts. I think it a most mischievous thing to overload these officials with such affairs. I quite agree with what has been said by Captain Hotham in this matter; but does not this discussion raise a very important question in our minds for consideration? Is it worth our while, or is it right, for us to go so largely into this system of contracts at all? Why is it that with our magnificent Dockyards, where we can produce everything required in the Navy, that we go so much into the open market and spend large sums of the public money on these contracts? Sir, I must protest, in the interests of economy, against the immense sums that are being squandered by the Government in this matter of contracts. It seems to me in the highest degree unbusiness-like that, having spent enormous sums on our Naval Dockyards, and having spent millions of money in setting up plant with which to build our ships, we should not make proper use of that plant, but should go to private yards to get work done which could be equally well done in our Royal Dockyards. I have only to turn to this Report of Contracts to find a useful illustration of what I am urging. We are told that in the case of certain iron-clad ships certain tenders were given. Well, one tender is, I think, £18,000 lower than the tender that was actually accepted; and are we to suppose that no profit is made by the contractors who build these ships for us? I know we are sometimes told so. I go into a shop sometimes to purchase an article. I complain of the price; and the shopkeeper tells me—"Oh, I can assure you we do not get any profit at all on this article; on the contrary, we are great losers by it." I would as soon believe a statement of that kind on the part of a shopkeeper, as the statement that the contractors who build our ships do not make a profit out of the work. Such statements are all nonsense. Of course, a profit, and a large profit, is made by the contractor. I do not suppose the owners of the shipbuilding yards who are called on to build the ships on which we spend £500,000, would attempt to go into such an extensive business as that without getting a profit of something like 10 per cent. Well, if you take the profit we may suppose to be made by such tenderers as Messrs. Harland and Wolff, and add to that £10,000 or £18,000, which we are giving to Messrs. Armstrong, Mitchell, and Co., we have a sum of something like £60,000 which we are giving away for the manufacture of these ships over and above what we might have given if the ships had been built in the Royal Dockyards. But this is not the only reason why I say it is mischievous and a mistake to build these ships so extensively in private yards. At the commencement of this evening's debate I remember an hon. Gentleman —I think the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed)—rather surprised us by stating that all our designs for ships that were being obtained from private dockyards were made public property—that is to say, that the designs for our ships, which, we do all we can to keep secret, and to keep from falling into the hands of Foreign Powers, in the case of ships built in private dockyards are made perfectly public property. Anyone can buy them for almost anything he likes. That is a serious consideration, and it is a thing which cannot happen in the case of ships which are built in Public Dockyards. Now, in the statement which the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) has laid before us, he has told us the allowance which ought to be made for the depreciation of our stock in ships. I wish he had carried out the same principle as regards the value of our stores. I think it would be a very important thing, and a very excellent thing, if, in future, he was to give us some idea of the nature and value of our stock and stores in hand. We are told what is required to buy stores for the year; but we never have a valuation of all the stores in the Service—for instance, of the timber, metal, and so on. That item is a very large one; it is something like £500,000 or £600,000. I see there is a very large decrease made this year in that item. I wonder why that is. Is it because the stores were depleted last year? In another item we find a corresponding increase, so we never know exactly where we are. It has often been the case that Boards of Admiralty, finding that their shipbuilding is rather running down, and wanting to get more money from the House of Commons to make up for the deficiency, deplete the stores, and the House of Commons knows nothing about it. It is sometimes the case that the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty will come down and astonish the House by saying he has done more than his Predecessor in the way of increasing the Navy; but, at the same time, he hides from us the fact that the stores are depleted, and that if another Board of Admiralty came in they would have to spend a great deal of money in getting the stores up to the required amount, and that in consequence of having to do that they could not spend the necessary amount of money in building. I hope that in future the First Lord of the Admiralty will be able to give us some idea of what stock of stores we have in hand. Now, I should like to make a few remarks upon the *personnel* of the Navy; it is quite as important as *matériel.* At the commencement of the evening, I asked the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty what he intended to do as regards carrying out the recommendations of the Duke of Edinburgh's Committee concerning the pensions to the widows of our seamen. The Report of the Committee was sent in two years ago; but the recommendations it contained have not been acted upon. My noble Friend very courteously and kindly stated that if I would come to him he would tell me the reason why the Committee's recommendation had yet not been carried out; but this is not a matter which can wait. I think the noble Lord should have told the House to-night, as I think I can tell them, what the reason is. I believe he will not deny the fact that the whole of the Board of Admiralty are unanimously of opinion that this recommendation should be carried out, but that they cannot get the small amount of money which is required from the Treasury. I believe that if the noble Lord were to ask the House of Commons to back him up in this matter—it is a small matter as far as the amount of money goes, but a very important matter to a great number of poor deserving people—the House of Commons will have no difficulty in providing the money which is necessary for these pensions. One word in regard to our warrant officers. Many years ago, during the time of the Crimean War, it was thought a great shame and a hardship that our warrant officers, that our seamen were the only seamen in the world who were never able to get a commission, never able to rise to the rank of officers. That was felt to be a hardship, and an Order in Council was made that our seamen should be allowed, under circumstances of long servitude, or of bravery in action, or for other special services, to rise to the rank of officers. Now, will the House believe that from that time to this not one single seaman has ever been given the commission of an officer?—they rise to the rank of warrant officers, but beyond that they cannot go. The matter was fully discussed some years ago, and the then First Lord of the Admiralty—I am not sure it was not the right hon. Gentleman the present Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers)—thought he would get over the difficulty in this way. He said, well, we will give some warrant officers commissions. Now, what are those commissions? Instead of being called gunner or boatswain or carpenter, they are called chief gunner, chief boatswain, and chief carpenter, and they are asked to believe they are commissioned officers; you may just as well tell a cabby that he is a coachman to Her Majesty the Queen. Well, that is the way the difficulty was got over. I think it is a great shame; and I submit to the House that it is a standing disgrace to this country that the Navy, which we always look upon as the finest profession in the world, is the only profession where a common man before the mast cannot in course of time, if he shows himself worthy of it, secure the uniform of an officer. There are supposed to be difficulties in the way; I do not see any difficulties at all. There are supposed to be social difficulties, but social difficulties should not exist; the warrant officers do not ask to be lieutenants and put in rooms with other lieutenants on a ship. There is no occasion for it. There are hundreds of appointments in the Navy where they need not come in contact, if they do not like it, with the other executive officers of the Service. There is the whole Coastguard open to them. There are appointments to gun-boats and the torpedo service, and many other services which I need not mention, where these officers might be very usefully employed as lieutenants. Again, they argue if that cannot be conceded to them, why should they not, after they have served their time in the Service and come on retirement, receive the rank of lieutenant on retirement. That looks a small matter, but it is not. It is one of great importance to them and to their families. These are the only few remarks I shall make with regard to the *personnel* of the Navy. The noble Lord would do well to take this matter into consideration. If the noble Lord would do something towards offering commissions to our seamen, and also in helping our men to make provision for their widows, he would do a great deal more to perpetuate the Queen's Jubilee than is to be done in spending large amounts of money on statues and the like.

Mr. HOOPER (Cork, S.E.): At this late hour (1.10) I will not trespass very long upon the attention of the House. But what I wish to bring before the House is, in the words of the Motion, which I regret the Forms of the House will not permit me to move, that the Government should take more energetic steps to bring to completion the works at Haulbowline Dockyard in Cork Harbour, in order that the large expenditure already incurred there may at the earliest possible date bear useful results to the Navy and the Public Service. In order that I may correctly place before the House the usefulness of this work, I have to refer to the early history of the undertaking. It was preceded by a very long agitation, beginning, I believe, at the time of the Union, for the construction of this dock was one of the bribes held out to the Irish people to consent to the Union of the two countries. But I shall begin with the year 1864, at which time a Committee was appointed, on the Motion, I think, of a predecessor of mine in this House, Mr. John Francis Maguire. That Committee was asked, on public grounds, and also on the ground that a fair share of the Imperial taxation should be expended in Ireland, to recommend the construction of a dock in Cork Harbour. I mention that fact lest the hon. Gentlemen who sit on the other side of the House should imagine my moving in this matter is entirely or mainly the result of any desire to obtain Imperial expenditure in my locality. A mass of evidence was produced before the House; and among others who gave evidence in favour of this project was the Duke of Somerset who has been already mentioned by— various speakers as closely allied with the Administration—Captain Godfrey Green, Captain Stuart, and Rear Admiral Mill. Rear Admiral Mill stated that—

> "Probably in time of war you would have ships disabled which might make for Cork, and it would be as well to have a dock there to meet cases of emergency, more especially at the present time."

And then he gives his reason, to which I especially ask the attention of what I may call the non-professional Members of the House—

> "In consequence," he says, "of the introduction of machinery there are many little derangements which take place, so that ships require to be docked much oftener than they used to be formerly."

The Committee also received evidence from Mr. Maguire, and he said that he had heard several naval men give their strong opinions in favour of the establishment of this dockyard. Sir George Sartorius stated before him the necessity of having a naval dockyard at Cork Harbour. Sir George Sartorius was of opinion that there should be a naval dockyard and arsenal on the West Coast of Ireland, because it was very unwise to have the defences of the country intrusted entirely to the Dockyards in England. The Committee in their inquiry felt the full force of the advantage to the Fleet of a first-class dock at Cork, and they advised the immediate construction of a first-class dock in some convenient spot in the Harbour, and also, if practicable, the deepening of the existing docks for occasional naval requirements. The Admiralty at that time acted on the Report, and they proposed to spend a sum of £150,000 in the construction of a dock in the course of six years. Well, Sir, for some reason or other that sum of £150,000 has been raised to something like £700,000 or £800,000. That large expenditure may seem to make the House a bit weary of this undertaking; but it is no detriment to my argument at present so far as there is practical result. This large sum is practically thrown into the sea, and therefore it behoves Parliament to see whether by some vigorous effort the dock cannot be turned to some useful account. But the work has been in abeyance for some time, owing, as it has been said, to the unfortunate circumstance that the Government cannot get a sufficient number of convicts for the work. Undoubtedly the proximity of convict labour at Spike Island was an inducement to enter into this enterprize; and while the convict establishment existed there and while convict labour, which cost the Government so little, was to be had, there might be some cause for dragging this work slowly along. But that state of things no longer exists, the convict establishment has been removed to Galway during the last two or two-and-a-half years; and now whatever money is to be spent—that is, if this dock is to be finished at all—and surely it ought to be finished when £700,000 or £800,000 has already been spent upon it—it will have to be completed by paid labour. I have quoted the reasons for which the dock was originally entered upon; and I ask any hon. Member of the House who is acquainted with the progress of affairs since that time to say whether those reasons have now less or more effect than they had at that time. I think it will be admitted that the reasons have greater effect now, for with the increased power of projectiles the chances are far greater that vessels in Her Majesty's Navy will require more docking, and will require to have more docks in which they can find refuge. I also call attention to the fact that the length of transport vessels has greatly increased since that time. The right hon. Gentleman was shocked to find that he could not take one of Her Majesty's ships into Malta; but what would happen if one of these splendid cruisers were to get damaged? If the arrangements at

Cork were complete, you would have a dock that you could take her to; and I may mention that Cork would be an excellent place from which to send troops. If one of the ships is disabled, how are you going to deal with her; is she to be brought to London for repair and then taken back again? I believe the whole history of naval administration shows that you use enormous sums of money which you might save if you had kept your Dockyards in an efficient state. In the time of the Crimean War I think there was something like the worth of £1,000,000 in the work done in private dockyards, because the Government Dockyards were overworked, and if such a time were to come again, I say it would be of the greatest consequence to the country to have the dock at Cork in a working state. If Her Majesty's Government are wise they will take this work seriously in hand, and that soon, and for this reason among others, that I see, with the greatest regret, that the shipping industry of Cork Harbour has been declining for years past, and that the trade is almost threatened with extinction. There are still some first-rate workmen left there, and the sooner they are saved from extinction the better. Apart altogether from that, I suppose that Her Majesty's Government are not altogether free from the apprehension of war at no distant period. France is not at the moment on the very best terms with England; on the contrary, she is the close ally of Russia, and perhaps the alliance which exists may be more friendly hereafter at a time when the Irish Coasts might not be free from attack. Under these circumstances, I say it would be well for the Government to have a harbour at Cork with all the appliances necessary for docking ships. It is a very capacious Harbour; there are splendid forts there mounted with the best artillery, and altogether it is the best position in which Her Majesty's ships can be placed. I will now remark that after all the money spent in the last 27 years, a new stage has been reached, and we are told that 80 men per week are to be discharged in June next. I ask the noble Lord whether it is his intention to allow the £700,000 or £800,000 which has been spent to lie waste, and whether he will not give these men some other work, which he can do very easily? Finally, I thank the House for the great courtesy they have shown during the time occupied by these remarks; and I ask the Government to consider carefully whether some new departure should not be taken to make this large sum of money immediately productive, and to provide, as soon as possible, on that part of the Coast a place in which Her Majesty's ships can be constructed and repaired alike in time of peace and war.

Mr. PEARCE (Lanark, Govan): The speech of the hon. Member for Barrow-in-Furness (Mr. Caine) seems to me to have had two points. In the first place, he vindicated a very pernicious system of contracting which had been going on for some years, especially during the term he was connected with the Admiralty; and, in the second place, he made a personal attack upon me, because I consented to act on the Committee of Contracts. He calls me a "disappointed tenderer." I am not a "disappointed tenderer," because years ago I discovered that the partiality existing amongst the professional advisers of the Admiralty was of such a character that it was not to be expected that I should get a contract under any circumstances whatever. I have tendered because I wished to remain on what is known as the Admiralty List; if I were not on that List I should be precluded from tendering in foreign countries. That is the sole reason why I was on the List—it was not because I had an idea of getting contracts. The hon. Member has also referred to me as cross-examining a professional officer. I simply asked that officer eight questions, and I ask the hon. Member if, out of those questions, he can point to one which was indiscreet? He cannot do so. As a professional man, I was supposed to ask questions of a technical character. I was solicited to act on the Committee, and it was pointed out to me that my professional knowledge would be of great service to the Admiralty. I think, in a case of this kind, the hon. Member should not make a personal attack on any Member of this House for doing what he considered to be for the public good. Now, I may state that I was not prompted, nor was any Member of the Committee prompted, to inquire into the question of the *Sanspareil* and *Renown*, on account of the firm to which I belonged having tendered for them. But the Committee were induced to inquire into the matter from the fact that the engines were given to a firm which has at the present time has 100,000 horse-power under construction. If the hon. Member turns to the Appendix of the Estimates, he will find that this firm has received orders for the engines for the *Trafalgar*, *Anson*, *Howe*, *Rodney*, *Collingwood*, *Mersey*, *Severn*, *Renown*, and *Sanspareil*. These represent 100,000 horse-power, and, roughly speaking, £1,000,000 sterling; it represents an amount of work greater than all the engineers in the country have in hand for the Government; and, that being so, we concluded that something was going on which it was desirable to find out. The hon. Member endeavoured to show that these two ships were obtained at a cheaper price by deducting the penalty which he said might be deducted if the engineers did not give the horse-power they had contracted for. But, as a matter of fact, in this contract there is no penalty at all. If the hon. Gentleman had read the evidence a little more carefully, he would not, I think, have made the rash statement which he did make, or have spoken about the suppression of the truth. Here is a suppression which he made in giving his version of the case to the House. With regard to the Belfast firm which offered to do the engines of the *Nile* and *Trafalgar* at a cost of £34,000 less than the Government are now paying, there was no reason that we could discover why they should not have had the contract. We were told that they were thoroughly competent to have the contract, and, when we asked why the Admiralty had invited the firm to tender, we were told that at the time there was great talk about justice to Ireland. There has been a great deal said about giving the Director of Contracts a great amount of power. When the Director of Contracts came before us we asked him whether he had anything to do with the contracts on these ships, and he said he had had nothing whatever to do with them. Well, Sir, when we found that this pernicious system was going on, which has been backed up by the hon. Member for Barrow-in-Furness, we considered that it would be desirable to have a man of commercial mind to elucidate the system of contracts. I conclude that the hon. Member for Barrow-in-Furness was formerly installed at the Admiralty on account of his commercial knowledge. I believe that the firm with which he was connected contracted with the Government for certain materials. [Mr. CAINE: Never.] Then I beg the hon. Member's pardon; I have been misinformed. But he has been in the habit of making contracts with large firms—my own firm, for instance—and I should have thought that he was a man of commercial mind. I have nothing further to add than this—that my opinion with respect to the system of contracting is embodied in the Report of the Committee.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): At this hour (1.40 A.M.), and at the close of a not unsatisfactory discussion on naval matters, I feel it is not necessary for me to inflict a speech on the House; but as a number of questions have been put to me relating to several matters which are not referred to in the Memorandum, it is, perhaps, desirable that I should say a few words in reply. The hon. Gentleman the Member for East Cork (Mr. Hooper) raised a question as to Haulbowline Dock, and seemed to be under the impression that there was an intention on the part of the Admiralty to postpone the operation of those works. I have not had the advantage of meeting the hon. Gentleman in connection with the subject. When I was over in Ireland I received a deputation of local gentlemen in regard to it, and I stated to the gentleman heading that deputation the course we intended to pursue. I told him that the amount of money we should spend in the succeeding year would be as much as we had spent the year before; but I added that, inasmuch as we should be completing a portion of the work, it would be necessary to discharge some of the workmen from time to time. In June next these discharges will have to commence; and, in arranging the time, we have been guided by a desire to get rid of the men at a period of the year when it will be the easiest for them to get other employment. It must always be remembered that we shall only be getting rid of the men because the work on which they have been engaged is being completed. As to the dock, I hope it will be ready to receive vessels in the course of the year, and that it will be found as valuable for naval and commercial purposes as the hon. Member anticipates. There has been some discussion with reference to the Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the system of making contracts at the Admiralty. I regret very much that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Barrow-in-Furness (Mr. Caine) introduced a personal element into that discussion, and I can assure the House that it is not my intention to imitate his example. What I would say on the subject is that, when last year it was suggested that a Committee should sit and investigate the question of the making of contracts at the Admiralty—a suggestion which originated with an Admiralty Departmental Committee—I asked the Secretary to the Admiralty to undertake the task to preside over the inquiry, and associate with himself, in the duties of investigation, three Members of Parliament in addition to other Admiralty officers. We were very anxious to have as a Member of that Committee some gentleman of commercial experience, who had a knowledge of that particular class of naval stores that the Admiralty were in the habit of contracting for. The proposition was made to the Member for the Govan Division of Lanarkshire (Mr. Pearce) that he should serve on the Committee, and he assented. I believed, at that time, as did the Secretary to the Admiralty, who had the management of the inquiry, that the question of contracts for engines and hulls only would not be investigated; but the old Chief Constructor of the Navy, Sir N. Barnaby, came up to give evidence as to the last contracts that had been made in reference to certain vessels and engines. In the course of his examination, Sir N. Barnaby stated the principle on which he had recommended certain tenders; and it became apparent to the Committee, as I say, that some error had been made. I have not had time to read all the evidence; but I have no doubt that a mistake was made by an Admiralty official, and I base my assertion on the fact that, in last year's Estimates, it will be found that engines were contracted for for the *Nile* and *Trafalgar*, both of which are larger and heavier vessels than the *Sanspareil* and *Renown*, at a price lower by £10,000 and £12,000 than that paid for the last-mentioned vessels. It is clear, therefore, that the contracts made in the first case were much more beneficial to the contractor than those made in the second. So far as I can make out, the mistake arose from the Admiralty officials knowing that a certain penalty was attached to every horse-power falling short of the required power. They assumed that that penalty was the price, and deducted that sum from the total amount of the tender, by which process they brought the tenders for the greater horse-power to a figure apparently lower than those for the higher. Those who read the evidence will see that one of the late chief officials admitted that he had made an error and an oversight. These contracts were completed under circumstances of great hurry, which is a fact which should not be lost sight of. It was in the year 1885, when it was considered not unlikely that we might be forced into collision with a great European Power. When the Report was presented and put on the Table of the House, a short Minute accompanied it, pointing out that the officials who now hold the position of Controller of the Navy and Chief Constructor were not those who were in Office at the time the contracts were made, and I pointed out that I believed that certain arrangements had since been made which went in the direction of meeting certain of the suggestions made by the Committee; but, at the same time, I can undertake on behalf of the Admiralty, that we will do our best to give effect to the purport of the suggestions made by the Committee. There may, however, be some controversy as to the advisability of transferring the making of contracts from the official upon whom the duty now rests. There is a reference to the matter in the Blue Book published two days ago, and the Report speaks of those recommendations. I believe we shall be able to arrive at some satisfactory conclusion which will prevent, in the future, any recurrence of what I believe to have been an error on the part of the technical officers of the Admiralty. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Devonport (Captain Price) asks me if we can give an estimate of what is the value of stores at the end of the year, and he pointed out that there is a decrease in the amount of timber. I would say, in reply, that this decrease has been deliberately made, as we find we have enough timber on hand to last us three years. The House must bear in mind that in regard to this question of naval stores the circumstances of the country have greatly changed in recent years. The great storehouses in our Dockyards were established and set up at a time when the productive power of the country was comparatively small, and when railroads were not in existence. In those days it was necessary to accumulate large quantities of stores for cases of emergency; but nowadays, should an emergency arise, we should find no difficulty in procuring large supplies of stores such as the hon. and gallant Member refers to at very short notice. I have no doubt, thanks to the agencies of electricity and steam, that now, on the shortest notice, large quantities of stores would be obtained from outside, and laid alongside the ships more quickly than they could be taken from our storehouses. The hon. and gallant Gentleman put two other questions to me—one, concerning the proposal to provide pensions for widows; and the other, in reference to the promotion of warrant officers to be executive officers. I must point out that, in this matter, you have to deal with the question of half-pay, and that warrant officers under the system proposed would find it difficult to live; and I have also to point out that no warrant officer could assume the position referred to without undergoing a certain prescribed examination which is an examination that I do not suppose many warrant officers would be able to pass. With regard to the pension fund, the question is a difficult one. My hon. and gallant Friend is aware that strong opposition has come from the men themselves, so much so that a certain portion of the proposals with regard to pensions we have been obliged to abandon. I have not been able to go thoroughly into the matter myself; but I think it will be necessary to substitute some other arrangement for that proposed by the Committee. Then, the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Eastbourne Division (Admiral Field) drew attention to certain Orders in Council which, he said, have inflicted great injury and wrong upon naval officers who form part of the Board of Admiralty. Well, Sir, as was pointed out, the first Order in Council was repealed 15 years ago.

Admiral FIELD: I know that; I stated it. I do not want to be misunderstood. It is well known that a new Patent of the Board of Admiralty rescinds the previous one. The Order in Council of 1872, no doubt, rescinded the one of 1869; but the one of 1869 is the parent of the one of 1872.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) wished to put the Board of Admiralty into the position of the Treasury Board, and he stated so. He desired to make the Naval Lords subordinates and assistants. That Order was rescinded, and the right hon. Gentleman the present Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) substituted another Order in Council, which put the Naval Lords of the Admiralty into their old position, making them Colleagues of the Board. What I have endeavoured to do, since I have held my present position, has been to increase as much as I could the individual power of the Naval Lords, and make them, as far as possible, responsible for their Departments, whilst, at the same time, giving them the opportunity of rendering themselves cognizant of the policy the Board as a body is pursuing. My noble and gallant Friend (Lord Charles Beresford) objected to attaching his name to the Estimates, because he had not had time to examine them. The desire is to make the Naval Lords share in the responsibility, and they accordingly feel it part of their duty to consider the Estimates, going carefully through them so that they may have no hesitation in attaching their signatures to them. Then, the question of naval education has been referred to. In two sentences, I will tell my hon. and gallant Friend who raised the point, how far we can agree with him, and how far we feel it impossible to agree with him. We are prepared to increase the age of entrance, and we have made arrangements for rendering examinations as general as possible. We have appointed a Council of Education to consider the whole subject; but we are not prepared to assent to the proposal of the Committee by which the age would be raised from 12½ to 16 years, nor are we prepared to assent to the system of unlimited open competition. I am perfectly satisfied that the proposals of the Committee in this respect are impracticable; and I am afraid they have made a mistake in the matter by drawing an analogy between the system in force in the Army and that that exists in the Navy. The proposal of the hon. and gallant Gentleman, if accepted, would have the effect of diminishing the amount of competition. The hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed) pointed out that, as my Minute stated, certain of our iron-clads were much more deeply immersed than had been anticipated; and he went so far as to say that, in consequence of this defect, the vessels in question were useless. I think he quoted a remark made by the hon. Member for Southampton last year, in which he expressed a very disparaging opinion as to the utility of the *Impérieuse.* Well, since the hon. Gentleman the Member for Southampton spoke, the *Impérieuse* has been thoroughly tested. The officer who went out in command of the vessel was the hon. and gallant Gentleman's own flag captain on the North American Station, and he gave a most favourable account of the ship. The statement I myself made I gave after consulting the naval technical advisers—namely, that, notwithstanding the deep immersion of this and other large vessels, though there has been some miscalculation as to their draught, are amongst the most powerful iron-clads afloat. As to the observations of my hon. Friend the Member for Oldham (Mr. Maclean)—who expressed some doubt as to whether, hereafter, there was to be any statement on the Navy Estimates, and who is doubtful as to the operation of the proposed depreciation fund—I would point out to him that, on page 16, there is a statement in about half-a-dozen lines—a summary of the present condition of naval finance. We are spending this year £1,000,000 of money more than we should spend in an ordinary year, to carry out the programme of Lord Northbrook; but we are spending £138,000 less than we ought to do to make good the annual depreciation fund. If you deduct £138,000 from £1,000,000, you will have £860,000, the difference which is the margin upon which I think hereafter reduction or retrenchment can be made. The depreciation fund will give an annual sum to be expended on new construction, which will keep up the Fleet at the strength and efficiency it is estimated it should reach. [Mr. R. W. Duff: How about the coaling stations?] There is an inquiry still going on as to them. There is no doubt that the facilities which we have for coaling are deficient, but experiments are being made. A certain apparatus was set up, which I have no doubt the hon. Member is aware of, which has been found quite inoperative; and until we are convinced as to what is the best method of shipping coal, we do not propose to incur large expenditure on this matter. Still, it is a question which must be attended to. I hope I have answered all the questions which have been put to me. It is satisfactory to find that the experiment of publishing a printed Statement has proved a success. This is shown by the fact that the discussion to-night has been much more germane to the subjects contained in the Estimates than previous discussions. I hope the Speaker will now be allowed to leave the Chair, so that the 1st Vote may be taken.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: If we allow the Speaker to leave the Chair, and the first Vote to be taken, I trust the Government will permit the general discussion to take place on the Victualling Vote in the same way as is done in connection with the Army. I have been anxious to make several observations; but I have not been willing to interpose during the discussion on the special subjects with regard to which Notices of Motion were put upon the Paper. It would have been very inconvenient if I had interposed to-night. Therefore, I hope that if the Speaker leaves the Chair, there will be no objection to discussing the question of general policy on the Victualling Vote.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Certainly; there will be no objection.

Mr. LANE (Cork Co., E.): I do not wish to intrude myself for very long before the House. I have sat here very patiently, for eight hours, for the purpose of supporting the Resolution which was put on the Notice Paper relating to the Haulbowline Dock. I am as deeply interested in the question as if I were the Representative of Queenstown; but I do not wish at this late hour (2 o'clock), to do more than merely tell the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) that the Irish Members do not intend to put forward their claim in regard to this dock in any *ad misericordiam* sense. We speak the unanimous opinion of the Irish Members, and we are determined to press this matter forward rather upon the basis that Queenstown Harbour is a most suitable site for a Royal Naval Dockyard, and that a Naval Dockyard is a necessity from our point of view; that we contribute upwards of £1,000,000 of the money spent on the Navy, and that some of that money ought to be returned to us in the way of expenditure in Ireland. Those are the two grounds upon which we make the claim that the original plan for the construction of docks at Haulbowline shall be carried out. I sincerely hope that before it is within our power to refer to this subject again, the First Lord of the Admiralty will see his way to modify the declaration he has made —that the Admiralty cannot at present proceed with the work. I am persuaded that, turning the matter over in his mind, the First Lord of the Admiralty will see that the Irish people have a very strong claim on the Admiralty for some portion of its expenditure. But it must not be supposed that we merely claim that this work shall be proceeded with in order that we can get back our money. We believe that money expended on a Royal Dockyard in Cork Harbour will be money wisely expended for the benefit of the Empire at large.

Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

## SUPPLY—NAVY ESTIMATES.

Supply—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That 62,500 men and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, including 12,900 Royal Marines."

**Dr. CLARK** (Caithness): On this Vote I should like to say a word or two with regard to the use to which some of our gunboats and Marines have been put. At this early hour (2.5) I do not intend to say much; I only want to show how ridiculous it is to use gunboats and Marines as they have been used lately in the North of Scotland. The first time they were used there was about five years ago. The Liberal Government sent a gunboat and a force of Marines to coerce half-a-dozen crofters who had allowed some stock to graze on certain hills where it was said they had no right to do so. The Marines could not arrest these unfortunate crofters; indeed, all the captain could do was to suggest to the men that they should go to Edinburgh to be arrested. One-half of these so-called criminals—a Royal Naval Reserve man and others—went to Edinburgh, for the purpose of being arrested. I believe they had to wait a week before any of them were arrested. The circumstances attending the second employment of the Marines were pretty similar to those on the first occasion. A gunboat and Marines were sent to arrest a crofter. They arrested this crofter, kept him in prison for a week, and then turned him out without trying him. The man is now bringing an action in the Scotch Courts for damages. Now, our fishing districts have been the best nurseries for both Marines and blue-jackets. In the district visited by these Marines we have a large number of Naval Reserve men; but if this course is persevered in, we shall lose the district as a recruiting ground. The men of the Highlands have a great contempt for the Commissioners of Supply in the county; but up to now they have had great respect for the Marines and blue-jackets. They will soon lose this respect, if the Marines are sent often on such errands as I have described.

**Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON** (Kerry, W.): Perhaps it will be regarded as an acceptable suggestion that we should now adjourn. I do not wish to make a Motion to that effect; but simply to suggest that the Committee may think it worth while to report Progress. No one seems inclined to answer the remarks of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark). Perhaps, at the present moment, hon. Members are not possessed of facts to enable them to do so. [*A laugh.*] One of the hon. Gentleman's countrymen thinks it worth while to laugh, but not worth while to answer his speech. I think it is not unbecoming in me to suggest that we have gone far enough to-night, so far as talk is concerned. ["Hear!"] Well, I do not think the night has been marked by any serious effort at progressive legislation; but, so far as talk has gone, we have a fair record from all sides of the House. Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen have talked to-night who have scarcely broken their "duck" during the Session so far. This is supposed to be a festive night for men who recognize the nationality I claim; but I do not pretend to say it has been a very festive matter for us to listen to the wearisome debate which has taken place to-night. Nothing practical has been done, or can be done, and therefore I suggest, most respectfully, that the Chairman should now report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Edward Harrington.*)

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) Strand, Westminster): I must confess I never heard reasons less reasonable why we should report Progress. I hope the Committee will unanimously agree that we should proceed at once to the despatch of Business.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I should like to ask the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) what are his intentions? If he gets the first Votes for money and men under the regular Naval Estimates, will he stop there, and not take the Naval Supplementary Estimates, or ask for the Vote on Account of the Civil Service?

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.): I understand that this Vote will be the only one taken to-night, and, in that case, I do not think my hon. Friend (Mr. Edward Harrington) would do well to press his Motion to a Division. I am quite sure he will accede to the general wish of Members of the House, and allow this Vote to be taken.

COLONEL NOLAN: I should like to receive an answer from the Government before we proceed any further. If they get the Votes for money and men, will they agree to report Progress?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I think the discussion has been such that would warrant us in taking the Supplementary Estimates, and it certainly would be convenient to the Committee that such a course should be adopted. We have been discussing the Naval Estimates the whole night, and if the Committee desire to postpone the Vote on Account of Civil Services, I shall not object; but, at the same time, I think it would be a great waste of public time to do so.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question again proposed.

COLONEL NOLAN: I should like to know from the First Lord of the Treasury whether, if we give him the two regular Votes of these Naval Estimates, and the Supplementary Naval Estimate, he will not persevere with the Vote on Account?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: That is what I understood the First Lord of the Treasury to say.

COLONEL NOLAN: He said, if it was the wish of the Committee.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I said distinctly that I should like to take the Votes for men and money, and the Supplementary Naval Estimates, and then, if it was the wish of the Committee to postpone the Vote on Account, I would postpone it until Monday; but I thought it would be a misfortune, looking at the pressure of Public Business.

MR. R. W. DUFF: In the event of the Vote on Account being postponed, will the right hon. Gentleman bring the regular Civil Service Estimates on on Monday?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I will say to-morrow what I will do on Monday.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I think we should save time if the First Lord of the Treasury would express his own opinion as to the postponement of the Vote on Account.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I will not go on with it.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2.) £2,940,700, Wages, &c. to Seamen and Marines.

(3.) £277,000, Supplementary, Navy Services, 1886-7.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

## MERCHANT SHIPPING (FISHING BOATS) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

(*Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Jackson, Sir Herbert Maxwell.*)

[BILL 168.] COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Baron Henry De Worms.*)

Motion *agreed to*.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 to 10, inclusive, *agreed to*.

Clause 11 (Fees payable on engagements and discharges).

Mr. GROTRIAN (Hull, E.): This clause provides that the Board of Trade may prescribe the fees to be paid by the owners of fishing boats in connection with the engagement and discharge of crews; and it goes on to say that the superintendents, clerks, and servants may refuse to proceed with any such engagement or discharge unless the fees have first been paid, and that the fees so paid shall be carried to the credit of the Mercantile Marine Fund. I ask, what is the intention of the Government with regard to these fees? because, on the face of the clause, it would be competent to the Board of Trade considerably to increase the fees payable under the Mercantile Marine Act of 1854. If the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill would give a pledge that the fees to be levied under the clause will not exceed the fees chargeable under the Mercantile Marine Act of 1854, I should regard it as satisfactory. With regard to the Bill generally, there are one or two points on which I might have felt disposed to offer a few remarks; but, having regard to the fact that the Bill finds general acceptance on both sides of the House, I shall limit my observations to the question I have raised, and which my constituents regard as of considerable importance to them. I venture to hope that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) will give the pledge I have asked for, and afford facilities, by deferring the next stage, in order to carry out his intention.

The SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (Baron Henry De Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): I can give the pledge which the hon. Gentleman asks for.

Clause *agreed to*.

Clause 12 (Power to hold inquiries in cases of loss of life from boats of fishing vessels).

Dr. CLARK (Caithness): I rise to ask why this Bill is not to extend, as I wish it to do, to Scotland? On what grounds is Scotland excluded?

Amendment proposed, to leave out Section (2).—(*Dr. Clark.*)

Baron HENRY DE WORMS: The hon. Member will be aware that a special Act was passed last year, dealing with the question of the Scotch Fisheries. It was quite understood in consequence that this Bill should not apply to Scotland, and when the hon. Member considers that I make that statement in accordance with the views of Scotch Members, I have no doubt he will not think it necessary to press his Amendment on the Committee.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Clause *agreed to*.

Clause 13 *agreed to*.

Preamble *agreed to*.

Bill *reported*, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon *Monday* next.

## *MOTIONS.*

### ISLE OF MAN (CUSTOMS) BILL.

*Considered* in Committee

(In the Committee.)

*Resolved*, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, that leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law respecting the Customs Duties of the Isle of Man.

Resolution *reported*:—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Jackson and Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 199.]

### NATIONAL PROVIDENT INSURANCE.

*Ordered*, That the Select Committee on National Provident Insurance do consist of Nineteen Members.

*Ordered*, That Mr. Hoyle and Captain Fellowes be *added* to the Committee.—(*Sir Herbert Maxwell.*)

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Three o'clock.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Friday*, 18*th March*, 1887.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—County Courts (Expenses) * (48).

*Committee*—Pharmacy Acts Amendment * (28).

*Third Reading*—Incumbents of Benefices Loans Extension Act (1886) Amendment * (39), and *passed*.

## IMPERIAL AND COLONIAL GOVERNMENT—THE CONFERENCE IN LONDON.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY, in rising to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he could assure the House that every endeavour would be made by Her Majesty's Government to secure the presence, at the opening of the Colonial Conference in April next, of suitable local Representatives of every Crown Colony, in addition to those of the self-governing Colonies for whom provision had already been made, so that the whole of Her Majesty's Colonial Empire might be represented on this important occasion? said, he had found that some great misapprehension had arisen with regard to the supposed action of Her Majesty's Government in not summoning the Representatives of the Crown Colonies to the forthcoming important Conference at the Colonial Office. He was himself convinced that there was some mistake; but the question was an important one, which strongly affected the feelings and sentiments of the Colonies, whom we desired to treat with the greatest consideration. He was sure no one desired to treat the Colonies with greater respect than his noble Friend the Under Secretary for the Colonies (the Earl of Onslow), whose long association with the Colonies and his known sentiments fully bore that out. This Conference would mark a new departure of the greatest importance in regard to the Colonies. It was possible that the Colonial Office even now hardly appreciated the very grave importance of the step they had taken in summoning the Colonies to confer with us as to matters affecting the Empire. Perhaps those outside the Colonial Office saw more clearly than those within it the gravity of the matters involved. In the first place, the object of the Conference was to confer as to the mutual business arrangements between the Colonies and the Mother Country, as to our mutual defence in case of war, and it also applied to facilities for inter-communication by post and otherwise, and he imagined it would touch upon Colonization. The Conference ought to tend, and ought to be so conducted as to tend, to the unity of the Empire and the mutual relations of every part of it. The sight of the Colonies meeting in Council with ourselves would help to raise the question out of the position of a merely local one, and he ventured to say that it was needed to get rid of the local feeling which existed in many of our Colonies. He had been told that in one of our leading Colonies at the present moment there was not an elementary school in which the history of England was taught; the only history taught was the short and purely local history of that Colony itself. He would ask their Lordships to remember what our Crown Colonies were, which apparently had not been represented in the list of Colonies invited to the Conference. Amongst the Crown Colonies that had hitherto not been represented or summoned to this Conference were the West Indies—Jamaica, Honduras, Barbadoes, Trinidad, Bahamas, Bermuda — the West African Settlements, Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus, Ceylon, Eastern Mauritius, the Straits Settlements, Borneo, and Fiji. The safety of the Empire depended on the safety of those Colonies whose names he had gone over. Anybody who carefully considered the matter would feel doubtful whether our more important Colonies could be maintained but for the existence of those precious little spots on the ocean. In case of war it would be everything to us to have the warm sympathy of the inhabitants of those Crown Colonies. He was in great hopes that his noble Friend would be able to assure the House that Representatives would be invited to come from every one of the Crown Colonies. It was possibly too late now to issue invitations to the first sitting of the Conference; but he would suggest that there might be two sessions, to the second of which the leading men of the Crown Colonies might be invited. He hoped they would this year see the Representatives of all the Colonies joining in the Jubilee Thanksgiving Service. In conclusion, he hoped no question of expense would be allowed to stand in the way of having the very best Representatives from all these various Colonies. He was sure their Lordships would be the very last people to grudge the expenditure necessary to secure so great a result.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of ONSLOW), in reply, said, he was very glad to have an opportunity of removing what the noble Earl (the Earl of Harrowby) had accurately described as a certain amount of misapprehension which appeared to have arisen in the public mind not only with regard to the Representatives of the Crown Colonies at the coming Conference; but also as to the value and importance which Her Majesty's Government attached to the meeting of that Conference generally. He believed he spoke the opinion of Her Majesty's Ministers, as well as of noble Lords in that House, when he said that there was probably no event in the forthcoming Jubilee year which would be of such interest and importance as this great meeting of distinguished men from all parts of Her Majesty's Empire. The increasing interest which was felt with regard to our Colonies in this country, and also the increasing desire on the part of the Colonies for closer communion with the Mother Country, were among the most significant features of the times, and he was quite certain Her Majesty's Government were desirous and eager to accord a hearty welcome to the Representatives whom they had summoned from distant shores and all parts of the world to meet in the capital of the Empire for the purpose of conferring together on Imperial questions. Since the Question of the noble Lord had been placed on the Paper, a Notice had appeared in the Press that the Colonies not possessing Representative Governments would not be officially represented in the Conference. That was to say, a communication had been made by the late Secretary for the Colonies to the Governors of the Crown Colonies, in the course of which he made the following statement:—

> "In the case of any Crown Colony which may not send a special Representative, I shall take care that other provision is made for securing such representation. If, however, you are in a position to furnish me with the name of any high officer or leading public man connected with the Colony who is likely to be in London during the Spring of next year, I should be glad to arrange for his presence at the Conference, at which matters specially affecting your Colony are likely to come up for discussion."

After the first meeting of the Conference he apprehended that there would not be a very large number of subjects which would fall under that latter category, but at the same time the noble Earl might rest assured that if there were such subjects there were Representatives in this country for most, if not all, the Crown Colonies, who would be invited by Her Majesty's Government. He might inform the noble Earl that Her Majesty's Government had made inquiries as to which of the distinguished persons from the Crown Colonies were now in England or could arrive in time for the opening of the Conference, and the result of those inquiries had been to show that there would be a Representative from very nearly every Crown Colony, who would be invited to attend at the opening meeting. It would then be seen that Her Majesty's Government had endeavoured to carry out the proposition contained in the Question of the noble Earl. He might add beyond that, that where there was more than one such distinguished person in this country, preference would be given to Members of local Legislatures, in order that they might hear the views of Her Majesty's Government and explain such unofficial views as were taken on the subject in the Crown Colonies.

House adjourned at quarter before Five o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

* * *

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Friday*, 18*th March*, 1887.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee—Resolutions* [March 17] *reported.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Waterworks Valuation and Rating (Scotland)* [203].

*First Reading*—Justices' Jurisdiction* [201]; Army (Annual)* [202].

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL—*First Reading*—Local Government (Ireland) (Carrick-on-Suir)* [200].

## QUESTIONS.

## POST OFFICE — TELEGRAMS — REGISTERED ADDRESSES.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.) asked the Postmaster General, If he would allow telegrams to be sent without insisting on a multiple address when telegrams are within the same district or town, thus—

"Broker," London,
to "Foundry," London,

might be rendered—

"Broker,"
to "Foundry," } London ?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I am not quite sure whether the hon. Member refers to telegrams sent from one registered address to another. If so, I may state that there is no necessity for the sender of such a telegram to give either his name or address. If, however, the Question relates to telegrams with multiple addresses, it would be very inconvenient to make the concession suggested. To prevent misunderstanding in dealing with such telegrams, it is necessary that the name of the place of destination should be telegraphed with each address. An important consideration in the matter is that the Department has registered, as part of abbreviated addresses, a large number of double names; and much confusion would result from any change of practice likely to render less apparent the distinction between telegrams for such double registered names and telegrams intended for a multiple address.

## NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—MONITORS IN NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland have determined not to appoint any more monitors, on the plea that the country is overstocked with teachers; and, if so, what compensation they intend to offer to the monitors who may lose appointment as assistant teachers; whether the Government will consider the desirability of prolonging the apprenticeship, at an increased salary, of the present staff of monitors who may be unable to obtain the promise of a school, and would thus be debarred from entering the Training College; and, whether in the large convent schools paid by Capitation Grant, one out of every two of the out-going monitors may be retained as assistant teacher, and allowed the usual salary by the Board?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Commissioners of National Education inform me that they have merely suspended the appointment of new monitors until next July, owing to excess in the number over the requirements of the service. No question of compensation arises. The Commissioners do not consider it expedient to prolong the period of monitorship.

## LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—POLICE AT TOBERMORE, S. DERRY.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) (for Mr. T. M. HEALY) (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Why no police are stationed in Tobermore, South Derry; is it the fact that Nationalists passing through the village are exposed at night to constant apprehensions of violence, that in other villages of the constituency the population and number of police are as follows:—

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Magherafelt, | pop. | 1,514, eleven | police |
| Moneymore, | ,, | 588, six | ,, |
| Castledawson, | ,, | 160, five | ,, |
| Ballyronon, | ,, | 100, five | ,, |
| Gulladuff, | ,, | 50, five | ,, |

while Tobermore, with over 400 inhabitants, has no police; and, if protection in future will be afforded to travellers through that village?

MR. LEA (Londonderry, S.) said, before the Question was answered, he would ask if the inhabitants of Tobermore did not bear the highest character as people of orderly conduct; and if it were not quite unnecessary for the police to be stationed there?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): In answer to the Question on the Paper, I am informed that the statistical portions are correct. No single instance is known to the District Inspector of any violence having been offered to the Nationalists of Tobermore. The locality is a particularly peaceable one, and adequate police protection is afforded by patrols from the neighbouring stations. I hope the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Lea) will take that as a complete answer to his Question.

## LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—IMPRISONMENT OF WILLIAM CASSELS.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is the case that William Cassels, sentenced on the 5th instant by the Sheriff Substitute at Portree to three weeks' imprisonment from his committal on December 23, had been kept in prison awaiting trial 10 weeks from that date, or seven weeks beyond the term of his actual sentence; and, if he will explain why a prisoner ultimately tried summarily before a Court whose powers of imprisonment are limited to two months, was detained in prison 10 weeks awaiting trial?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities): I have made inquiry into this case. During last winter the time of the Procurator Fiscal of Skye was much occupied in consequence of important criminal investigations and trials, some of which latter took place in Edinburgh. But, while this, to some extent, explains the delay in Cassels' case, it does not, in my opinion, excuse it altogether, as I am satisfied that there was no sufficient cause for so long a detention in prison before trial, and my decision that this was so will be conveyed to the Procurator Fiscal. I ought to add that, although the offender was tried in the Summary Court, this was not the original intention, as Cassels was ordered by my Depute to be tried by a jury; and the order was only cancelled in consequence of the long and improper delay in preparing the case, Crown Counsel thinking it better to order trial at once in a Summary Court, rather than detain the accused over the additional time of notice required in jury cases.

### JURORS (IRELAND)—RETURN.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) (for Mr. T. M. HEALY) (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Would he have any objection to grant a Return showing the number of jurors in each county and county of a city having separate Assizes in Ireland for the present year, and the number of Parliamentary electors also?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I have no objection to such a Return being laid on the Table as soon as it can be prepared, if the hon. and learned Member wishes to move for it.

### CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIOTS AT BELFAST—CHARGES OF JUDGE O'BRIEN TO THE GRAND JURIES.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) (for Mr. T. M. HEALY) (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Would he have any objection to lay upon the Table a copy of Judge O'Brien's Charge to the Antrim Grand Jury after the late Belfast riots, and also his Charge to the Kerry Grand Jury last week; and, could he state the number of persons killed and wounded during the Belfast riots, and the number killed or wounded by outrage in Kerry or Limerick, from the Summer Assizes of 1886 to the Spring Assizes of 1887?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Addresses of the Judges are, I have no doubt, published with substantial accuracy in the Press. The Government have no special information on the subject, and I do not see what advantage would be gained by laying the newspaper extracts on the Table. I am informed that the number of persons known to have been killed during the Belfast riots last year is 30, including the Head Constable and soldier who lost their lives. There is no record of the wounded. The police have information of eight persons killed and seven wounded by outrage in Kerry and Limerick since the Summer Assizes.

### EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—BUILDING OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS — THE CONSULTING ARCHITECT.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, with reference to the Circular recently issued by the Education Department—

> "Education Department, Whitehall,
> London, S.W.
>
> "Experience has shown that efficiency and economy in school-building have been greatly promoted by means of suggestions made by the consulting architect of this Department, and by conferences between him and the architects of school boards and voluntary managers.
>
> "As the making of such suggestions and the holding of such conferences are beyond what can be officially required from the consulting architect, and occupy a very considerable portion of his private time, your attention is directed to the following regulations:—

> "1. The duty of the consulting architect is to advise the Department and to point out which of the building rules have been violated; and he is prohibited from himself undertaking the erection of elementary schools.
>
> "2. In cases where school boards, managers or their architects require professional information or suggestions from the architect to the Department, as to the best mode of making the plan conform to such rules, he shall be entitled to charge fees on the following scale:—
>
> "For advising on plans of schools not exceeding 250 children, £3 3*s*.
>
> "For advising on plans of schools not exceeding 500 children, £4 4*s*.
>
> "Above this number, £5 5*s*.
>
> "In the case of a school board the fee will form part of the sum to be borrowed.—I have the honour to be, etc., P. Cumin."

Whether, inasmuch as the arrangement suggested to school boards is that they shall employ at their expense an officer of the Education Department in a matter in which he has afterwards to officially advise the Department, he will state the reasons for issuing the Circular?

The VICE PRESIDENT (Sir William Hart Dyke) (Kent, Dartford): The rules as to planning and fitting up schools are published, and are so plain and explicit that any competent architect should be able to apply them. It is the duty of the Education Department, through their architect, to point out in each case any of the rules which have not been observed; but it often requires special professional knowledge to discover the best mode of making a plan conform to the rules, and this does not fall within the province of the consulting architect of the Department. He is not an officer of the Department in the sense of being a Civil servant and entitled to a pension; but he is a gentleman in general practice who is retained to advise the Department whether the printed rules laid down have been complied with. He is debarred from himself undertaking the building of elementary schools; but many school boards have expressed a desire to avail themselves of his professional services, and by the Circular in question they are permitted. The employment of his services is entirely optional in each case, and other Departments have adopted the same principle.

## IRISH REPRODUCTIVE LOAN FUND ACT—CO. KERRY.

Mr. E. HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury What is the amount of money under the Irish Reproductive Loan Fund Act to the credit of the County of Kerry; and, whether any portion of this might be available for the purpose of erecting artizans' dwellings in the town of Tralee; and, if so, how much, and on what terms?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): The amount to the credit of County Kerry under the Irish Reproductive Loan Fund Act is £12,784. No portion of this could be applied to the erection of artizans' dwellings (see Section 4 of 37 & 38 *Vict*. c. 86, the Act which regulates the purposes to which the Fund may be applied).

## LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE MAAMTRASNA TRIALS—PAT JOYCE.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the report which appeared in *The Galway Observer* of the 5th instant, of a case brought by Pat Joyce against Stephen Joyce, at the Clonbur Petty Sessions, in which it is stated that, according to the oath of the clerk of Petty Sessions, the cuts which appeared on Pat Joyce's forehead at the time of the trial, and which he swore had been inflicted by the defendant, were not there when the complainant applied to the clerk for the summons, and must have been caused since then; whether the presiding magistrates are reported as having made the following observations from the Bench:—

> "Mr. Lynch, J.P.—During my whole experience as a magistrate I have never heard or seen such a glaring case of perjury. I certainly would be for sending the blackguard to gaol with hard labour.
>
> "Mr. Jackson, J.P.—I must certainly agree with you, that he deserves the severest punishment we can inflict;"

whether these statements are true; whether Pat Joyce was a Crown witness at the Maamtrasna trials; whether he is the son of Anthony Joyce, who was a Crown witness at same trials; and, whether, under these additional circumstances, the Government will now cause an inquiry to be made into the cases of the Maamtrasna prisoners, with the view to consider the justice of their continued imprisonment?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I am informed that the facts are substantiall as stated, except that the observations of the clerk of Petty Sessions were not on oath, and that the relationship between the two Joyces is not as described. I am advised that there is nothing in these circumstances to call for any re-opening of the Maamtrasna case, the result of which depended in no way on the evidence of any single witness.

MR. M'CARTAN asked whether this man Joyce was not a witness for the Crown in the Maamtrasna cases?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe he was.

### COURT OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND)—MR. C. H. JAMES—LATE OFFICIAL ASSIGNEE.

MR. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether Mr. C. H. James, late Official Assignee to the Irish Court of Bankruptcy, had been required to give security before or after his appointment; if so, whether he can state who were the sureties, and for what amount was the bond given; whether the bond was in force at the time of his dismissal; and, whether the sureties have since paid the amount of their liability; if not, whether steps will be taken to enforce the payment of same?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University): The late Official Assignee gave security to the extent of £5,000, which security was in force on his dismissal, and one half of it has been already paid, and the remainder is secured. The whole matter is now being investigated, and I think I can assure the hon. Gentleman that no loss will be sustained.

### IRELAND—HARBOURS &c., ON WEST COAST—PORT OF SLIGO.

MR. P. M'DONALD (Sligo, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has received a copy of a Resolution passed by the County Sligo Grand Jury at the late Spring Assizes, calling attention to the necessity of improved port facilities to that part of the West Coast of Ireland; whether the Port of Sligo, considering its importance towards the development of the industries of the Western Province, is entitled to the favourable consideration of the Treasury; whether the Royal Commissioners on Irish Public Works will be instructed by the Government to inquire into the claims of the Sligo Harbour Board, as put forward in the several Memorials forwarded by them to the Treasury; and, what reply, if any, was sent to the Secretary to the Grand Jury, on receipt of the copy of Resolution referred to?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): A Resolution of the Sligo Grand Jury in favour of improved port facilities was received by the Government; but it is one with regard to which the Government regret to say that they do not feel in a position to take any present action. As the hon. Member is probably aware, it is not competent for me to give any instructions to a Royal Commission as to what evidence they will receive.

### EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—EXEMPTION FROM ATTENDANCE—THE BYE-LAWS—ATTENDANCE PARTIAL.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether the Education Department expect school attendance authorities to carry out the requirements in the Department's model form of bye-laws, to the effect that before a child of school age can be partially exempt from attendance at school, its parent must show to the satisfaction of the Local Authority, that the employment of the child is necessary on account of the circumstances of the family; if so, whether school attendance authorities should carry out this requirement fairly to all parties by making no distinction as to the kind of employment, provided that it is not an injurious one; and, whether any unfairness to others would arise in the Local Authorities making a distinction as to the kind of employment, by acting in accordance with a declaration by the Department, that if a child of school age is employed half-time in a factory, it should be assumed that the employment of such child is necessary, without having any regard to the circumstances of the family?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): The Education Department do expect school attendance authorities to carry out the bye-laws; and they should do so, of course, in a manner which is, in their opinion, fair to all parties. What the Department has said is, that where a child is employed in a factory, school authorities generally assume that such employment is beneficial and necessary, and grant partial exemption to such children as half-timers. It is difficult to see how this view can involve injustice to others, as the bye-laws leave the Local Authorities the right to exercise their judgment in the matter.

### POST OFFICE — THE TELEGRAPH BRANCH AND THE POSTAL BRANCH.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is aware that the utmost dissatisfaction exists in almost every Telegraph Office in the United Kingdom, owing to the fact that in the Postal Branch the number of "superior appointments" largely exceeds that of similar appointments in the Telegraph Branch, although the Telegraph Staff, in the aggregate, exceeds in most cases that of the Postal Branch, and the duties performed in the Telegraph Branch are, if not superior, at least equal to those in the Postal Branch; and, whether, if he finds this to be so, he will endeavour to equalize, as far as possible, the "superior appointments" in the two Branches?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I am not aware of any great dissatisfaction such as is stated to exist in almost every telegraph office. The number of superior appointments allotted to each post office is regulated strictly according to the number of supervising or other superior duties to be performed. For the indoor telegraph work a smaller number of supervising officers is required than for the indoor postal work. The postal work, in contradistinction to the telegraph work, comprises several branches, such as the receipt and disposal of mails, including letters both ordinary and registered, book packets, newspapers, and parcels, the transaction of money order, savings banks, insurance, and annuity business, the sale of stamps, both postal and inland revenue, the issue of inland revenue licences, and the general charge of the accounts, including, in some cases, large money responsibility. Of the total gross revenue earned by the Department less than one-fifth consists of revenue from telegraph business. These several duties must at large offices be conducted in more separate rooms than the telegraph business; and they, therefore, require for their efficient performance a larger number of superior officers in proportion to the whole of the postal staff than are required in the Telegraph Office, in which there is no such diversity of duty. Under these circumstances, it would not be right to endeavour, as the hon. Member suggests, to equalize the superior appointments in the two Branches of the Service by creating appointments for which there are no corresponding duties. I may add that the complaint made can only apply to the very large Provincial Head Offices, about 60 in number, as only at those offices separate staffs are employed for postal and telegraph work. At all the other Head Post Offices, about 850 in number, there is one establishment for both Branches.

### TELEGRAPHS ACT, 1868—PRE-TRANSFER TELEGRAPH CLERKS.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether pre-transfer Telegraph Clerks can, under "The Telegraphs Act, 1868," still claim the title and privileges of "Clerks in the permanent Civil Service of the Crown;" and, if so, what rights and privileges does that Act confer upon them; and, has the Postmaster General the power to substitute the title of "Telegraphist" or "Sorting Clerk and Telegraphist," either of which apparently deprives such pre-transfer Telegraph Clerks of their rights and privileges?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): The rights of pre-transfer clerks are fixed by The Telegraphs Act, 1868, and they are entitled to the rights and privileges which are determined by the character of the offices to which they were appointed in the same way as other officers and clerks in the permanent Civil Service of the Crown. By Sub-section 7 of Section 8 of the Act means were provided whereby the question whether an appointment offered to a pre-transfer clerk was of equal value with an appointment previously held by him should be ascertained at the time of his appointment by agreement, or, if necessary, by arbitration. No change of title or description can, in my opinion, alter the rights which pre-transfer clerks now possess by virtue of their appointment.

## IRELAND—ALLEGED ILLEGAL LOTTERIES.

Mr. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether the lotteries advertised in *The Scotsman* of 6th November, 1886, and 14th December, 1886, to be held in Dublin on the 20th November, 1886, and 15th December, 1886, respectively, were contrary to law; and, if so, why such lotteries were permitted by the Legal Authorities?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Holmes) (Dublin University): My attention was only called to this matter a few days ago by the Lord Advocate, and at this distance of time from the occurrence there would be but little utility in investigating it. I observe, however, from the advertisement, that the drawing was for a charitable purpose; and I am aware that when similar drawings were brought to the notice of some of my Predecessors they did not deem it expedient to prosecute.

## INDIA—(BOMBAY)—THE HINDOO MARRIAGE LAWS—CASE OF RUKMABAI.

Mr. COZENS-HARDY (Norfolk, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Rukmabai, a defendant in an action, pending in the Bombay High Court, for the restitution of conjugal rights; whether this lady, when only a child of 11, was married without her consent; whether she has since received a high English education and developed considerable literary power; whether, while she is a lady of refinement, her nominal husband is a labourer earning only 10 rupees a month, unable to support her, and suffering from consumption; whether the Judges of the High Court have ordered her to join her nominal husband within a month, and whether she will be liable to be sent to prison for six months if she refuses to do so; and, whether the Government propose to take any action to prevent the Courts of Law from being used to compel adult Hindoo women, whose child marriages have never been followed by cohabitation, to live with their nominal husbands?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): The proceedings of the Courts in India, which are public, are not officially reported to the Secretary of State. I have thus no means of information not equally open to the hon. Member. It appears from the Indian law reports that Rukmabai when a child of 11 was married with the consent of her guardians to a husband then aged 19. After the marriage she continued to live with her mother, and the marriage was never consummated. Eleven years afterwards the husband called upon his wife to live with him and she refused. I have no reasons to doubt the statements as to the relative positions of the husband and wife implied in the Question. The husband instituted a suit for institution or restitution of conjugal rights. The Court of First Instance held that the suit was not maintainable. This judgment was reversed by the Court of Appeal in March, 1886, and the case was remanded to the Court of First Instance for a decision on the merits. The decision of this Court appears to have been now given in favour of the husband. How the decision of the Court is to be enforced, and what would be the consequence to the wife disobeying its orders, are questions of Indian Law upon which I must decline to give an opinion. But the wife may appeal to the Court of Appeal against the decision on the merits, and the two judgments of the Court of Appeal—that on the law and on the merits—if given—may be reviewed by the Privy Council; while the case is thus still pending any consideration such as that suggested in the last paragraph of the Question would be premature.

## CUSTOMS HOUSE—FOREIGN GOODS BEARING BRITISH TRADE MARKS.

Mr. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, What are the Regulations issued to Customs House officers as to the importation of foreign goods bearing British names or marks; and, if he will direct the greatest vigilance to be exercised at all ports in the United Kingdom, to prevent foreign manufactured goods entering this country having any indications whatever calculated to suggest the belief that they are British made?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): The Regulations in question are designed to carry out Section 2 of the Revenue Act, 1883. As regards the second part of the Question, I am informed that great vigilance is being exercised under the existing law; and the House is aware the Government has introduced a Bill, now before a Select Committee, which, if passed, will make still more stringent the Regulations.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) asked, whether the hon. Gentleman was aware that these Regulations were differently administered in different ports; that in some ports the goods were impounded, while in other cases they were allowed to pass free?

Mr. JACKSON said, he feared he was not sufficiently acquainted with the different Regulations to be able to answer that Question. He had, however, had some conversation with the Custom House Authorities with a view to the carrying out of the Regulations.

### POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF POOR LAW GUARDIANS—CLAIMS TO VOTE.

Mr. HOOPER (Cork, S.E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, under the 25 & 26 *Vict.* c. 83, s. 15, any ratepayer claiming to vote at the election of Poor Law Guardians in respect of property not in his occupation, or in respect of a beneficial interest in property in his occupation, must first execute a claim to vote in presence of a Justice of the Peace; whether it is a portion of the duties of Justices of the Peace to take declarations necessary by law, and to permit documents of the nature in question to be executed before them, or whether it is in the power of Justices to disfranchise voters of different political opinions by refusing; whether it is the fact that the late Lord Chancellor of Ireland (Sir Edward Sullivan) on several occasions reprimanded Justices for refusing to permit claims to vote to be executed before them; whether, on the 19th day of February, 1887, Mr. John M'Donnell applied to Mr. Whitney, J.P., Nohoval Cove, Kinsale, to be permitted to execute a claim to vote in the Kinsale Union before him, and was refused, and whether Mr. Whitney, on the 21st of February, refused John Kiely under similar circumstances; and, whether Mr. Whitney was justified in so refusing?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he was afraid it was scarcely in accordance with his duty to advise an hon. Member on an abstract question of law, such as that raised by the Question of the hon. Member. He was informed there was no record of any reprimand to magistrates on this matter by the late Sir Edward Sullivan. His predecessor, the late Mr. Law, when Lord Chancellor, did investigate such a complaint; but he was satisfied with the explanation which was given by the magistrate concerned. No complaint had been made to the present Lord Chancellor of any such action as was attributed in the Question.

### CIVIL SERVICE WRITERS—FIXITY OF TENURE.

Mr. COCHRANE-BAILLIE (St. Pancras, N.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is the intention of the Government to give a guarantee that the Civil Service writers employed on permanent duties shall receive the fixity of tenure which their work warrants, and that they shall be discharged only in case of misbehaviour or incompetence, thus relieving them of the necessity of being at the caprice of Heads of Departments, who are not in all cases disinterested parties; and, whether, if necessary, he will cause a Treasury Order to be issued to that effect?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I wish to take the opportunity which the Question of the hon. Member affords me to say that the Chairman of the Commission appointed to inquire into the condition of the Civil Service has informed me that the Commission will deal with the case of the writers. I must decline to give a guarantee of fixity of tenure to Civil Service copyists. Such a guarantee would contravene the principles regulating their entrance into the Public Service. Copyists are not dismissed by Heads of Departments. The power to dismiss them rests with the Civil Service Commissioners. When the Heads of Departments say that their services are no longer required they come again under the control of the Civil Service Commissioners, who decide the conditions of their future employment. Now, I wish to call attention to a phrase in this Question which ought not to have been introduced into it. I refer to the following words:—

> "Thus relieving them of the necessity of being at the caprice of Heads of Departments, who are not in all cases disinterested parties."

I am not aware of any ground justifying the sweeping allegation contained in those words. There are certain classes of Civil servants who are able to form themselves into large Associations, and by that means to exercise considerable Parliamentary influence, to the detriment of the Public Service generally. The Heads of Departments have no such means of influencing public opinion; and they ought, therefore, all the more to command the support and consideration of the Government and Parliament when allegations of this kind are made.

**MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR** (Donegal, E.) asked, whether it was a fact that during the last few weeks a very large number of copyists in different Departments had been removed by those over them from the work upon which they had been engaged for a considerable time, and had been put upon work properly described as copying? He also asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would obtain from the Civil Service Commission a Return showing the work upon which copyists had been engaged during the last six months, such Return to be verified in each case by the copyists personally concerned?

**MR. GOSCHEN** replied that the Royal Commission was inquiring into the case of the copyists. As the Commission had undertaken that duty, he was not disposed to interfere in the way suggested.

## LAW AND POLICE—ALLEGED ASSAULT ON MR. FRANCIS CONNOLLY.

**MR. BLANE** (Armagh, S.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If Mr. Francis Connolly, of 29, Foley Street, Portland Place, on coming out of Hyde Park on Sunday, 13th instant, was violently assaulted by Police Constable "35 D," and forcibly thrust from the pavement; whether the constable followed him to the opposite corner of Cumberland Place, endeavouring to trip him up, and struck him a violent blow with his closed fist; whether, in consequence of Mr. Connolly's resistance to this treatment, the constable arrested him, and had him brought before Mr. De Rutzen, at Marylebone Police Court, and sentenced to 14 days' hard labour; and, whether the evidence of the policeman was unsustained by other testimony, and the defence was supported by the evidence of Messrs. J. G. Pope, G. Kurman, A. Bryant, and P. Fitzpatrick; and, if so, whether the Government will cause an inquiry to be made into Mr. Francis Connolly's imprisonment?

**THE SECRETARY OF STATE** (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, that he had obtained the magistrates' Report and a copy of the evidence. The magistrate was satisfied beyond doubt that the prisoner was guilty of assaulting the policeman. The prisoner had given notice of appeal; but he had not appealed. The evidence of the police-constable was corroborated by three others; and, in the opinion of the magistrate, there was not the slightest reason to suppose that the police committed perjury. There was no ground for advising an inquiry or an interference with the sentence.

## ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—POLICE SUPERVISION.

**MR. M'CARTAN** (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that in every Constabulary barrack, or in every district - barrack, throughout Ireland, there is a policeman appointed to keep, in a diary supplied for the purpose, a note of the movements of certain persons in that particular district; whether the persons so kept under police supervision consist of Roman Catholic clergymen, and those persons in the district who in any special way assist in the advancement of the Irish National movement; whether the list of names of persons so watched was made up from the Return furnished from the various police stations, in pursuance of a Circular issued in November, 1885, and a copy of which appeared in *United Ireland* of the 20th of November last; whether this list of names was furnished to each barrack from the office of the Divisional Magistrate within whose division such barrack is situate; whether the Return required by this Circular included as directed men

> "who were likely to take a leading part in the commission of outrage,"

and also

> "Roman Catholic clergymen, and other persons of note, who take a leading part in the National movement, and from their position and status have influence over the people;"

whether instructions have been given to the diarist to make an entry of the persons with whom any prominent Nationalist visiting the district may happen to call or associate; and, whether promotion or reward has been given to some of the policemen so employed, for the manner in which they had executed their duty in this regard?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The instructions issued to the police in Ireland are confidential, and I cannot undertake to communicate them to the House. But I may state generally, in answer to the hon. Member, that the police are directed to watch any person whose movements are thought likely to be injurious to the peace and good order of their districts.

MR. M'CARTAN pointed out that the right hon. Gentleman had not answered the part of the Question which asked if the police were not directed to watch "Roman Catholic clergymen and other persons of note?"

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There is no exception to the general rule I have laid down in favour of either clergymen or laymen.

MR. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.) asked, whether the police were watching certain people at Derry who threatened that unless they got reductions of rent they would form an Association——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

### ADMIRALTY—COALING AT HOME PORTS.

ADMIRAL MAYNE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, If he will lay upon the Table the Report of the Committee on the existing facilities for Coaling Ships at the Home Ports, the best means of improving the same, and proposals for their rapid extension, 1885; and, whether the Admiralty propose to take any action upon it?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): The Report in question is strictly confidential, and could not be made public. Experiments are now being carried out at Portland, with a view to ascertaining how far the system recommended by the Committee can be practically applied to Her Majesty's ships. We propose, when these are completed, to commence improving the present scheme, and it is intended to erect a coaling jetty at Haulbowline recommended by the Committee this year.

### ADMIRALTY—THE DOCKYARDS—CONSTRUCTION OF SHEERS AT PEMBROKE.

ADMIRAL MAYNE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether a letter, containing an offer from a well-known firm, has been laid before him, for the construction of the most approved form of sheers at Pembroke, to lift 100 tons, for £5,000 to £6,000, in four to five months, or at less than half the official estimate, and in less than half the time; and, whether he will cause the sheers to be constructed at this small outlay, thereby render Pembroke Dockyard efficient, and be enabled to hoist the engines and boilers into the ships now building there, as well as to perform any future heavy work, which, though not at present contemplated, may be required at any time in the event of war?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): I am given to understand that a communication on this subject has been received at the Admiralty; but the matter has not been brought to my notice, and until I have had time to look into it carefully, I can express no opinion upon its practicability.

### POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—MULLINGAR POST OFFICE.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether four additional letter carriers have been added to the staff of the Mullingar Post Office within the last 18 months; whether, notwithstanding the recognized rule of the Department, that where any such increase is made in the staff of a post office, extra stripes are provided for that office, no additional provision has been made for the Mullingar Office; whether three of the letter carriers at Mullingar are, by reason of their years of service, due stripes for a considerable time past; whether, although recommended for same by the Postmaster, the stripes have not as yet been awarded; and, what is the cause of the delay?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The short Notice which the hon. Member has given has not admitted of my making inquiry into the particular case of Mullingar. I may observe, however, that in the Question the rule of the Department is not stated quite correctly. Except in the case of five or six Post Offices—and those of the largest size—good conduct stripes are allotted not to offices, but to districts; and it by no means follows that, because a particular office receives an increase of force, the good conduct stripes which the increase carries will fall to the same office. There is hardly an office in the Kingdom at which postmen who have served the prescribed periods are not waiting for stripes; and as these become vacant they are conferred upon the men who, out of the whole of the district, are considered to have the prior claim to the distinction.

### VACCINATION—INSTRUCTIONS TO PUBLIC VACCINATORS.

MR. M'ARTHUR (Leicester) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, with a view to minimise the risks of vaccination, new Instructions have been issued to public vaccinators; whether, in Article 7 of these Instructions, direction is given for the careful examination of vaccinifers as to the existence of skin diseases, and particularly of hereditary syphilis; and, whether eminent authorities like Mr. Jonathan Hutchinson and Mr. Brudenell Carter have testified that the signs of syphilis are frequently undistinguishable until after the vaccination age?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Revised Instructions have been issued; but the direction referred to was contained in the old Instructions. I am not aware whether Mr. Hutchinson and Mr. Brudenell Carter have testified in the way referred to in the last Question; but I may say that the Board know of no evidence of syphilis having been communicated by vaccination from a child not itself presenting signs of syphilis. I may add that I am informed that signs of inherited syphilis in a child usually make their appearance within two months after birth, and the customary vaccination age in England is three or four months.

### CHINA—GERMAN PROTECTORATE OVER ISLANDS OF CHUSAN.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that Germany has annexed, or occupied, or acquired, a protectorate over the Island of Chusan, or one of its Dependencies; and, whether such an act would be regarded by Her Majesty's Government as constituting a violation of the Convention between Great Britain and China, signed on the 4th of April, 1846?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): No such information has reached Her Majesty's Government.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON asked the right hon. Gentleman if he would answer the latter part of the Question?

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: I cannot undertake to answer a hypothetical Question.

### LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—"STORMY EVICTIONS IN MAYO."

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to a paragraph on page 8 of *The Pall Mall Gazette* of Wednesday, 16th March, headed Stormy Evictions in Mayo, or if he has other knowledge of the facts referred to therein—namely, that the Resident Magistrate present at the eviction stated—

> "If the people offered resistance the police must shoot them down." "A bailiff, named Gallagher, abused by an old woman when he was removing her furniture, drew a revolver and threatened to shoot her." "A dying lad was carried from one of the cabins, and last night he received the last rites of the Roman Catholic Church?"

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I have inquired whether these statements are true; but as the Question only appeared yesterday, the reply has not yet reached me.

### THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—THE QUEEN'S CORONER—POWERS OF COMMITTAL.

MR. LANE (Cork Co., E.) asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether the Queen's Coroner, presiding in his Court, has power to commit witnesses for contempt, in refusing to answer questions put to them at an inquest; whether the officers and men of the Royal Irish Constabulary, to whom a Coroner's warrant committing a witness for contempt is directed, are bound to execute the same; and, whether an Executive officer is entitled to supersede such warrant, or suspend its execution?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University): I am asked in this Question for an abstract legal opinion which I have always declined to give, as it can be rarely useful and must be often misleading. If there is brought to my notice any specific instance in which it is alleged constables acted illegally, I shall endeavour to deal with it.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Constable Bulmer, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, was committed to gaol by Mr. Coroner Rice, on Wednesday last, for refusing to answer questions tending to discover the person who bayonetted Patrick Hanlon, of Youghal; whether District Inspector Smith, to whom the Coroner handed the warrant for execution, has executed or made any attempt to execute the same; and, what steps the Government intend to take to insure the execution of the Coroner's warrant?

MR. LANE (Cork Co., E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the Coroner has made repeated complaints of receiving no assistance in the conduct of the inquest from the police officers at Youghal; whether the District Inspector refused to execute a warrant which the Coroner issued against a policeman for contempt of Court; and, whether he will telegraph orders to the officer in charge of the police at Youghal to render the same assistance to the Coroner in this case as he would give in a case where the suspected culprit was not a member of the Constabulary Force?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.): I have called for a Report as to the alleged matters of fact set forth in both these Questions; but there has not been time to admit of its receipt.

## CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE DISTURBANCES AT YOUGHAL.

MR. LANE (Cork, Co., E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the following statements, which appeared in *The Times* of last Friday, are true:—That a determined effort was made on the previous night to burn the house of Inspector Kerin at Youghal; that the crowd broke the windows of the Protestant Schools and the Methodist Church at Youghal; that children of 12 to 14 years of age were found drunk in the doorways, early on Thursday morning, in the streets of Youghal; and, whether any official Report, in reference to the above alleged outrages, was made by the local police officer to the authorities at Dublin Castle previous to this Question appearing on the Notice Paper?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The foundation for this report appears to be that on the night of the 7th instant a lighted tar barrel was thrown against the hall door of the District Inspector's house, and that some glass was broken in the windows of the Protestant Schools and of the Methodist Church. The police do not know of any children having been intoxicated.

MR. LANE asked, was the right hon. Gentleman aware that the throwing of this lighted tar barrel into the doorway of the Inspector's house had been represented as a determined effort to burn the house down?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not see it is part of my function to ascertain the accuracy of reports in newspapers. I have informed the hon. Member of the facts, and he may put what construction he pleases on them.

MR. LANE: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he is aware that it has been sworn by responsible officers in Youghal that there was not a scintilla of foundation for these reports in *The Times*?

[No reply.]

## CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE DISTURBANCES AT YOUGHAL—LETTER OF DR. C. RONAYNE, J.P.

MR. LANE (Cork Co., E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has seen a copy of the following letter, which was addressed by Dr. Charles Ronayne, J.P. (the only magistrate living in the town of Youghal) to Mr. Kerin, the District Inspector of Youghal:—

"Dear Sir,—I am just after coming from the death of a fine young man, who was stabbed by a policeman. I went to the barracks to see who was in charge of the police, and to inquire what circumstances produced the sad business. I found there a number of strange police, and a young officer, Mr. Somerville, who assumed the responsibility of having ordered the charge that caused this young man's death. Now, as I have taken great pains for the past 24 hours to preserve the peace in this usually quiet town, and as I am of opinion that there was not the least danger to apprehend any public disturbance, and as I am afraid that it was the advent of these new men led to this calamity, I desire to know from you, as the Residing District Inspector, under what circumstances they were brought or sent here.—Yours faithfully,

"8th March, 1887. CHARLES RONAYNE;"

whether this magistrate had been taking a very active part for some days previously, in co-operation with the Catholic clergymen of Youghal, in allaying the excitement caused by the threatened arrest of the Reverend Father Keller; why the police authorities ignored him by not consulting him as to the necessity of bringing a force of strange police into Youghal; and, whether the preservation of the peace of Youghal has been transferred from the magistrates of Youghal to the police officer?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Report on this subject was only called for yesterday, when the Question appeared. It has, of course, not yet been received.

## SOUTH AFRICA—THE ZULUS.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Zulus have now accepted the settlement made between Her Majesty's Government and the Boers of the New Republic, or whether their protests against the new boundary line still remain unrevoked?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): I have heard nothing of a later date on the subject from Sir Arthur Havelock than his telegram of February 15, printed at page 191 of Parliamentary Paper C 4,980, saying that Mr. Osborn had received favourable answers from Dinzulu, Undabuko, and other Chiefs. The correspondence printed at the end of that Parliamentary Paper shows that the Zulus had had the situation fully explained to them; and I entertain little doubt that they now practically acquiesce in the general settlement as well as the boundary line.

## MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT (1854) AMENDMENT (No. 2) BILL.

MR. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What course the Government intend to pursue with reference to the Merchant Shipping Act (1854) Amendment (No. 2) Bill, which raises an important International Question, and seeks to annul arrangements which have subsisted between Great Britain and Foreign Countries for upwards of 30 years?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The course to be taken by Her Majesty's Government with reference to a Bill for the amendment of the Merchant Shipping Act belongs naturally to the Board of Trade. The Law Officers are being consulted with reference to the bearing of existing Treaties upon the proposed legislation.

## INDIA—FORCE OF OBSERVATION ON THE PISHIN FRONTIER.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Indian Government intend to station a Force of Observation on the Pishin Frontier; if so, what is amount of the Force, and with what object is it being massed on the road to Candahar; and, will the Secretary of State promise that Parliament shall be informed before orders are issued to any such Force to cross the Afghan Frontier?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Secretary of State has received no information which in any way corroborates the report referred to in the Question.

MR. BUCHANAN: Will the hon. and learned Gentleman answer the second part of my Question?

SIR JOHN GORST: The hon. Gentleman cannot expect any assurance when the grounds on which he asks for it are quite baseless.

## POST OFFICE—THE ANNUAL HOLIDAY.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether the order of 30th November, making uniform the rule as to annual holidays, has been extended to sorters of the

London Postal Service; and, if not, whether he will place those officers on the same footing as the officers in Dublin and Edinburgh?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The order of November last to which the hon. Member refers applied only to Provincial offices. The question whether it should apply to sorters of the London Postal Service, and, if so, to what extent, is now being considered.

## SCOTLAND—SHOOTING STRAY DOGS.

MR. MARK STEWART (Kircudbright) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the damage sustained by farmers to their flocks by stray dogs; and, whether a dog found worrying sheep may be destroyed by the owner of the sheep?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities): My attention has not recently been called to the matter referred to in the Question of my hon. Friend. It is not legal to destroy a dog which is found straying or doing mischief; but the owner of such a dog can be sued summarily, and ordered either to put the dog under control, or to have it destroyed, under penalty if he fail to do so.

## MERCHANT SHIPPING — ACCIDENTAL LOSS OF LIFE—INQUIRY.

MR. LEES (Oldham) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether, after any accident resulting in loss of life on board a British merchantman, it is customary for the officials of the Board of Trade to interrogate the crew respecting the causes of the accident collectively in the presence of their officers, or individually and apart; and, if not, whether he will consider the advisability of taking steps to insure that the men shall be privately questioned in all such cases?

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): In cases of wreck and casualty, to which I presume the hon. Member refers, the Board of Trade instructions already provide that each witness shall be examined individually and apart. These instructions apply to seamen as well as officers.

## DEFENCES OF THE EMPIRE—COALING HARBOUR AT SINGAPORE.

MR. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Mid) asked the Secretary of State for War, What measures he proposes to take to secure the safety of the coaling harbour at Singapore from now to 1889, whilst its defences are to remain only approximately defended; how he proposes to redeem the bargain made with the Colony in 1884, that the armament then agreed upon should be completed in 1887; whether the colony has fulfilled its part of the bargain, and has already spent £81,000 upon its defences; and, whether the Elswick manufacturers are able to turn out the required guns in half the time, approximately, required by the Woolwich manufacturers; and, if so, why no tender has been made to them?

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE (Mr. NORTHCOTE) (Exeter) (who replied) said: The Colony of Singapore has fulfilled its part of the contract for the security of the Colony, and there will be no unnecessary delay in the fulfilment of the Imperial share. In the meantime, although the defences of Singapore are not absolutely complete, they are very strong, and leave no practical doubt as to the safety of the coaling station. The two guns which will not be completed in 1887-8 are being made at Elswick.

## POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—IMPROVED POSTAL SERVICE AT KINSALE.

MR. HOOPER (Cork, S.E.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is in a position to make any further statement on the subject of suggested improvements in postal arrangements at Kinsale?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The hon. Member will be glad to hear that I have authorized the employment of a mail car by means of which the hours of the day mail service to and from Kinsale during the fishing season will be made more convenient.

## LONDON COAL AND WINE DUTIES CONTINUANCE BILL.

COLONEL HAMILTON (Southwark, Rotherhithe) asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether, in the event of the London Coal and Wine Duties Continuance Bill passing the Second Reading, looking at the injury done to the trade of the waterside districts of the Metropolis by the Duty imposed on wine brought into the Metropolis by the River Thames; while wine brought in by rail or road is admitted free of Duty, and looking at the small sum raised by this Duty, he will undertake to withdraw so much of the Bill as relates to the continuance of Wine Duties?

THE CHAIRMAN (Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG) (Middlesex, Hornsey): In reply to the hon. and gallant Member, I beg to say that if the Bill is read a second time, I think the Bill, as a whole, had better go before the Committee; and if the Committee see fit to withdraw the part relating to the Wine Duty, the Corporation of London and the Metropolitan Board will be quite satisfied to abide by the decision.

### SITTINGS AND ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—THE EASTER RECESS.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith, &c.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he can inform the House as to the date of the commencement and as to the duration of the Easter Recess?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I regret, Sir, that in the present condition of Public Business it is quite impossible for me to make any announcement with regard to the Easter Holidays.

### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): Is the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury able to tell us what the course of Business will be next week?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I am afraid I cannot go beyond Monday; but, perhaps, that will be sufficient for the right hon. Gentleman. On Monday we propose, in accordance with the engagement which I made at 2 o'clock this morning with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), to put down the Navy Estimates and the Vote for Clothing, so that there may be a discussion upon them, and afterwards to take the Vote on Account for Civil Services.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) inquired, whether the Government proposed to take Wednesday and next week for Public Business? He asked because there were some Scotch Bills.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I am afraid there is no chance that Members will get Wednesday for their ordinary Business.

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### PARLIAMENT—NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—RULE 2—ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

### LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE ARREST OF FATHER KELLER.

#### MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Mr. Speaker, I desire to ask permission of the House to move the Adjournment of the House, in order to call attention to a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, the arrest of Father Keller, parish priest of Youghal, under a warrant issued by Judge Boyd, and the disturbances and loss of life which resulted from the issue of the warrant.

MR. SPEAKER said, is it your pleasure that leave be given? ["No!"]

The pleasure of the House not having been signified——

MR. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than 40 Members having accordingly risen in their places.

MR. DILLON: I have no desire, Sir, to occupy the attention of the House at any great length, or that the debate should occupy the attention of the House at any great length, but I have just received a telegram from Limerick—a telegram from the City of Cork—announcing that Father Keller has just been arrested, and is now on his way to Dublin as a prisoner. Father Keller, the parish priest who has been arrested, is notoriously—as will be admitted by all, even by the gentry of the county of Cork—one of the most respected and most eminent of the Roman Catholic clergy of the district. I venture to say that there is not even a landlord of the county of Cork who will not admit that Father Keller is entitled to respect from all classes of the community. Now, what are the facts which I wish to lay before the House in order to justify myself for taking this unusual proceeding of moving the adjournment of the

House? I do not contend that anything illegal has been done. I do not propose to argue anything of the kind. I am well aware, and I am informed by those who know better than myself, that Judge Boyd has not in any way outstepped his legal powers in order to arrest this priest. But I could not by any possibility exaggerate the feeling felt by our constituents, who believe, not that an illegal thing has been done, but that a legal power of an undefined character given for certain uses has been grossly and flagrantly abused with respect to a gentleman whose arrest will create throughout the South of Ireland a feeling of the most profound disturbance and intense disgust, and will convince every individual living in the South of Ireland that the Judge who used his power in such a way as that which led to the arrest of Father Keller has placed himself and the powers of his Court under the orders of the Emergency Association and the Property Defence Association. What is practically the power under which Father Keller has been arrested? He has been arrested for contempt of Court. We, in Ireland, are unfortunately familiar for a number of years past with what has been admitted to be a growing and increasing abuse of this dangerous privilege of committal for contempt of Court. A Judge can commit any individual citizen to prison for contempt of Court without cause given, and there is no appeal—practically he can suspend the Habeas Corpus Act. In England the simple reason why that power has been left in the hands of the Judges is because it is almost never exercised, and is only exercised under circumstances of such flagrant contempt that the general public naturally rally to the side of the Judges. What are the facts in Ireland? During the last few years there has been a growing disposition on the part of certain Judges—whose language used inside the Courts has plainly indicated them as most violent partizans—there has, I say, been a growing disposition on the part of these Judges to avail themselves of this undefined, unchecked, unlimited power of committing for contempt of Court as a political weapon to put down political opponents of the Government, and to give assistance to the Executive of Ireland. This power has been exercised lately by two or three men—notorious political partizans—and to such an extent was it abused, that three years ago the then Prime Minister, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), proposed to introduce into this House a Bill to limit that power, but owing to some disagreement which arose that Bill was dropped. Judge Boyd has exercised that power so oppressively that at the present moment he has men lying in prison whom I know to have been lying in prison for upwards of six months without any power of appeal to any Court of Law, and in a recent instance he issued warrants from his Court to arrest the wife and five children, the last being but six months of age, of a poor man who had already been nine months in prison. In issuing these warrants, Judge Boyd uses language which would be justified in no Judge, and which would not be tolerated for a moment in England. Judge Boyd has no right to inquire into the politics of men brought before him, and if it be permitted for a Judge——

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now impugning the conduct of a Judge of a Superior Court on making a Motion for the adjournment of the House, to which no Amendment can be moved. It is perfectly competent for the hon. Member to call the attention of the House to the arrest of Father Keller; but I cannot allow the conduct of a Judge of a Superior Court to be impugned in this way except upon a direct Motion, when an opportunity would be afforded for giving an answer.

Mr. DILLON: May I not refer to the circumstances attending the issue of the warrant which are of vital importance to the point I wish to bring forward?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member cannot do so except upon a definite Motion impugning the Judge of a Superior Court whose conduct he desires to call in question.

Mr. DILLON: Then I will only add that a great deal of the strength of my case rests on the fact, that upon the issue of this warrant, Judge Boyd took occasion to deliver a political oration from the Bench.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is distinctly out of Order.

Mr. DILLON: Then I will bow to your ruling, Sir. What happened was that Father Keller was the priest of a parish on which the tenant of one estate adopted the movement known as the Plan of Campaign. Father Keller has in no way been engaged in the movement with me; he is not a Trustee of the Estate Fund, nor has he money in his hands which would render him in any way directly connected with the case of bankruptcy, which has arisen in connection with one of the tenants of the estate. He has been summoned as one of the witnesses before the Court of Bankruptcy on the supposition which, I believe, is generally entertained in regard to the people of the South of Ireland, that the parish priest of a district is likely to know the secrets of his parishioners. This is the feeling—the very intense feeling—created through the southern districts of Ireland, that this attempt is not a *bonâ fide* effort to get, as in ordinary circumstances, and looking at the thing from a purely judicial, and not a political, point of view, a substantial and important witness; but this is an attempt to drag up a parish priest who, from the nature of his office, would know the secrets of his parishioners, and be trusted by his parishioners, and to compel him to turn as an informer against his now people. Now, Sir, the reason why Father Keller did not attend on that warrant was because he felt that an outrage had been put upon his cloth and upon his office. If he had been in any business way mixed up with this transaction he would, of course, have gone to Dublin; but because he is convinced that this is part and parcel of a policy to compel him and other priests in Ireland to turn informers—a course which, I need hardly say, no self-respecting priest in Ireland would for a moment indulge in—he thought it would be just as well to take his stand against this policy at the beginning, instead of going up to Dublin to be committed to prison for contempt of Court for refusing to reveal the confidences of his parishioners. I dare say the Judge has not exceeded his legal rights, but it is a great abuse of a power which unquestionably will very soon have to be legislated upon and circumscribed by this House. I would like to say a word or two of the results that have followed in Youghal on the issue of this warrant. I have endeavoured to point out why is it not unnatural that great public excitement should have followed from such proceedings. Great public excitement did follow; but we have it on the sworn statement of the only magistrate who was resident in Youghal, and who on the day previous to the occurrence of which I wish to speak remained in the streets up to one or two in the morning to see if there was any danger of disturbance, or any necessity for extra police—we have it on his sworn statement that the people were peaceful and the crowd thoroughly good-humoured, though excited, and that not only no injury was offered to the police, but no insulting word was addressed to them. There were 10 policemen in the town, and amongst the thousands of people nobody offered them the slightest violence. When leaving to go to bed this magistrate called on the Head Constable, who was responsible in the absence of the District Inspector for the peace of the town, and said—"Will you need any more men to keep the peace of the town?" The Head Constable replied—"Certainly not. I have more than enough, and am perfectly able to cope with disturbance." "Has injury been done to property?" asked the magistrate. "None, sir, except a few panes of glass," said the Head Constable. The people were expecting men down with a warrant to arrest their priest. The Head Constable after this conversation, without consulting the magistrate, telegraphed off to a neighbouring town to bring in extra police, after telling the magistrate that he had more than enough force, there being no excuse for bringing them. The people thought that these police were bringing down a man to arrest their priest, and there was some disturbance. We have heard statements about the extensive injuries done to these men. Now, I sat in the Court and listened to the sworn evidence of the doctor. Out of the whole force only one man was struck over the forehead, and that was all the injury. This individual was the only injured man in Youghal that night on the police side. He was hurt over the forehead, and their was an immense apparatus of bandages and plasters over his forehead, and nobody was allowed to see the wound except the police doctor. It might have been a scratch for all we knew. The police were ordered to charge with bayonets. I sat by and heard the doctor who held the *post-mortem* examination on O'Hanlon give his evidence. Now, I have heard of military charges in cases of disturbance, and it is the universal practice of a soldier to give nothing but flesh wounds when the crowd turns and flies. But what happens in the case of Hanlon? Poor Pat Hanlon was flying from the police with his back turned to them, and the policeman, instead of giving him a mere flesh wound, drew back and gave a lunge which broke off a piece of bone, knocked it into splinters, and went six inches into the man's bowels, cutting the main artery of his body. A more murderous stroke was never given. We have it on the evidence of the doctor that it would have pierced the man clean through had not the bone been struck. Firing is nothing to this. When you fire you do not know where the bullet may go, but here is a man in full flight, and yet we have it on evidence that the policeman did not prod him, as is the custom, but gave a full lunge. The police went behind the back of the only magistrate who was there; they deceived him, and the first news he heard of the introduction of the extra police was when he was called on to attend the dying man, for he is a doctor as well as a magistrate. I have not the slightest doubt that if the police had discharged their duty, and told the magistrate, that this gentleman, who has lived for 20 years in the town, and is trusted by the people, would have gone to the station, there would have been no disturbance. I say there is not a man in Youghal who does not believe that the object was to have a row that night in Youghal, and to draw blood; and that the magistrate, who is known and loved there, was left in his house lest he should prevent that row. Such is the conviction of the magistrate himself, and so outraged was he by the conduct of the police that he went instantly to the police barracks and protested against the conduct of the sub-Inspector. What I want to know is, is this system to be carried on—is occasion to be sought out for goading the people, who have exhibited extraordinary patience under great sufferings, into sufficient outrage to justify the passing of a Coercion Act? I believe the issue of this warrant was part and parcel of a deliberate policy. We know how difficult it is to control the people of the southern counties in Ireland when they see an old respected parish priest dragged away from his cure as a prisoner in the hands of the police—we know how desperately difficult it is, and we say that to carry it out in any way you choose to do it must be a thing of danger and offensively irritating to the people, but you do it in such a way as to increase that danger and irritation to the utmost, and to bring about the shedding of blood. I must confess I view the whole circumstances attending that arrest and the issue of the warrant—which I have not been able to enter into now, as I hope to do on another occasion—I view them with the utmost possible anxiety as to what may be the result of such conduct if persisted in in future. I know perfectly well that that policy will probably be successful for the Government up to a certain point. Human nature is human nature, and human patience has its limits. You may be successful up to a certain point if you are determined on goading the Irish people into such desperation that you may have what you consider a sufficient justification for sticking a few more of them into prison. It is an odious policy. As long as we Irish Nationalists are permitted to remain in this House, and as far as we can, under the Rules of the House, we should be shamefully and basely false to our duty if we did not endeavour to expose that policy before the people of England. The people of Ireland have on this occasion, as on other occasions, been patient. I have not had any details of to-day's arrest, but I trust the Government sent a large force, because the larger the force the less is the danger of outrage. Before I sit down I want to direct attention finally to one circumstance of a most extraordinary character. When this excitement arose in Youghal last week with reference to the anticipated arrest of Father Keller, the solicitors acting for the plaintiff wrote a letter to *The Daily Express* newspaper, and the letter appeared also in other newspapers, and in that letter the solicitors stated that there was no intention to arrest Father Keller at all, and that all this bogus excitement was got up by the leaders of the people for their own political purposes. Now, these solicitors did not appear in Court when the warrant was issued. Their letter is on record stating that they had no intention of arresting Father Keller. If the solicitor for the plaintiff did not want him arrested, at whose instigation then was the warrant issued? Was it the Cork Landlords' Defence Association? I maintain that this is a question to which we ought to have an answer, and it is a question important to the case which I have endeavoured to lay before the House, because if it turned out that this most unjustifiable and dangerous action is the result of incitements either from the Government or from the Cork Landlords' Defence Association, my case will have been made out very much clearer.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Before I come to the circumstances which have been detailed to the House by the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), let me relieve his mind on one point—the arrest of Father Keller, as I have heard by telegram this evening, has been carried out without any disturbance or difficulty whatever. As to the hon. Gentleman's speech, let me say this—that in the whole history of this House—full as that history is of violent language and violent partizanship—I do not believe that an accusation so violent has ever been levelled by an individual in this House against the Executive of his country as that to which we have just listened. What the hon. Gentleman has accused us of—not by insinuation, but by direct language, of which the hon. Gentleman is so great a master—is goading the population of Youghal into resistance to the law in order that some of the people might be killed, and that the Government might thereby be able to show their justification for introducing their Coercion Bill. A more monstrous and unfounded accusation was never levelled by a public man against those responsible for the government of the country. Now, Sir, I presume that the apparent incoherence of the argument of the hon. Gentleman is due to the fact that he was not allowed, owing to a breach of the Rules of the House, as decided by you, to lay the whole of the argument which he had prepared before the House; but he did make before you, Sir, called him to Order—and I regret very much that he was allowed to do so—an attack upon Judge Boyd. The hon. Member, Sir, used words about that learned Judge which, I think, should never be used in this House against Judges of the Courts of Law who are not present and who are not able—that is, who have not the opportunity—to defend themselves. But what is it, let me ask, that has been done? Why, this: that the Bankruptcy Court summoned a man to appear before the Court as a witness; and I presume, Sir, it is not to be concluded that, because that man appears to be a priest, even though he be, as the hon. Member says—and as I do not for a moment doubt—that Father Keller is a most respectable and eminent gentleman, he should not be summoned. Well, Sir, if the Bankruptcy Court is allowed to summon before them any man as a witness, and if the man refuses to appear in answer to the summons, what course, may I ask, is before the Judge but to put the man into prison? The hon. Member for East Mayo suggested no alternative; but he talked about the abuse of the Rule under which a Judge may commit a man for contempt of Court. Well, Sir, this action on the part of Judge Boyd does not come under the condemnation which has been levelled against the use by Judges of the power of commitment for contempt of Court—the contempt of Court in respect to which, as a preventive against the use to which Judges were said to put their power, a Bill was introduced into the other House, which may or may not have been occasionally used by Judges who thought they had not been treated with sufficient respect in Court; but imprisonment is the only weapon which can be used by a Judge to make it certain that the jurisdiction of his Court shall be respected; and to take away the power of inflicting such imprisonment would be to destroy the whole system of the Bankruptcy Court in Ireland root and branch. The only other matter which I think requires remark relates to the police, and here I must say that I think the hon. Gentleman appeared to me to have allowed himself a licence of criticism with regard to a case which is, I believe, still pending most unusual and improper in debates in this House. I shall not follow the hon. Gentleman in this matter except as to one matter, and I am doubtful if I ought to go even so far in a pending case; but there is one statement—I should say mis-statement—which I must correct. The hon. Gentleman says the only injury which the police of Youghal had undergone was a scratch received by one man on the forehead.

Mr. DILLON: I did not say so; I said a cut, the nature of which we were not allowed, or anybody except the police, to investigate. [An hon. Member: A scratch.] I beg pardon, I said it might have been a scratch for all we knew.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, I will give the hon. Gentleman the advantage of the "cut;" but the facts are not as the hon. Member stated them. So far from its being the fact that only one policeman was injured more or less slightly on the forehead, the facts are as I read them from a telegram in the House which I said yesterday I had received from an authentic source of information. Twenty-one out of 22 policemen were struck, 15 were hurt, and three were seriously hurt. Well, I will say nothing about the hon. Gentleman's attack upon the humanity of the Police Force, save that I am unwilling to think that anybody in Ireland should suppose that I allowed an accusation of the kind to pass for a moment in this House without giving it the most absolute contradiction. The hon. Gentleman has attacked the police for inhumanity. [Mr. Dillon: One man.] My belief is that the charge of the police was not ordered by the commanding officer till he was fully convinced that the very lives of the police were in immediate danger—and if that position of affairs does not justify the action of the commanding officer I am at a loss to know what, in the opinion of the hon. Gentleman, would justify the police in resorting to extreme measures in self-defence.

Mr. DILLON: The right hon. Gentleman is really misrepresenting what I said. I made no charge whatever against the police. I made a charge against the man who drove the bayonet into the back of Pat O'Hanlon.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, Sir, I might have misunderstood the hon. Gentleman. What I thought the hon. Member said was that the police were the instruments in goading on the population of the district to resistance; and that they deliberately misled the Magistrate for the purpose of producing a butchery which would assist the Government in passing the Coercion Bill. I need not say much more. I think I have dealt with the hon. Gentleman's speech so far as he has been able to lay the case before the House. The hon. Gentleman accuses us of being responsible for the lamentable occurrences which have taken place at Youghal; but has it never occurred to him that those who are really responsible are those who continue to goad on the people of the country to carry out this illegal plan of spoliation? This illegal plan of spoliation, called the Plan of Campaign. On their heads rests and must rest the responsibility of goading on the people to resist the law. The law must be obeyed; the orders of the Courts of Law must be carried out. They will be carried out, and carried out peaceably, I believe, in every district in Ireland if only those agitators will cease from their baneful work—those agitators who are primarily responsible for all those unfortunate occurrences. I think, Sir, if the hon. Gentleman will, in his calmer moments, consider upon whose heads the responsibility rests for what has occurred, he will not find that the Government of this country or the police of Ireland are responsible, but that it rests upon the heads of those with whose policy and motives he is probably more intimately acquainted than I am.

Mr. LANE (Cork Co., E.) said, the House could easily understand that it is a matter of congratulation to him to be relieved by this debate from the necessity of putting any further questions to the Chief Secretary, so as to bring the facts of this unhappy case under the notice of hon. Members for England. Before he referred directly to the origin of the cause of the disturbance of Youghal, he wished to reply to a few of the statements made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour). The right hon. Gentleman prefaced his remarks by stating that, instead of the arrest of Father Keller leading to bloodshed and riot in Youghal, the arrest had been carried out very quietly. There was no credit due to the Executive or to the Police Authorities in Ireland for the quiet manner in which the arrest of Father Keller had been effected. The credit was wholly due to the rev. gentleman himself, and to the other clergymen of the town, and to the good sense of the people of his parish, who obeyed his mandate. The rev. gentleman was not going to allow his people to fall into the traps set for them by the police. The fortunate discovery of the telegram sent by Captain Plunkett to the Police Superintendent showed that it was the deliberate intention of the police to excite an occasion for bloodshed and death in their midst. The right hon. Gentleman accused the hon. Member for East Mayo of having used violent language. He (Mr. Lane) put a question to the right hon. Gentleman last Tuesday in reference to the authenticity of Captain Plunkett's telegram; and after the endorsement he gave to that bloodthirsty telegram, the hon. Member for East Mayo was fully justified in the strong language he had used, and in expressing his opinion that the policy had been deliberately adopted at a meeting of magistrates in Dublin Castle, acting in concert with the right hon. Gentleman for the purpose of creating an excuse for the introduction of a Coercion Act for Ireland, which, according to the declaration of all the Judges, was exceptionally free from crime at the present moment. The Irish Members did not say, as the right hon. Gentleman contended, that because Father Keller was a priest he should not be liable for arrest under a warrant from the Bankruptcy Court, or any other Court. What they objected to was this—that Father Keller was arrested because, from his position as parish priest, he was expected by those who moved for his arrest to know the secret affairs of his flock, to act as a spy upon the doings of his parishioners, and to give evidence in favour of the landlord. This was a most serious matter, and might become more so if the policy of the Government were to be carried on on the same lines as at present. With regard to the charge of the right hon. Gentleman against the Irish Parliamentary Party of goading on the people to spoliation and excitement, if there was any Member of the Irish Party who could be said to be guilty of goading the people into excitement, he took upon himself all the responsibility of being that individual. Youghal was in his Division, and he was connected with all the operations on the Ponsonby property, from the beginning until the time he had to leave to take his place in Parliament. But he distinctly repudiated now—as he had done on the first night the House assembled—that he, or any of his hon. Colleagues had goaded—to use the word of the right hon. Gentleman—the people of that district, or any other, to put the Plan of Campaign into operation. He did not visit the estate until the tenants themselves had decided the matter. He went down on their pressing invitation, and instead of the people being goaded into adopting the Plan of Campaign, the fact of the matter was that his hon. Colleagues and himself had to use their influence to moderate the demands of the tenants on that particular estate for a reduction of their rents. He would now give the House a short history of how that excitement had arisen in Youghal, and would show how little the people and the parish priest were to blame for the existing state of things there. It had all arisen in connection with the Ponsonby estate. Mr. Ponsonby was the only landlord in the County of Cork who had refused to give his tenants a fair and reasonable reduction in their rents. This was not the first time that a similar struggle took place on the same property.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is now deviating from the matter before the House, which is a definite matter of urgent public importance; it is the adjournment of the House for the purpose of calling attention to the arrest of the Rev. Father Keller. The history of the Ponsonby estate has nothing to do with that subject.

MR. LANE: The warrant, Sir, upon which Father Keller was arrested was issued in connection with this estate——

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is going into a history of the eviction on the estate, and the means that were used to bring about a reconciliation. This is quite different from the specific matter before the House.

MR. LANE: This warrant, Sir, upon which Father Keller has been arrested has been applied for by the solicitors who are employed for the Ponsonby estate, and the arrest has taken place in connection with that estate. Father Keller is summoned to Dublin to give evidence in reference to the Plan of Campaign being carried out by two tenants upon the Ponsonby property;

and I would respectfully ask, Sir, for your ruling as to whether I am not in Order in referring to what has happened in connection with that property out of which the whole case arises.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am clearly of opinion that it would be out of Order to allude to the circumstances of the Ponsonby estate. That has nothing whatever to do with the subject which has been brought before the House, and which is the arrest of Father Keller.

Mr. LANE: The warrant was issued in reference to evidence to be given concerning the proceedings of two tenants on the Ponsonby property; and I would ask very respectfully whether I may not refer to those proceedings?

Mr. SPEAKER: I have already given a very definite ruling upon the point.

Mr. LANE said, that, under those circumstances, he found it very hard to proceed on the lines he had intended to do; but, bowing very respectfully to the ruling of the Chair, as he was bound to do—and notwithstanding the sneers of the Chief Secretary for Ireland—he should try and make out his case all the same. The people of the district were perfectly aware that the landlord was not a party to the proceedings taken against Father Keller, as he had told them that the property had passed out of his hands into those of the Landlords' Association, and that he would not stop the issue of the warrant. They knew the reverend gentleman was compelled to go to Dublin, and they believed that was done simply because the solicitors engaged by the landlord believed that because he was the parish priest, if they put him in the witness box there on oath they could ask him any questions, and get information from him which he possessed as parish priest, respecting certain of his parishioners, and so would enable the landlord to get his rents without any reduction. Father Keller and his brother priests had been going about amongst the people for several days, quieting them, and endeavouring to prevent the excitement getting the better of their discretion, and leading them to do things which would justify the authorities in interfering with their lives and liberties. They had the positive assurance of Dr. Ronayne, the only resident magistrate in the town of Youghal, sworn by him at the inquest, that there was a sufficient force of police in the town for the purpose of arresting Father Keller, and he was a magistrate, who for years had been able to keep order there. But the authorities thought well to send a force of strange police into the town. That evening the town was perfectly quiet until the extra force of police were brought in; but the moment they were brought in the people became excited. The people were thinking of the vindictive action being taken against their priest. The townfolk sat up all night near the residence of the priest the night before. They went out to the station to meet the police, and were only following the police into the town, when the officer in charge of the police commanded his men to fix bayonets. Up to that time not a single thing was done by the people to aggravate the police. Hon. Members would easily understand the effect which the fixing of bayonets by the police would be likely to produce upon the people under the circumstances. The crowd followed the policemen down to the barracks; and they had it on the sworn testimony of the Head Constable of the local police that the police had been allowed to march all the way from the station to the barracks—a distance of about two miles—before a stone was thrown and struck him. Then the strange policemen immediately turned round, charged the people, and killed this unfortunate man, whose death was now forming the subject of an inquest at Youghal. He had no desire to discuss the culpability of the police engaged in the charge. He thought the statement which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had made was one which ought to receive a favourable reception from the Irish Benches, that as the investigation was *sub judice* at present, it would be better not to refer to any detail with regard to the conduct of the police who were engaged in the fearful charge. He would not do so at this particular point. He was now brought to the telegram from Captain Plunkett, which had given rise to so much comment in the Press and the House during the last week, and in which the expression occurred, "Shoot them down." On the following morning after this riot took place in Youghal——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Member, but he is now clearly out of Order. He is not confining himself to the definite subject which has been brought before the House, and not only that, but he is anticipating a Motion which has been put down upon the Paper with reference to this very telegram from Captain Plunkett.

MR. LANE said, that he had not seen it, and, as he was not aware of it, he was very much afraid that he must cut his observations short; for that telegram had a great deal to do with the question of the arrest of Father Keller that day, and if he was precluded from referring to that telegram, of course he should not do so. He did not see the Notice of Motion to which Mr. Speaker referred; but he was inclined to think that that Notice of Motion must have been put down on the Paper for the very same motive which led to other Notices being put upon the Paper a few weeks ago—to prevent debates on similarly inconvenient subjects for the Government from being brought on. His belief and the belief of his Colleagues—and they were entitled to say so from the expression of opinion which had appeared in the Irish Press during the past week—and it was the opinion of the whole of the people of Ireland that the policy indicated by the arrest of Father Keller was deliberately planned by the Government for the purpose of goading the people of Ireland into excitement, and possibly from excitement to the committal of outrage; because if there was one point upon which the people of Ireland were more susceptible than another, and upon which the Government could better calculate upon working them up to a point of excitement, it was any undue interference whatsoever with the priesthood of Ireland, particularly in connection with their relations as priests towards their flocks. They were very much afraid that the arrest of Father Keller was only a prelude to a series of similar arrests that would follow of the priests all over Ireland. Ten, twenty, and hundreds of other priests would be ready to-morrow to take Father Keller's place. The right hon. Gentleman would not be able to draw the line at parish priests, because the respected Roman Catholic Bishop of Cloyne — the Most Rev. Dr. M'Carthy—felt it to be his duty in such a trying crisis, to write a letter to the Rev. Father Keller, which had received widespread publicity all over Ireland, and was read by every Bishop and priest in Ireland, endorsing Father Keller's action in this matter, and telling him that he would be untrue to the best and noblest traditions of the Irish priesthood if he did not act as he had acted in refusing to obey the summons he had received to proceed to Dublin to disclose the confidential secrets of his parishioners. Every Bishop and Archbishop in Ireland was prepared to adopt the same course. He (Mr. Lane) believed that if the right hon. Gentleman followed up his policy—as he was bound to follow it up if he was going to be consistent in it—he would force every other Bishop in Ireland to assume the attitude which the Most Rev. Dr. M'Carthy, Bishop of Cloyne, felt it his duty to take up, and that he would be brought face to face in a short time, not alone with the phalanx of the Irish Parliamentary Party, but would find himself and his Government opposed by the solid phalanx of the Bishops and priests and the whole united people of Ireland in direct, violent, and active opposition to the policy of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. LOCKWOOD (York), said, that in common with a great many other English Members, he had listened with considerable pain to the way in which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), in that practically his first appearance upon the stage in the capacity which he was now called upon to perform, had spoken, and felt considerable disappointment at the way in which he chose to deal with this question. He (Mr. Lockwood) took it that no one could listen to the statement that was made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) without feeling very considerable interest in the observations which he had made. He might say that any person who was familiar, as he supposed the right hon. Gentleman (the Chief Secretary) was familiar, with the law of this country, knew perfectly well that the powers of a Court which enabled Judges to deal with persons in contempt were regarded in this country as being powers of an extraordinary nature, and that they were used only under circumstances of an extraordinary character. He (Mr. Lockwood) was sure that very few men who sat above him on that side of the

House, at the time when the right hon. Gentleman was speaking, were prepared for the manner in which he made the statement which he had made. He expected that the right hon. Gentleman would have been able calmly, as befitted his high position, to have given them the facts connected with the arrest of the rev. gentleman, and that he would have shown a fitting tone of respect towards all the Members of that House whom he might address. ["Oh, oh!"] Surely they were entitled to an explanation of the facts without a show of temper, without the employment of unnecessary emphasis, but with that calm dignity which usually characterised statements to this House from the Treasury Bench, no matter which Party occupied it. He thought it was the duty of the right hon. Gentleman to put before those Members of the House, who like himself (Mr. Lockwood) could not claim to be intimately acquainted with the details of this case, such information as would justify the Government in the action which they had taken, or rather the action which the learned Judge had taken, in regard to Mr. Keller. The right hon. Gentleman they had a right to expect would put the facts before the House—he meant the facts within his knowledge—that he would have shown that the learned Judge was acting in accordance with the powers that he had, and also in accordance with the law which he had to administer. But, instead of doing that, what did the right hon. Gentleman do? Why, in the first place, he simply indulged in a *tu quoque*. Addressing himself to hon. Members sitting on that side of the House, he, first of all, endeavoured to rid himself of a charge which apparently stung him to the quick—of a charge that went right home to the right hon. Gentleman—and might, perhaps, to some extent account for the want of respect which he (Mr. Lockwood) thought they were entitled to, and with which he addressed the hon. Member who introduced this Motion. The charge from these benches the Chief Secretary felt very keenly. He knew where the shoe pinched, and he cried out —but having indulged in that display of temper, the right hon. Gentleman went on to excuse himself from the charge by saying—"How can you lay this to my door, when you are just as bad yourself?" Was that the mode and spirit in which the right hon. Gentleman should approach the discharge of the important duties which he had accepted? [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I never said that.] If the right hon. Gentleman wished to interrupt him, he (Mr. Lockwood) assumed that he would, as was proper, rise from his place and do so. He thought it would be within the recollection of the House that, as he had said, the explanation offered by the Chief Secretary was simply a *tu quoque*, and nothing else. Was that the spirit in which to approach the question raised in that important debate? They had a right to expect the right hon. Gentleman to approach the question in a very different spirit. It was not, of course, his (Mr. Lockwood's) duty, as a young Member of this House, to instruct the right hon. Gentleman as to what his attitude should be in the matter. ["Hear, hear!"] Let him, however, remind hon. Gentlemen opposite who cheered that statement, that he was perfectly aware of his inexperience, and the great disadvantage under which he laboured in consequence of that inexperience; but he would, nevertheless, venture upon this remark—that the Chief Secretary was making a very great mistake if he approached the discharge of his duties in such a dictatorial spirit as he had shown that night. They had heard a story from the hon. Member who introduced the Motion which certainly led them to sympathize with him and those who sat around him in the account which he gave of this matter; and, as he had already said, they had been supplied with no details in the case—they had had no confirmation from official quarters to explain away the story told by the hon. Member for East Mayo, who introduced this subject, and those who sat around him; and, therefore, in the absence of any explanation from the Ministerial Bench to account for the use of these extraordinary powers on this occasion, if the hon. Member pressed this matter to a Division, he hoped that many on that side of the House would take the earliest opportunity they had of expressing their strong disapprobation of the line of argument which was indicated by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. Very probably the arrest of Mr. Keller was carried out in the same spirit that had characterized that speech.

MR. PICTON (Leicester) said, the right hon. Gentleman seemed to treat the arrest of this parish priest in Ireland as comparatively a trivial affair—one certainly not of sufficient importance to justify any hon. Member in moving the adjournment of the House. But in times gone by, they knew it was a very much more frequent practice than now to move adjournments, in order to bring before the attention of the House cases of an arbitrary exercise of authority, or cases of the stretching of the law. They had not needed lately—at least, as regarded this country—to exercise the right; but, if all they heard was true, it was probable that, within a very few months, it might be absolutely necessary to resort to the practice as often as they were allowed, in the interest of the much-oppressed Sister Island. That arrest of a parish priest seemed to him (Mr. Picton) very much like the first shot of a battle. The first shot might be regarded as a trivial affair; it might not do much damage, but it was the opening of a dread carnival, and he prayed Heaven the analogy might not be followed out in this case. In cases of the kind the responsibility often rested on two sides. He thought the right hon. Gentleman ought to realize, more than he seemed to do from his speech that evening, the very grave and heavy responsibility that rested upon him in justifying a course of action like that to which attention had been called. Let them realize what the relation was between this priest and his neighbours and friends. It was one of the closest, most intimate, and tenderest relationships that could arise in life. When a gentleman in this extremely confidential position was called upon to give evidence in a case like that which had arisen, suspicion, uneasiness, anxiety, and alarm must be aroused in the breasts of his flock; and he could not but call it a most imprudent enterprise to demand the evidence of a priest under circumstances like those. Irish Members were far from being alone in the alarm and deep indignation they felt on this subject, and the time that might be spent in discussing this subject would not be altogether wasted. The people of Youghal would feel that there was sympathy for them; they would feel that they were not left to "the wild justice of revenge;" and, probably, the expression of sympathy with them might lead them to persevere, as he hoped they would persevere, in carrying on a peaceful and Constitutional agitation, and in refraining from any measure that would be likely again to disturb the public peace.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) said, it appeared to him that the aspect of the question which was most fitted to arrest the attention of the House and of the country was this—that it was a signal illustration of the gross misuse which was made by the Administration of the powers of the Executive in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had assumed an air of indignant remonstrance which was not at all justified by the circumstances. The language of which he complained was not nearly so strong as had been used in both Houses of Parliament 90 years ago. For instance, the right hon. Gentleman need only refer to the debates of 1798, and the charges that were made against Pitt and Castlereagh. The fact was that a very strong feeling of suspicion had been aroused in the minds of a large portion of the people of Ireland with regard to that which they thought was not altogether foreign to the policy of Her Majesty's Government. The action of the Executive in Ireland showed their inconsistency; for while the Government adopted one line of conduct with respect to a certain person, they adopted a totally different line of conduct with respect to another person under perfectly similar circumstances. The Court of Bankruptcy was within its right in directing a warrant for the arrest of a priest, or anybody else, who did not obey its orders; but what was true of the Court of Bankruptcy was also true of other Courts—it was also true of the Coroner's Court; whereas, when the Court of Bankruptcy issued the warrant to arrest the priest, a man of the highest character, the Executive enforced it with all the powers that might be necessary. But when the Coroner's Court issued a similar warrant of arrest, the Executive, instead of carrying it out and enforcing it, and bringing into custody the man against whom it was issued, so far from doing that, they shielded, and were shielding at that moment, the man against whom the Coroner's warrant was issued on the grounds of contempt, and he was a man who was regarded from one end of Ireland to the other as a murderer. That illustrated, in a very signal way, the two-handed style of administration which existed in Ireland. But whatever might be the result of that first shot in the battle-field, he trusted that Father Keller and those with whom he was acting would stand firm—that not only the Representatives of the people of Ireland in that House, but the people at home would stand firm, and that whatever disasters might be enclosed in the struggle which now appeared to be so close upon them, at any rate they should be able to weather that, and go through it as they had gone through others of the same nature before, and he had little doubt as to what the issue of the conflict would be.

Mr. HOOPER (Cork, S.E.) said, that as one acquainted personally with the rev. gentleman whose arrest formed the subject of that debate, he wished to trouble the House with a few words regarding his character, and his character was an important factor in judging of the wisdom—not to attribute any other motive—of the action of the Executive in Ireland. Father Keller was known throughout the whole of the Irish Catholic Church as a man not alone of what might be called great mental stature, but of great wisdom, prudence, and calmness; and if he (Mr. Hooper) was disposed to enter into details, which he was not, he might show that, within a very recent period, he displayed the greatest courage in the face of circumstances that might have exposed him to public odium, in correcting what he honestly thought were the political extravagances of a brother clergyman. Father Keller's action in that respect showed the strong conviction which must have guided him when he took his stand and refused to act on this summons of the Court. He (Mr. Hooper) took it that this was an attempt not only to intimidate him from further action in reference to this estate, but an attempt to intimidate and degrade the character of the Irish priests generally. If the only object of summoning Father Keller to Dublin was to obtain information, it could have been obtained much more easily from tenants on the estate. For Father Keller was not a tenant on the estate, and had paid no money under the Plan of Campaign. There were, however, 400 tenants who had paid money under it, each of whom could have been brought up at Dublin, to say whom he had paid it to, and whither it had gone. Why did not the Executive summon from among these some weak, illiterate, men, who might be terrorized by legal forms, rather than the parish priest of Youghal? He used the word "Executive," because they knew that the solicitors of the estate were anxious to withdraw from any proceedings against Father Keller; then he should like to know on whose responsibility another warrant against this clergyman was issued? He regarded the exhibition of temper that evening by the Chief Secretary for Ireland as fortunate; and, if only on that account, they might congratulate themselves on the raising of that debate. English Members would now see the temper which governed Irish officials. What was the meaning of the arrest of an Irish priest? It meant that every Irish pastor would place himself in exactly the same position as Father Keller; and he ventured to say that if the Chief Secretary thought he was going to terrorize congregations by attempting to deprive them of the advice and courage of their pastors, by arresting these, he would be completely mistaken. The Chief Secretary for Ireland must feel in his heart that he had made a fatal mistake; and he (Mr. Hooper) invited the House to watch if, when he had occasion to make another statement, he would not, in the meantime, have accustomed himself to better Parliamentary manners. What he complained of was that the Chief Secretary had not only shielded the police, but had encouraged them to further irregularities of a most dangerous kind. He had met the Questions put on the Paper with reference to the conduct of the police at Youghal by the most deliberate evasion and delay. The police had been allowed to flout the authority of the Coroner's Court, which was one of the most ancient Courts in Ireland, and one in which the people had confidence. What would be the construction placed on the right hon. Gentleman's action by the Irish Constabulary? Would it not be that, as the Chief Secretary for Ireland had shielded their irregularities, they might do anything, as they were sure to be shielded afterwards? He desired to know if the right hon. Gentleman had ordered the Inspector to call in the co-operation of the local magistrates in future. Let him remember that this was not Belfast, where he (Mr. Hooper) could have understood such an order as that telegraphed by Captain Plunkett to the County Inspector at Youghal being issued in view of possible outbreaks of a bloody character breaking out at any moment. But Youghal was a most law-abiding place—[*Laughter*]—and there the local magistrates should not be ignored. He challenged hon. Gentlemen to contradict him. Youghal was one of the most peaceable places in Ireland. He believed the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) had some knowledge of the fact, for it was near a place which that right hon. and learned Gentlemad once represented as a Home Ruler. He (Mr. Hooper) believed that if the local magistrates had been present this unfortunate man would not have lost his life. Under all the circumstances, they were entitled to say that this unhappy determination to bring the people and the police into conflict synchronized with the right hon. Gentleman's entry into Office, and they would not retract that charge until the right hon. Gentleman convinced them that they were wrong.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) said, he looked upon the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), which he had listened to with an amount of pain and regret he could not express, as the beginning of a new policy which they had heard of under the name of firm government, but which bade ill both to that country and to Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman's remarks made them feel what a loss the House and the Government had sustained through the retirement of his right hon. Colleague the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), who, even in carrying out a policy of which many of them did not approve, had always, by his behaviour and temper, secured the respect of all those who differed from him, as well as of those who agreed with him. When life had been lost, and human souls sent into eternity, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had spoken in a flippant and unfeeling manner, which, if persisted in, must ultimately tend to bring the Executive in Ireland into great contempt. He hoped that, in future, the right hon. Gentleman would endeavour to apply his mind to the problem placed before him, with a desire rather to grapple with the arguments and facts that were addressed to him, than attempt to excite the feelings of the House in the manner he had done that night. He was afraid that that was the beginning of a new policy which would work ill for them all. While it was necessary that the law should be administered, it was far more necessary that it should be just. He therefore invited the Government to see that the law was not only firmly but justly administered, and administered with due respect to the age in which we lived, and the spirit of humanity with which we ought to be governed.

Mr. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.) said, he intended to support the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) if he went to a Division, simply from what had passed before his own observation that night as to the style and attitude of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He must say he had been extremely disappointed in observing the style of the right hon. Gentleman that night. As a Scottish Member he felt considerable pride and satisfaction in noticing the fact that the right hon. Gentleman had been promoted by his noble Relative at the head of the Government to what he (Mr. Wallace) might call the box of the Irish chariot, and to hold the reins on that very difficult pinnacle; but from what he had seen seen that night, it was probably one of the most hazardous experiments in charioteering which had been made since Father Phœbus entrusted Phaethon with the temporary driving of the solar tandem.

Mr. FINCH-HATTON: I rise to Order. [*Cries of* "Sit down!"]

Mr. WALLACE said, he ventured to tell the right hon. Gentleman that, unless he altered his style, it was very probable that he might come to considerable sorrow. The whole style of the right hon. Gentleman's reply was not in any way argumentative, but seemed to him to be simply declamatory denial. It reminded him very much of the position of the advocate who was recommended by his client to act on the principle of "no case, abuse the plaintiff's attorney." He (Mr. Wallace) had had sufficient experience of various sides of human life to know that, when that style was indulged in, there was very little real defence to be offered. He did not think that the right hon. Gentleman had a case upon which he could rely, simply from the right hon. Gentleman's demeanour; not from what he had said, but from what he had not said. It was evident that the case was altogether indefensible. For his own part, therefore, he had no hesitation whatever in giving his humble support to the case made out and the Motion put forward by the hon. Member for East Mayo.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, that certainly the tone of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) was most deplorable. Certain specific charges had been made by the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon). He meant his hon. Friend; he was only anticipating what was to come. Those statements of his hon. Friend went to show that the police had acted most inhumanly and most improperly. His hon. Friend had brought before the House a specific charge that when there was a magistrate in the town those police were employed against the desire and the wish of that magistrate; to that charge the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland did not condescend to offer any reply. His hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo had pointed out that when the mob were broken, and were running away, a particular policeman ran his bayonet through the back of an unfortunate man with such force that had it not broken one of the bones inside would have come out on the other side. What did the right hon. Gentleman answer to that? The right hon. Gentleman rode off on a general protest against the hon. Member for East Mayo, daring him to say that the entire body of policemen in Ireland were inhuman. What answer had they to that specific charge of inhumanity? If these things which had happened at Youghal had happened in France, if they had occurred in Poland, if these events had been stated in English newspapers, they would at once have been dealt with as instances of gross and needless acts of inhumanity on the part of an armed force against a defenceless mob. His hon. Friend had complained to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland that the Government were seeking to goad the people into resistance in order to justify a new Coercion Act. To that the right hon. Gentleman replied that so monstrous a charge was never before made against a Government. Surely, the right hon. Gentleman was the last person to object to hon. Members below the Opposition Gangway having specific views and "philosophical doubts" upon that point. The Leader of what was called the Fourth Party, of which the right hon. Gentleman himself was a Member at the time, had made as strong charges against the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) as were now directed by the hon. Member for East Mayo against the present Government. For his own part, he shared the belief of his hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo that the Government were goading the Irish people. They were as weak men trying to be strong men, who were endeavouring to bring their courage up to the point of introducing a strong Coercion Bill. The Government wanted a justification and an excuse for it. The Government has certainly acted in Ireland in a way that was enough to make any people in the world resist. He (Mr. Labouchere), for one, held that the people had a perfect right to resist. He honoured them for having resisted, and he trusted that whenever the right hon. Gentleman let loose his myrmidon police, without even consulting the magistrate, the people would resist again. The hon. Member for East Mayo would not have done his duty if he had not brought this Motion before Parliament. So much for the particular case of this priest; but what about the death which had occurred in what the right hon. Gentleman called maintaining law and order in Ireland? Whenever a death occurred on account of the action of the military in Ireland or in any other part of the Kingdom, he trusted that some hon. Member representing the portion of the country in which the death took place would bring the matter before Parliament. If such a fatal occurrence had happened in any English town from the action of the police, depend upon it the Representative of that town would at once have brought the subject under the notice of the House of Commons. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary and the

Government must clearly understand that if they had adopted this course in Ireland, the Home Rule Members—as long as they had breath and as long as they had the right—would protest against the conduct of the Government in season and out of season in that House.

MR. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.) said, he felt bound to ridicule the pretence put forward by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour)—namely, that the police were put in danger of their lives. The right hon. Gentleman had said that 20 out of 23 policemen were injured. What were the facts? An inquest was proceeding before the Coroner upon the body of the unfortunate man who had been killed, and at that inquest several constables were examined. For a couple of days those constables gave their evidence freely; since then a change had taken place—their mouths had been shut. But while they were free to speak, what evidence did they give as to the nature of the resistance which the Crown offered? One constable named Downes declared that the crowd that met the party of 23 extra policemen at the railway station, numbered only 30 unarmed persons. There were 23 constables armed with rifles encountering 30 persons unarmed and making up the crowd, some being women and some children that offered resistance to those armed police. Could anything be more monstrous? When the police marched up the town—said one of the constables—there was no resistance offered to the police at all; a band was simply playing, and the police followed the band. Another of the constables examined at the inquest, Head Constable Higgins, swore that during their passage through half the town the policemen remained unmolested; they were simply marching at the rear of the band, and he saw the force of police marching with fixed bayonets; the band was playing, and there was no disturbance at the time, except cheering and shouting. That was the crowd upon which the police made this murderous outrage. It was while the crowd was flying and while they had their backs turned that the police directed against those who were in it fixed bayonets, and the man who perished was killed by a policeman rushing and lunging upon him with one of these deadly weapons. At the inquest were two persons who saw this murder committed, and according to their evidence the policeman, having killed that man, chased another who had run into a doorway, and there endeavoured to stab him too with the bayonet. That policeman seemed eager to hang another scalp to his girdle in order to win the approbation of the Irish Office. What had all this bloody work been about? It had simply been about the execution of a warrant. The whole forces of the Crown had forsooth been put into operation to drive the people into a disturbance, and as it proved, even to slay, just in order to execute a warrant for contempt of Court. The evidence of the policemen given at the inquest was a little too damning for the case of the Government, and they were ordered to shut their mouths and refuse to give any more evidence. After that though, one policeman after another was called and asked the question "Did he see anybody stab anybody on that night?" yet in each case there was a refusal to answer. Such was the conduct of officers who were the boasted guardians of the law, whose profession was the discovery of crime! They declined to answer the question because, as distinctly admitted in one instance, they feared to criminate themselves. Here was contempt of Court surely similar to that on the part of Father Keller. Father Keller refused to give evidence in one Court against his flock—that was contempt of Court. In the Coroner's Court there was a policeman who refused to give evidence, and the Coroner issued his warrant for the committal of the constable. The warrant was handed to a police officer, who on seeing that it was against a fellow-constable instead of executing it put it into his pocket. Here were the two pictures—let hon. Members look upon one and then upon the other. In the one case an armed force was employed against an unarmed, inoffensive crowd, scarcely larger than itself; in the other, the policeman puts the warrant quietly into his pocket. That was a state of things without a parallel in the history of the world, and in calling attention to it his hon. Friend was fully justified. It was the duty of every Englishman who had any respect for the law of England, or any desire to see it respected by others—in Ireland or anywhere else—to support his hon. Friend to the utmost in making this protest against the infamous and disgraceful proceedings on the part of the Government.

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT (Manchester, S.W.) said, my object in rising is to ask whether we are likely to get any reply from the Treasury Bench to the statements which we have heard made by the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. T. P. Gill.) We have had one speech from the Treasury Bench already. But we have two Law Officers of the Crown on the Treasury Bench who know something about Ireland, and should be able to tell us whether what we have heard is true. If the speech of the hon. Member for Louth, who spoke last, has any truth in it, if one half the things he has uttered are true, it does strike me as something extraordinary that Her Majesty's Government should maintain a dumb silence and make no reply whatever to what has been uttered. I should like to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith). I should like to state to him that unless some notice is taken of the charges that have been made against the conduct of the Irish Government, it will be the first time in this House that in such extraordinary circumstances the Government of the Queen have maintained silence. Is it true, or is it not true, that the police were as numerous as the people they were dispersing? Is it true that a policeman killed an Irishman who was running away from him; that he stabbed him in the back? Is it true that when he had done so he sought to do the same to another man? Are these things true or not? I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury that some Irishman on that Bench, some man who knows Ireland, may give an answer to these extraordinary charges.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I cannot but express surprise at the speech of the hon. Member who has just sat down. I have already stated in this House that the charges made are now the subject of judicial investigation. Inquiry is being made into the truth of the allegations. There is a Coroner's Inquiry going forward at this moment for the purpose of ascertaining whether these things are true or not.

Mr. T. C. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour): The police will not give evidence.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I appeal to the House whether these interruptions should take place. It is alleged by the hon. Gentleman that the police will not give evidence; but I would ask the House, and even hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, whether it would be right for the Government to make any statement on facts which are in dispute as to circumstances that were unknown to them, and which might inculpate or tend to exculpate persons who are before a judicial tribunal, and whose conduct, if they have done wrong, will have to be answered for to a jury. Remarks have been made as to the conduct of my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour). I protest against the tenour of those remarks. The utmost my right hon. Friend has stated is this, that it is the duty of the Government to see that the law is carried out. There can be no doubt whatever as to that, whatever the law may be. So long as the law remains the law of the land it is the duty of the Government to support and to give assistance to those charged with carrying it out, and in the way declared by the Judges of the land to be legal. The question as to what the law shall be is a question for Parliament, but there is no question to my mind, and I think there is none in that of the House of Commons, that the Executive Government is bound to sustain the judgments, orders, and directions of the Courts of Law. That is the sole and entire responsibility of the Government at the present moment, and we decline to enter further into a question which we are not justified in judging, and on which we have only partial information.

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) said, there were circumstances connected with this case into which it behoved Her Majesty's Government to inquire before they took the steps they had taken. No case whatever had been made out to show that Father Keller was a necessary or material witness to attend at the Bankruptcy Court. On the other hand, there was no less than 400 tenants on the Ponsonby estate, each of whom had been cognizant of the circumstances which led to the adoption of the Plan of

Campaign, and each of whom could have given evidence; and, under such circumstances, it seemed to him to be an extraordinary thing that Father Keller could know anything except as pastor of his people. He was a man of great prudence and moderation, and exercised great influence with the people, always in favour of order, peace, and tranquillity. It was desired to weaken and undermine his influence; it was desired that these people should be handed over without assistance to the forces of the Crown, and their leaders taken from them. If the summons served on Father Keller had been obeyed, his influence would have been seriously weakened, and the bailiffs and spies of the landlords, and the Landlords' Association would have gone round the estate, telling the tenants that Father Keller had abandoned and betrayed them. The warrant, in connection with which a man had been killed, was so irregular that it had since been withdrawn and abandoned. The Government sent a force of 25 police to enforce this warrant. This force met an unarmed crowd of 30 people, among whom were many women and children, and, without any consultation with the magistrates, without any attempt to read the Riot Act, and before a single stone was thrown, charged the people and did one man to death. The Government had admitted that the circumstances which led to this was an unjust rent. Their Commission, by their report, had admitted that, and they were desirous of maintaining law and order. They should maintain it in all cases, and not in one. The Government had taken no steps to bring the murderer to justice, and the only conclusion they could draw from that was, that there was one law for the people and another for the landlords. The Government allowed their officers to deliberately impede the Coroner's Inquiry, and make it fruitless. They all knew that was done for the purpose of making a case for a Coercion Act, and no excuse was needed for bringing the matter before the House. It was their duty to warn the country of the battle in which the Government now deliberately engaged, and the guilt and shame of which would rest altogether on the Government.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) said, it was not his intention to engage the attention of the House long, but he felt bound, in reference to this grave matter, speaking, as he knew he did, on behalf of his constituents, to join his protest to that which had been made by the hon. Member for York (Mr. Lockwood) and other hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House, against the tone which was displayed by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour). He did not think the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) had mended the matter by what he said, for he made no attempt to reply to the argument advanced by the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon). The Coroner who was conducting the inquiry now proceeding, had made a very grave charge against Her Majesty's Government. That gentleman had declared that he had received no assistance from Her Majesty's Government in the inquiry which he was conducting. He (Mr. J. E. Ellis) gathered from the language of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House that the right hon. Gentleman was entirely ignorant that such a charge had been made. It was not to be expected that the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House should be acquainted with all that was taking place at Youghal; but it was part of their case that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had manifested the utmost ignorance of what is taking place in that town at the present moment. He (Mr. J. E. Ellis) and others wanted to know why the orders with regard to Father Keller were being enforced with such alacrity, when no assistance whatever was rendered to the Coroner in the inquiry he was holding. It was undeniable that the significance of the events of the last few days, in relation to the state of Ireland, could hardly be exaggerated, and therefore he ventured to say that unless the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland treated these events with a little less levity, and answered hon. Members from Ireland with a little more respect, something serious would before long occur in that country. He thought that what had taken place amply justified the hon. Member for East Mayo in bringing these matters before the House. He (Mr. J. E. Ellis) agreed with the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), that whenever anything of this kind occurred in Ireland, or in any part of the United Kingdom, it was to be hoped that some one connected with the constituency would feel it to be his duty to bring it before the House, as the hon. Member for East Mayo had done. To do so would be to follow the best traditions of the House of Commons. He himself intervened in the discussion on behalf of his constituents, and with their full sanction, and they were determined that every case of grievance in administering the law should be probed to the utmost. Whenever Irish Members thought fit to bring before the House, in their Representative capacity, anything of which they thought the House should take cognizance, they would have his most earnest sympathy.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, he also felt bound to complain of the levity of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) in dealing with this matter, and the general want of respect shown by the Government and their Representatives, to the House in these proceedings. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith)—who had said that nothing could be done to-night because there was a judicial investigation going on—whether he would, first of all, direct his menials and agents in Ireland to cease putting obstruction in the way of the Coroner in the course of his inquiry? It was practically impossible, owing to the conduct of the Government officials, for the Coroner to get any evidence as to why the poor fellow, Hanlon, was brutally murdered, as they contended he was. He would also ask whether the right hon. Gentleman would give an assurance that the House would have an opportunity of discussion on some future occasion when the inquiry was over? The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had told them that he had authentic information, which contradicted the evidence given before the Coroner. They had a right to ask where he got his information; and, unless he gave his authority, they had a right to consider the evidence before the Coroner as more trustworthy than that on which the right hon. Gentleman relied. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary had used such language as that something worse than batons would be used. Whether the right hon. Gentleman intended it or not, he believed that here they had the direct consequences of such reckless language. If the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary did not mend his ways, and treat the House with more respect, and if he did not show a little less levity in his method of dealing with these matters, he would be as responsible as the late Chief Secretary must be held to be for the consequences of such utterances. The proceedings of the Government in Ireland were most arbitrary and despotic, and before they talked of Irish Representatives leading the people of Ireland into illegal courses, they should set an example of legal and law-abiding behaviour in the administration of the law.

Mr. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.) said, he was desirous of calling the attention of the House and of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) to the fact that there seemed to be no necessity for the collection of a Police Force at Youghal, that the telegraphing for extra men was a mistake, and the death of Hanlon following from that mistake was directly attributable to whoever committed that error. Where had they been drafted from, and what was the character of these men who were to give the people of Youghal something more than batons? There were hundreds of cases of contempt of Court in Ireland in which witnesses refused to attend Courts where no warrants were issued. Why, then, this frenzied energy in the case of a priest, and why this particular demonstration on the part of the authorities? Was it attributable to the discontent of some of the Representatives of the Protestants of Ulster, who had been very restless of late, and who had been clamouring for energetic action, and who thought that the arrest of a priest or two, with, perhaps, a Bishop thrown in, would most likely exasperate the people? He failed to see why the forces of the Crown should be devoted exclusively to executing landlord decrees, whilst the decrees of merchants and others were rotting in the Sheriffs' offices and could not be executed. He would give the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland precedent for the arrest of policemen for acts done in the execution of their duty. In the case of the Belfast riots 13 policemen were arrested in Belfast, because some people engaged in wrecking houses were killed during an attempt to disperse them, and the Attorney General himself refused at an Assize Court in the North of Ireland to allow these men out on bail, and said an application should be made to the Court of Queen's Bench. In the case of one of the Londonderry riots, two officers were put on their trial and produced in Court their rifles with the indentations made on them by the revolver bullets of the mob. The contrast between the course taken in these cases and the frenzied energy displayed at Youghal seemed to illustrate once more how in Ireland all law and all authority were disturbed in the interests of the landlords. If a policeman killed an Orangeman in the North he must go to gaol, but if he runs a bayonet through a Papist in the South he goes free.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) said, he did not consider that the fact that a judicial investigation was pending afforded any ground in the present instance for not discussing the matter, for the only investigation that was pending was a Coroner's inquest, which did not arraign the conduct of anyone, but merely inquired into the facts. Unless some further information was given by the Government the House would be led to the conclusion that the law was not evenly administered in Ireland. How was it that the warrant for the arrest of Father Keller was so promptly executed at all hazards, while the warrant for the arrest of the constable who was committed by the Coroner for refusing to give evidence was wilfully left unexecuted? There was one other point to which he wished to call attention. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had been led unwittingly to make a statement which had turned out to be unfounded, to the effect that 21 out of 22 policemen had been injured in the riot. Now the judicial inquiry showed that only three had been injured; and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland himself that evening did not assert that more than three had been injured. He thought that they ought to know on what information the right hon. Gentleman had acted.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he thought that the hon. Member misunderstood the facts of the case. He had answered a Question put to him without Notice, and stated that 21 out of 22 had been seriously hurt. He had qualified that statement by saying that he could not guarantee its accuracy, and yesterday he had stated the facts as they had occurred —namely, that 21 had been hit, 15 hurt, and three badly hurt.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS said, he thought that that hardly affected the question. The right hon. Gentleman must have got the first information from somebody, as he would not have uttered that statement from his own consciousness. He thought that the House was entitled to have a full explanation of the authority upon which the right hon. Gentleman had given his first answer.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) said, that as one of the Protestant Representatives from Ireland, he regretted extremely the manner in which the question had been dealt with by the authorities responsible for law and order in Ireland. He maintained that if a Protestant clergyman had been arrested in similar circumstances in England or Wales and carried off to prison, as the Irish Executive had carried off Father Keller, a storm of intense indignation would have been roused by English Members in the House of Commons, and extremely strong language would be used with reference to the matter. If it was the intention of the Government to do anything for the benefit of the people of Ireland, they had certainly in this case gone to work in the wrong way; and they had acted in Ireland in a way in which they dared not act in England. The way in which the arrest of Father Keller had been carried out was evidently intended as an insult to the people. In Wales, where there had been a great deal of trouble, would the Government dare to arrest one of the Nonconformist clergymen there who were struggling against the tithes? In consequence, however, of the action of the Government, Father Keller had been ennobled in the eyes of his parishioners and his fellow-countrymen in Ireland, who now looked upon him with feelings of veneration and respect. The Government could not produce their Coercion Bill without stirring up the muddy waters and trying to bring about bloodshed. He had been at meetings which were attempted to be suppressed, and which he had held in spite of the attempts to suppress them; and on such occasions it was customary for the Government to send 200 police. How many were sent to Youghal? He argued that if the Government had meant to preserve law and order in Youghal, they would have sent a strong force to execute the warrant, instead of sending 30 policemen only, some of whom he was certain were Orangemen. The whole policy of the Government was to provoke the people, and to make them take up the rifle—a thing which they might do if it were necessary. He believed that the dangerous policy which the Government were pursuing was not originated by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary or his Colleagues, but was pressed upon them and backed by the landlord faction in that House, and they were afraid to take up a line of policy which would differ in any degree from the policy inaugurated by the Landlords' Defence Union; and he felt convinced that its evil results would sooner or later recoil on their own heads. If their object in playing upon the chords of passion and trying to exasperate the Irish people was, as he feared, to obtain a miserable pretext for introducing coercive legislation, they must themselves bear the responsibility for all the bloodshed and disaster which might ensue.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.) said, he regarded the statement which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) as fraught with danger to the Public Service. The right hon. Gentleman ought not lightly to make such statements, and when he had found himself misled into such a statement he should have apologized to the House, and explained how and on what authority he was induced to make it. He denied that any justification had been shown for the arrest of Father Keller, and maintained that it was ridiculous to expect that by summoning him as a witness any evidence could be obtained from him in the case before the Bankruptcy Court, inasmuch as it was impossible for him to betray the confidence reposed in him as a priest. Moreover, in face of the letter of his Bishop, Dr. M'Carthy, warning him of his duty towards his people, he dare not do other than refuse to give any information in this matter. Further, it was a wanton exercise of power on the part of Judge Boyd to compel Father Keller to come before his Court when there were hundreds of the tenants joined in the Plan of Campaign on this estate who had not been summoned as witnesses yet. The Government only carried out the laws that suited themselves and favoured the rich; and if they were so anxious to enforce law and order and to execute the decrees of the Courts, why was the order of the Coroner's Court at Youghal not carried out? If law and order were to be maintained in Ireland the decree of one Court ought to be executed with as much certainty as the decree of another Court. The policy adopted by the Government was not calculated to increase respect for law and order in Ireland. If the Government despised the orders of the Coroner's Court in Youghal, how could they expect the people to respect and obey the orders of other Courts? There had not been shown the slightest necessity for the arrest of Father Keller, and the object of the Government was to exasperate the people and provoke disturbances, in order to find some excuse for passing the measure of coercion for Ireland they intended to bring in.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) said, if the Members of the Government were pleased with their attitude in that matter, hon. Members from Ireland could well afford to make them a present of that pleasure. When an Irish subject was brought before the House the Members of the Government seemed to be seized with lock-jaw; and all they could do—as was the case at that moment—was to indulge their artistic tendencies by sketching the Irish Members in the House. He must confess he could not help feeling surprised that not one word of regret had fallen from the lips of any Member of the Government at the death of the man Hanlon, at Youghal, who was proved to have been stabbed through the back whilst running away from the forces of the Crown. The expression, "I'm sorry I did not fire on them," used by District Inspector Somerville to Dr. Ronayne, J.P., of Youghal, was an embodiment of the spirit that animated Her Majesty's Government in Ireland, and was a free paraphrase of the last words of the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), "You will get something harder than batons," as he bid adieu to the House. He (Mr.

E. Harrington) could not congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) on his baptism of blood at Youghal. He (Mr. E. Harrington) was an humble man, but not for a thousand times the salary of the best paid Minister of the Crown would he occupy the position, standing there, and being the Representative of the murderers of the Irish people. [*Cries of* "Order, order!"] Well, he supposed that was not in Order; but if the statement were untrue why had not some Minister the courage to stand up and refute it? The fact was, the Government knew that they were losing their power over Ireland, and were becoming reckless. The Nationalist Members were agitators, and they would be base and recreant if they did not agitate until the wrongs of their country were redressed. If justice was not done to Ireland they would lay the print of the agitation on every spot of England until, if there were hearts in the men of the country, they would rise up and demand that justice should be done to Ireland, and that there should be an end to the present cruel, cowardly, and murderous policy of the Government in Ireland.

DR. FOX (King's Co., Tullamore) said, there was a conspiracy of silence on the part of the Government in this matter, and the conspiracy had even extended to the Coroner's Court. It was entirely due to their mismanagement that the arrest, which was altogether unjustifiable, was made of Father Keller, in order to incite the Irish people to a breach of the peace. The unfortunate man who was killed had been present on the occasion merely out of curiosity. Father Keller was much respected in the district. With reference to the occurrences in Belfast——

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) rose to Order, and wished to know whether the hon. Member was in Order in referring to what had taken place in Belfast?

MR. SPEAKER said, that there was a definite Motion before the House—the arrest of Father Keller and the disturbance at Youghal; and, in his opinion, the hon. Member was not confining his remarks to the subject of that Motion.

DR. FOX said, he wished to know what the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary for Ireland—with his 48 hours' experience of that country—could know about the Irish Constabulary? The right hon. Gentleman appeared to have set himself up as the Irish Ruddigore of modern politics. He talked of governing Ireland with a strong hand. He wished him joy of the job; but before many months were past the right hon. Gentleman would find that the labour of crushing down the Irish people was too much for him. He had uncoiled himself, and showed an amount of backbone that he hoped would stand by him for some time.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is not in Order. He is not discussing the Motion before the House.

DR. FOX said, that he would not pursue that line of argument further. Hon. Members opposite appeared to be anxious to enjoy the luxury of arresting an Irish Archbishop. If the right hon. Gentleman did make such an arrest he would find that he had made a very grave mistake. Many a braver man than the Chief Secretary had failed to rule Ireland, and the people of that country would continue to strain every nerve to show that they were worthy of self-government. With the Salisbury family in Office, and the Chamberlain family out of Office, he would soon come to the conclusion——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I again, for the third time, warn the hon. Gentleman that he is not confining himself to the Motion before the House.

The hon. MEMBER thereupon resumed his seat.

MR. P. McDONALD (Sligo, N.) said, the occurrences at Youghal had filled the Irish people with horror, and those of this country with indignation. The Irish priests did not dread a prison. Priest after priest and Bishop after Bishop were ready to sacrifice their liberty for the good of their people. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) had made a very false step when he permitted or approved the arrest of Father Keller. The Government thought that because Father Keller was the keeper of the consciences of his people he would communicate the secrets of the Confessional in the witness-box. But anything communicated to a priest in the Confessional was as secret as the grave. The brutality of the police was intended to provoke the people to resistance in order to give this wretched Government an excuse for coercion.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not speaking to the Motion before the House.

Mr. P. McDONALD said, he was about to illustrate the object for which Father Keller had been arrested. The arrest was made in sustainment of a certain interest in Ireland; but it would not bring about the result desired by the Government, which was to enforce the payment of impossible rents. What Ireland wanted was not government by the baton, but just laws and equal rights.

Mr. DEASY (Mayo, W.) said, he would ask whether it was too much to expect that the House should listen for a few hours to so important a discussion? He would suggest that the Government should allow some right hon. Gentleman to answer the speeches made from that (the Opposition) side of the House. The only speech made from the Government Bench was that of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour), who spoke only for a few minutes, and during those few minutes gave very little satisfaction to the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) who introduced the subject. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman had been commented upon very severely, and during his experience he had not heard any speech so much calculated to stir up ill-feeling. If the Government desired to carry out the law fairly in Ireland, why did they not arrest the policeman who refused to give evidence in the Coroner's Court? That was a much stronger case than that of Father Keller; but the policeman was not interfered with. The fact was that there seemed to be one administration of the law for the priests and the people, and another for the police; and he believed that the arrest of Father Keller was ordered and made because it was the step best calculated to enrage the people and to bring them into conflict with the law. If the Government wished to maintain order in Ireland, and to instil respect for the law into the minds of the Irish people, let them set the example of fairly and equitably applying it to all classes. The course they were at present pursuing, and the tone of the speech delivered that evening by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, could have no other effect than to stir up the most bitter feeling against the law and the Executive; while, at the same time, it would tend to strengthen the bond which existed between the priest and his people all over the country.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, they had often listened to debates on the administration of justice in Ireland without heeding them, but now the feeling was different; and he believed that the result of this debate would be different from that of former debates in its effect upon English opinion as to the administration of justice in Ireland—[*Cries of* "Divide!" *and interruptions*]——

Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN (Durham, S.E.), in rising to Order, appealed to Members on the Ministerial Benches to give the hon. Member a fair hearing, as that would be the best means of bringing the debate to an early conclusion.

Mr. JAMES STUART said, the country would be more than ever convinced, by what had happened in the House and out of it, that the administration of justice in Ireland should not, when Home Rule was established, be retained in the hands of this country. Some of the darkest blots on our administration of Ireland had arisen from the fact that the administration of justice had been in the hands of others than the Irish people.

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): Mr. Speaker, I must protest, Sir, on the absence of any serious attempt on the part of the Government to meet the very strong and very serious case which has been made out against them. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland may be, like the pirate Lambro—

> "The mildest mannered man,
> That ever scuttled ship or cut a throat;"

but his mildness of manner will not enable him to escape the retribution which the judgment of history will assign to him as one who has entered on his task of bloodshed in Ireland lightly, and as one who, in a short tenure of Office, has been guilty of more errors, and displayed more callousness and more indifference, than any of his Predecessors. The Leader of the House has attempted to throw a cloud of dust in our eyes by endeavouring to shift the responsibility from the shoulders of the Government to those of a policeman. Now, Sir, this Motion attacks directly the conduct of the police. It has been said that the subject of the Motion is the subject of judicial proceedings; but it is only the conduct of the policeman which is the subject of judicial procedure. The Government are not shielded by the fact that a Coroner's inquest is proceeding upon the body of the unfortunate man Hanlon; but the charge is that the Government, armed as they are with the forces of civil authority, have deliberately set out on a course of exasperation, and have done all they could to bring about a collision between the people and the police. It seems to me that this unfortunate state of affairs has been brought about by the hurried change of Office from one right hon. Gentleman of considerable experience to another right hon. Gentleman who has had no experience at all. Unfortunately, the Government do not apprehend what sort of a country they have to rule; and what we accuse them of is that they have endeavoured to bring about the cruelties which have been perpetrated by the police upon the people. We also charge them and their Representatives with deliberately shielding the offenders from justice. At the Coroner's inquest which is now proceeding on the death of Hanlon, it has been sworn that a policeman named Ward chased this man Hanlon for 50 yards through the streets, and then deliberately ran a bayonet through his back. That statement, in fact, has not been denied; but yet this police-constable so charged is continued in his duty, and is marching through the streets of Youghal at the present moment, in company with his comrades, and in possession of the weapon he used on Hanlon. It is also sworn that the policeman, not contented with taking one life, pursued another man, who only saved his life by escaping through the open door of an hotel. The acts of this policeman appear to be regarded by the Government as brave deeds, and he is continued still in his duty; and the other day the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had a lie put into his mouth—[*Cries of* "Order!"]

Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN (Durham, S.E.): I rise to Order. I understood the hon. Member to say that the Chief Secretary for Ireland has had a lie put into his mouth. Obviously—[half turning towards the hon. Member]—the hon. Gentleman does not mean what his words imply?

Mr. SPEAKER: Does the hon. and gallant Member rise to a point of Order?

Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN: Yes, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Then the hon. and gallant Gentleman must address the Chair.

Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN: Quite so, Sir; that is what I intended to do. I understood the hon. Member to say that the Chief Secretary has had a lie put into his mouth by some Member of this House; and I want to know from you, Sir, if the use of such an expression is regular?

Mr. SPEAKER: I noticed the expression; but I did not understand the hon. Member to imply that the right hon. Gentleman had stated that which was not true, but that a statement had been supplied to the right hon. Gentleman which was not correct. He did not impute anything at all to the right hon. Gentleman.

Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN: I rise to Order.

Mr. PARNELL: I had no intention of imputing anything at all to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN: I now rise to Order for the purpose of making a personal explanation in this connection.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! Mr. Parnell.

Sir HENRY HAVELOCK-ALLAN again rose——

Mr. SPEAKER: I call upon Mr. Parnell.

Mr. PARNELL: The expression which I made use of may have been somewhat too strong; but what I meant to say was that the right hon. Gentleman was asked for information in reference to the proceedings of the police at Youghal. The right hon. Gentleman stated that a large number of the constables employed on the occasion were seriously injured. That information turned out to be without any foundation whatever, and the right hon. Gentleman was himself obliged to admit that the proceedings had not been of so grave a character, and that the lives of the police were not in any danger at all. I would ask the House to contrast what took place at Youghal with that which occurred in the North of Ireland at Belfast, where the civilians of that town absolutely rose in arms not only against the Constabulary, but against the Queen's troops, and inflicted serious injury both upon the police and the military. Contrast the conduct of the Government in the one case and the other. The police constables in Belfast, after having been fired into, did take the life of one man, and for taking that life were arrested and sent to prison; but Police Constable Ward is still allowed to remain at Youghal, as a still further provocation to the people. I maintain that such conduct is intolerable, and it shows that the Government have not considered the weight of the task they have undertaken when they proceed in this reckless fashion. The Inspector of the police, who was in Court at the time of the inquest on Hanlon, was directed by the Coroner to execute a warrant for the arrest of Constable Ward; but he treated it as waste paper, and the constable is still at liberty. If we are to respect the authority of Judge Boyd's Court, why not respect that of the Coroner also? One of the reasons why your law is not respected is that it is only administered in a one-sided way. The Government talk of maintaining law and order. Why do they not begin in the Coroner's Court? The Coroner gave directions for the issue of a warrant, and you refuse to put it in force, and you allow a Constabulary officer, with a charge of murder hanging over his head, to remain at large. But if Judge Boyd gives an order in favour of the privileged classes, then all the forces of the law are called into action for the purpose of giving effect to it. This is one of the reasons why the people of Ireland do not respect the law, and they never will respect it as long as it is administered in that one-sided way. I think we are entitled to ask Her Majesty's Government to abstain from reckless provocation—to abstain from those open incitements which have been directed to the superior officers of the Constabulary of Ireland to shoot down the people. The arrest of an Irish priest is a serious matter. The arrest of Father Keller, an Irish priest, who is publicly supported by his Bishop and by the Archbishop of Cashel, is a very serious undertaking for the Government. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant could not have commenced his duties with a more memorable undertaking than the prosecution of an Irish priest. It is a remarkable thing that the right hon. Gentleman had been scarcely a week in Office when it was signalized by two such events as the murder of this unfortunate man and the arrest of this priest. [*Cries of* "Withdraw!"] I shall not withdraw.

Colonel BLUNDELL (Lancashire, S.W., Ince): I wish to ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether the hon. Member is not bound to withdraw that expression?

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the expression the hon. and gallant Member complains of?

Colonel BLUNDELL: The hon. Member said the right hon. Gentleman signalized his first week of Office by a murder. In saying that the hon Member has attributed murder to the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member has imputed anything of the kind he is entirely out of Order, and it would be my duty to call upon him to withdraw it. But I did not gather that he said that. What he said was that the right hon. Gentleman's advent to Office had been signalized by the murder of this man and by the arrest of a priest—that those acts had taken place in Ireland since the right hon. Gentleman accepted Office.

Mr. PARNELL: I made no imputation whatever against the right hon. Gentleman. What I said was that it was an ominous thing that the first week in Office of the right hon. Gentleman should have been signalized by a murder and the arrest of a priest. I call on the Government while there is yet time, before they go from bad to worse, to pause at the commencement of tho struggle they are undertaking for no better or worthier reason than to try to keep themselves in Office a few months longer than they otherwise would. I can understand a Government believing that the foundations of society are unloosed, or persistently and steadfastly applying coercion; but it is not right, nor is it legitimate, but it is a miserable thing, to coerce Ireland merely for the exigencies of Party purposes. This strong and stern government is due to the exigencies of their Party, and not to the exigency of the state of affairs in Ireland. A year ago the Government intimated their intention to apply 20 years of stern and resolute government to Ireland; and it may suit their purpose now to imprison priests, and to uphold what you call the law with sternness and resoluteness. Neither of those feelings can I reciprocate; upon neither of them can I look with anything but the feeling they deserve; and I believe that the result of this last attempt at resolute government will be to bring the authors of it to the confusion they deserve.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 88; Noes 226: Majority 138.

AYES.

Anderson, C. H.
Asquith, H. H.
Blake, J. A.
Blane, A.
Bright, Jacob
Broadhurst, H.
Buxton, S. C.
Byrne, G. M.
Campbell, H.
Chance, P. A.
Channing, F. A.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Connolly, L.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Craig, J.
Craven, J.
Deasy, J.
Dillon, J.
Dodds, J.
Ellis, J. E.
Ellis, T. E.
Esslemont, P.
Evershed, S.
Fenwick, C.
Foley, P. J.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Gill, T. P.
Harrington, E.
Hooper, J.
Hoyle, I.
Hunter, W. A.
Illingworth, A.
Joicey, J.
Kenny, C. S.
Kenny, M. J.
Labouchere, H.
Lane, W. J.
Leahy, J.
Leake, R.
Lewis, T. P.
Lockwood, F.
Mac Neill, J. G. S.
M'Cartan, M.
M'Carthy, J.
M'Donald, P.
M'Donald, Dr. R.
M'Ewan, W.
M'Kenna, Sir J. N.
M'Laren, W. S. B.
Mason, S.
Molloy, B. C.
Morgan, O. V.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Connor, A.
O'Doherty, J. E.
O'Kelly, J.
Parnell, C. S.
Paulton, J. M.
Pease, A. E.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Powell, W. R. H.
Quinn, T.
Redmond, J. E.
Roberts, J. B.
Rowlands, W. B.
Rowntree, J.
Russell, E. R.
Samuelson, Sir B.
Stack, J.
Stanhope, hon. P. J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Sullivan, D.
Summers, W.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Tanner, C. K.
Thomas, A.
Tuite, J.
Wallace, R.
Warmington, C. M.
Wayman, T.
Williams, A. J.
Wright, C.

TELLERS.

Sheil, E.
Stuart, J.

NOES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, Colonel R. H. L.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baggallay, E.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Balfour, G. W.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Bartley, G. C. T.
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W. de la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Biddulph, M.
Bigwood, J.
Brkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Boord, T. W.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Burghley, Lord
Caine, W. S.
Caldwell, J.
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Cochrane-Baillie, hon. C. W. A. N.
Coghill, D. H.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Corbett, J.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, H. S.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dixon, G.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Dugdale, J. S.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Ebrington, Viscount
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Elliot, hon. H. F. H.
Elton, C. I.
Ewart, W.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Fergusson, rt. hn. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Finch, G. H.
Finch-Hatton, hon. M. E. G.
Fisher, W. H.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Fry, L.
Fulton, J. F.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. A. E.
Gedge, S.
Gent-Davis, R.
Gibson, J. G.
Giles, A.
Gilliat, J. S.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hn. G. J.
Gray, C. W.
Grimston, Viscount
Grotrian, F. B.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamley, General Sir E. B.
Hardcastle, F.
Havelock-Allan, Sir H. M.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Heaton, J. H.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hermon-Hodge, R. T.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hobhouse, H.
Holland, right hon. Sir H. T.
Holloway, G.
Houldsworth, W. H.
Howorth, H. H.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Hubbard, E.
Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hunt, F. S.
Hunter, Sir W. G.
Isaacs, L. H.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
Jarvis, A. W.
Jennings, L. J.
Johnston, W.
Kelly, J. R.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenrick, W.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kerans, F. H.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
King-Harman, Colonel E. R.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, H. T.
Lafone, A.
Laurie, Colonel R. P.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir J. J. T.
Lawrence, W. F.

Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Lees, E.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Low, M.
Lowther, J. W.
Lyell, L.
Lymington, Viscount
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
MacInnes, M.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclean, J. M.
Maclure, J. W.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Mallock, R.
Marriott, rt. hn. W. T.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Matthews, rt. hn. H.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mildmay, F. B.
Mills, hon. C. W.
Morgan, hon. F.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Mulholland, H. L.
Muncaster, Lord
Muntz, P. A.
Murdoch, C. T.
Noble, W.
Norris, E. S.
Northcote, hon. H. S.
Norton, R.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Parker, hon. F.
Pelly, Sir L.
Pitt-Lewis, G.
Plunket, right hon. D. R.
Plunkett, hon. J. W.
Pomfret, W. P.
Powell, F. S.
Puleston, J. H.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Reed, H. B.
Ritchie, rt. hn. C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Robinson, B.
Russell, T. W.
Salt, T.
Saunderson, Col. E. J.
Sclater-Booth, rt. hn. G.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Smith, rt. hn. W. H.
Smith, A.
Spencer, J. E.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stewart, M.
Sykes, C.
Talbot, J. G.
Taylor, F.
Temple, Sir R.
Theobald, J.
Thorburn, W.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Tottenham, A. L.
Townsend, F.
Trotter, H. J.
Verdin, R.
Vernon, hon. G. R.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Waring, Colonel T.
Watson, J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Webster, R. G.
West, Colonel W. C.
Weymouth, Viscount
White, J. B.
Whitley, E.
Winn, hon. R.
Winterbotham, A. B.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.
Wroughton, P.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (RULES OF PROCEDURE)—RULE I (CLOSURE OF DEBATE).—RESOLUTION.

ADJOURNED DEBATE. [FOURTEENTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on the Amendment to the Main Question, as amended,

"That, after a Question has been proposed, a Member rising in his place may claim to move, 'That the Question be now put,' and, unless it shall appear to the Chair that such Motion is an abuse of the Rules of the House, or an infringement of the rights of the minority, the Question, 'That the Question be now put,' shall be put forthwith, and decided without Amendment or Debate.

"When the Motion, 'That the Question be now put,' has been carried, and the Question consequent thereon has been decided, any further Motion may be made (the assent of the Chair as aforesaid not having been withheld) which may be requisite to bring to a decision any Question already proposed from the Chair; and also if a Clause be then under consideration, a Motion may be made (the assent of the Chair as aforesaid not having been withheld) That the Question, That certain words of the Clause defined in the Motion stand part of the Clause, or that the Clause stand part of, or be added to the Bill, be now put. Such Motions shall be put forthwith, and decided without Amendment or Debate.

"Provided always, That Questions for the Closure of Debate shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear by the numbers declared from the Chair, that such Motion was supported by more than Two hundred Members, or was opposed by less than Forty Members, and supported by more than One Hundred Members.

"Provided always, That this Rule shall be put in force only when the Speaker or the Chairman of Ways and Means is in the Chair."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

And which Amendment was,

To add, at the end of the Question, the words "Provided also, that any number of Members exceeding Ten, who shall be dissatisfied with such decision, shall be entitled, at the next Sitting of the House, to make a collective protest in writing, which shall be recorded in the Journals of the House."—(*Mr. Parnell.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there added."

Debate *resumed.*

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): This Proviso, which was moved by my hon. Friend the Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), was under discussion when the debate was adjourned on Wednesday, and it provides that a protest in writing may be made and recorded in the Journals of the House. On that occasion I ventured to say that no hon. Member could find fault with the Amendment, seeing that it would occasion neither delay nor procrastination, nor involve a waste of the time of the House. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] If hon. Gentlemen are under that impression, let me explain to them how the matter stands. The proposal simply provides that any number of Members exceeding 10 who feel themselves aggrieved by a decision in favour of closure shall be able to make a collective protest in writing. I fail to see what reasonable objection can be made to the proposal. There can be nothing unreasonable in the protest, which, in many cases, might be valuable when a discussion of grave local importance, such, for instance, as that which has been debated to-night, had been brought to an end by the closure. Every Member who is dissatisfied with the decision, and whose constituents are affected by the action of the Government or the majority, will be able to place their views upon record. The Proviso is so framed that a defeated minority could not at once, in unseemly haste, rush to the books and record their protest. It must also be a collective protest of at least 11 Members, and it is provided that the protest shall not be made at once, but at the next Sitting of the House. This is no Party question, and the Proviso is practically the same as that which was proposed by the Conservative Party in 1882; and I hope, therefore, that at least some hon. Members on the other side of the House will justify themselves to history and in the eyes of their constituents by voting in favour of it. I would certainly invite the Leader of the House to explain the reasons which induce him to oppose the insertion of the Proviso.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I hope that this will not be made a Government or even a Party question. We do not ask the whole of the Members of the Government to vote for it, but simply to leave it an open question. The Amendment is not our Amendment, but it is one which was originally proposed by the First Lord of the Treasury himself. If, therefore, he will consent to leave it an open question, I believe that a large number of his followers will be willing to support it. I have no doubt that if they are allowed to vote as they like, there will be a considerable majority in favour of it. The time will come when the Conservative Party may be in Opposition, and they will then find the right of protest which we ask them to adopt very useful. This is not a Radical innovation—the words of the Amendment are those of the Conservative Party, they are not ours—and the Conservatives are much more likely to want freedom of speech than we are. They ought, therefore, to cherish this right, and if they refuse to accept the Amendment, they will, I think, act very foolishly, and regret having done so hereafter. It would be a graceful act on the part of the right hon. Gentleman to concede this point; and if he is not willing to do so now, I trust he will say that the matter shall be taken into consideration.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): I hope the House will not forget the origin of this Amendment. Hon. Members will be aware that this Amendment was originally brought forward by the present Leader of the House; it was moved in his words, and it was supported by the whole force of the Tory Opposition in 1882. The question was brought to a Division, and it was only defeated by a very narrow majority. The majority against the Amendment was only 31; and yet the right hon. Gentleman, in the face of all his former arguments, and the arguments of every Member who at the time sat on the Front Opposition Bench, turns round and opposes the very Amendment which he then introduced, and which the whole of his Party supported. But we are supported by other recommendations than those of the then Conservative Opposition. We have other precedents for the Amendment which is now under discussion, and the support of gentlemen who are authorities on Parliamentary precedent, and who do not belong to the Tory Party. One of those gentlemen whose authority is, perhaps, higher than that of others is Professor Thorold Rogers, who has collected a series of precedents for protests made during a number of years. Professor Thorold Rogers, who was at the time a Member of the House, spoke in favour of this right of recording a protest; he referred, in support of the Amendment, to the practice of the House of Lords, which enables Peers to record their protest against the action of the majority of the House of Lords; that protests had been of great assistance in securing English liberty; and that those who had protested "were the protectors of public liberty against the arbitrary action of the Crown." In the series of protests which he records, an instance, in 1641, was included, when in the House of Commons an effort was made to exercise the identical right of protest which existed in the House of Lords. They claimed it in a higher degree than we do now, because we only ask for a certain number of Members what was then sought for all—this right of recording their protest on the Journals of the House. It was ultimately refused, but it may have been fortunate that it was so, because, at that time, the right of protest would not have been beneficial to the liberties of the Members of the House. The argument adduced against the Amendment of the present Leader of the House was that since it was the Speaker who had to exercise the initiative in proposing the closure, any protest recorded in the Journals of the House would be a protest *in futurum*, and not a protest *in rem*. That, Sir, strengthens our case immensely, because the initiative no longer rests with the Chair; and it can no longer be contended that a protest on the Journals of the House would be a protest *in futurum*, and not a protest *in rem*; it would be a protest against what the majority then considered an injustice, and the argument, therefore, falls completely to the ground. If it be contended that the recording of a protest might be considered as an insult to the Chair, I remind hon. Members that it would be competent to the House to expunge the protest. The House of Lords has frequently ordered certain protests, condemned by the Regulations of the House, to be expunged, either wholly or in part. If, therefore, anything were recorded on the Journals of the House which was considered as a reflection on the Chair, it would be very easy to order a correction of the protest recorded. I think these are reasons why the Amendment of my hon. Friend should be accepted. We are supported by most excellent precedents, and by the very high authority of persons who have made the practice of Parliament their special study. Under the circumstances, I urge upon the right hon. Gentleman that he should accept the Amendment of my hon. Friend, always bearing in mind that it is identical with that which he himself proposed to the Closure Rule in 1882.

Mr. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): The right hon. Gentleman advocates the closure on the ground that the time of the House will thereby be economized; but surely, if our tongues be silenced, our pens need not be paralyzed. There can be no reason why we should not record our protest, when we believe that the closure of debate is premature. This proposal precludes the idea of obstruction, for the recording of our protest could be the cause of no waste of time. The privilege for which we are asking is analogous to the right existing in the House of Lords, or, rather, it does not go so far; because I understand that in the House of Lords an individual may protest on any subject, while in the Irish House of Lords the right was carried even further. Then Peers were allowed to protest even by proxy. I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to yield this point, which is identical with his own proposal in 1882. I am certain that if he does not do so it will be a great disappointment to Members on both sides of the House. What we ask for is that the Government should give us the greatest alleviation of the Rule, which can be conceded now by allowing us to record our protest on the Journals of the House. The protests of the House of Lords are of great historical value, as evidencing the current of contemporaneous opinion on leading public events. Professor Thorold Rogers, who was for some years a Member of this House, has collected these protests in a work which is a valuable monument to historic research. In his preface, written in 1875, he speaks unconsciously words of warning when he says—"A tongue-tied Parliament is a contradiction in terms." The House of Commons were urged to claim the privilege of protesting on the occasion of the Grand Remonstrance in the time of Charles I. That privilege was not then exercised in the interests of public liberty owing to the power of the Crown. It is now claimed in defence of public liberty, which demands the utmost publicity for all proceedings in this House. It cannot be attacked on the ground of novelty. The publication of Division Lists, which commenced in the House of Commons so late as in 1836, and in the House of Lords so late as 1853, might thus be impugned.

Mr. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.): I am glad to see the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House in his place, because I am anxious to see how he will answer the arguments which he himself used in 1882 in support of the Amendment, which we are now asking him to adopt. It will be, I think, very instructive to hear on what grounds the right hon. Gentleman now considers unwise that which he considered so wise and necessary in 1882, as to compel him to move it as an Amendment to the Rules of Procedure which were then brought forward. Various reasons have been given for accepting this Amendment, and it will puzzle an ordinary intelligence to know on what ground it is now rejected by the right hon. Gentleman. The hon. and learned Gentleman who spoke against the Amendment (Sir John Gorst) hardly gave any reason at all, except that the times have changed, and we have changed with them; but I am sure the Leader of the House has too much respect for the gravity of hon. Members to base his refusal to accept the Amendment on that ground; and, therefore, I trust that he will consider the House to be worthy of receiving an explanation of his altered position. It must be remembered the Motion for the closure cannot be debated, so that there may be a very large section of the House who differ from the Motion, and who may have very good reasons against it, which, if they were allowed to lay them before the House, would possibly change its decision, or, at any rate, reasons which would justify the veto of those who are opposed to the closure; and it would be an explanation to the country and their constituents of their action as to what might otherwise appear to be the evident sense of the House. Although they oppose the Vote they dare not speak—they will be absolutely tongue-tied when the closure is applied. Now, hon. Members may have very strong reasons indeed why they should wish it to be known that they opposed the closure, and there may be also very strong reasons why they should wish their protest to be publicly recorded. The mere fact that the Motion for the closure is to go to the Division without Amendment or debate ought alone to be sufficient to secure the Members of the House the privilege of stating their views, and laying them before their constituents. Protests on the Journal of the House have a very great political and historical significance, and, besides, the protest we desire to make would in no way hamper the operation of the Closure Rule, or interfere with the dignity of the House. While simply providing that the opposers of the closure should be able to state their reasons, it will have no effect upon the closing of debate. That being the case, I think the right hon. Gentleman ought to have a very grave reason why an Amendment so harmless and so proper should not be agreed to. We have no attempt at a serious debate on the Amendment; and, in view of its importance, I hope we shall hear from the right hon. Gentleman some cogent reasons for its rejection.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory): I think we, on this side of the House, have great reason to complain of the action of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, and to contrast with it the statement of his intentions which he made at the opening of the discussion on these Rules. In his opening statement he said he was not pledged to the form of the Rules, and that he would look with a view to their adoption, if salutary, upon all Amendments which might come from any part of the House. But I have observed that the right hon. Gentleman has not, in any single instance, made a concession of importance to Members on these Benches, unless it was backed up by Members in other parts of the House. Now, I say that that is not carrying out the pledge which the right hon. Gentleman gave, and it is not treating us with that fairness and courtesy which I am sure he would like to be extended to himself. The principal part of the discussion on this Rule has now terminated, and the right hon. Gentleman is not asked to make any modification of the Rule, but simply to allow us the privilege of doing what he himself wanted to do in 1882, and the refusal of the right hon. Gentleman seems to me to be carrying inconsistency very far indeed. I can understand a change of front when anything is to be gained by it; I can understand a change of front when there is a real change of time and circumstance; but I cannot understand anyone occupying the position of the right hon. Gentleman refusing a concession of this kind, which he knows cannot materially interfere with anything which the House has determined to do. We do not ask the power of preventing the closure in any way whatever; we simply ask that, on the following day, when our minds are calm and collected, and when we are no longer in danger of acting on the impulse of the moment, we may have the opportunity of recording our protest on the Journals of the House against the decision of the majority. Was ever a more moderate proposal than that in the interest of a minority made in this House? I can understand the right hon. Gentleman saying that he ought to have a week for consideration; I can understand him saying that we propose too small a number of Members, and that it ought to be 20 or 30; but we are met with a blank refusal, and that, I say, is not acting at all in the spirit by which the right hon. Gentleman, at the commencement of these discussions, said he should be guided with regard to Amendments. There is no doubt that if the closure is exercised prematurely and severely, there will be an injured feeling on the part of the minority on this side of the House, and that injured feeling we may be certain will find a vent for itself in some form or other. Now, I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman and the Government as to whether it is not better that this resentment should find expression in a silent vote, than in proceedings which might be embarrassing to the majority? Surely, if this right of protest will have the effect of calming the minds of the minority, instead of affording an opportunity for confusion being introduced into the proceedings of the House, as was said by the right hon. Gentleman who spoke against the Amendment on behalf of the Government, it will import into them the true principle of harmony and goodwill as between the various sections of the House. I will only say, in conclusion, that if the right hon. Gentleman and his supporters do not yield on this point, he has not kept to the undertaking which he solemnly gave when he introduced the Rule to the House.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 60; Noes 281: Majority 221.—(Div. List, No. 68.)

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): In the absence of my hon. Friend the Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) I rise to propose the Amendment next standing in his name—namely, that it shall be provided that in any Division the vote shall be taken by secret ballot. This proposal is by no means unprecedented. We had, in the case of the last Amendment, the authority of one of the most distinguished Members of the Party now sitting on the Treasury Bench. This Amendment is in the *ipsissima verba* of the proposal made by the present Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Lord John Manners) in 1882. Although we have almost ceased to hope that the Government will accept any Amendment that is proposed by the Opposition, I venture to submit this to the Leader of the House, in the hope that he will view it with favour. We all recognize the great authority of the present Chancellor of the Duchy on questions connected with the Procedure of the House; next to the Prime Minister there is no one who can speak with the same authority; because, as he himself has reminded us during the progress of these discussions, he has sat in the House for 40 years. The noble Lord, in 1882, referred at great length to the reasons which prompted him to introduce this Amendment. Amongst them I find he stated that during the debates Members in various parts of the House apprehended undue influence and intimidation in carrying the Closure Rule; and that, if it were so carried, it was reasonable to suppose that it would be applied under similar conditions; and he cited a letter written by a Member to one of his constituents to the effect that a well-known Radical Member had said that he was going to vote for the clôture, and that he had no more power to vote against it than he had to refuse his purse to a man who held a revolver at his head. The noble Lord was followed by the late Mr. Schreiber, the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Cavendish Bentinck), and the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), all of whom supported the Amendment. I believe the discussion was continued for a considerable time. The Amendment was rejected, in spite of the protest of the Members of the Irish Party and a few independent Radicals; but the majority against it was very narrow. The opposition to the present proposal of the Government is quite different from the opposition offered to the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), which extended over many months, whereas the present opposition has been confined to days. There should be no objection in the country to this proposal to vote by ballot. We know that a Party man votes as a Party man, and not as a person recording his own opinions; anyone who has heard the Whips directing Members on which side to vote will know that Members do not care for anything but the interest of their Party in the Division. ["No, no!"] I cannot understand that any Members would have the hardihood to deny that they are frequently unacquainted with the merits of the questions on which they vote. I remember that, when the closure was applied in this House, the Liberal Whips had to use the utmost pressure to get a sufficient number of Members to carry it, and they barely succeeded in doing it, for the majority in favour of it was only 7. I say that Members are liable at any time to unfair pressure; they are liable to the innuendoes of their Party in respect of the votes they are about to give; and it is for this reason that we have submitted this Amendment to the House. We are acting on good authority in this; for we have on our side all the Members on the Treasury Bench, every one of whom, in 1882, supported the proposal we are making.

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Question, to add the words "Provided also, That in any such Division the votes shall be taken by secret ballot."—(*Mr. M. J. Kenny.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I am not now prepared to justify, in respect of this Rule, every proposal that was made with regard to the Rules formerly introduced. I should regard it as an ill day for Parliament when Members of this House, instead of recording their names openly on the Division Lists, think it necessary to seek the protection of the ballot. I cannot accept the proposal of the hon. Member, and I trust I shall be excused for refraining to make a long speech on the subject.

MR. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.): The main argument against vote by ballot was that Englishmen should not be afraid to record their votes openly. But the Ballot Act was considered a most beneficial change in the law; and I think this Amendment, which was proposed in 1882, did honour to the head and spirit of the noble Lord the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, who is a Tory of the old school and steeped in all its prejudices. I venture to say that a great number of hon. Gentlemen in the last Division did not know what they were voting about. Two hon. Gentlemen stood at the door, who said "No" to Members as they came in, and they went into the "No" Lobby like sheep into a sheep-pen; and, besides that class of voters, there are others who feel that they are compelled, by the exigencies of Party and Party intimidation, to vote against what probably are their opinions as to the question before them. But there are other Members whose minds were open to argument, who were convinced by the arguments used on this side of the House, and who felt that there was right, reason, and justice on the side of the Amendment, and who, if they were not under the watchful eye of the Whips, would have voted for Amendments which they dare not support, owing to the intimidation which is exercised by the Chiefs of their Party. What is the meaning of the word Parliament? It means a place in which talking goes on. What, then, will be the position of Members of the House of Commons when this right is taken away? [*Cries of* "Order!"] I can see there are a large number of Members in this House who have degenerated so far already.

MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. Member to speak more relevantly to the subject in hand.

MR. T. P. GILL: I should be glad to do so; but I was induced by the interruption——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I have asked the hon. Gentleman to speak more relevantly to the Question.

MR. T. P. GILL: I was only explaining——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. T. P. GILL: Then I adduce these reasons in favour of this Amendment—that upon a question of this kind many hon. Members would like to resist the adoption of a Clôture Rule, but are compelled, by the exigencies of Party arrangements in this House, to vote for the Resolution. The Amendment, if adopted, would provide the same protection for Members in this House as is provided for voters at the polling booth at Parliamentary Elections. I only hope that, as an example of the independence which ought to characterize Members of this House, and which hon. Members claim in supporting this Resolution, that those who voted for the Amendment when it was last before the House will vote for it now in spite of the Government Whips.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I hope hon. Members will not be misled by the suggestion of the hon. Member who has just sat down, and lose sight of the difference between the proposal now made and a simple vote at the election of a Member of Parliament. I was a supporter of the ballot when originally proposed in this House; but I am entirely opposed to the present proposition, because Members come here in a representative capacity, and their constituents have a right to know how they vote. There is this difference between voting for a Member of Parliament and a Member of Parliament voting in this House—that it is necessary, in order to keep the elector beyond the reach of improper influences, that he should vote secretly; but that it is equally necessary that the Member of Parliament should vote openly, in order that those he represents may know the action he is taking.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I would submit to the House that there is a vast difference between an ordinary vote given in this House and the vote of a Member upon a question of clôture, so far as that Member's constituents are concerned. In the case of an ordinary vote upon a matter of legislation or national policy, a Member's constituents can form some opinion as to how he should vote; but it is absolutely impossible for them to know the rights and wrongs of a question of clôture. No one can be better called upon to say whether or not it is right to close a particular debate than those who have sat and listened to that debate; and to say that our constituents are in a position to form an opinion upon such matters—to say that a debate ought not to have been closed when it has been closed, or ought to have been closed when it has not been closed—is simply preposterous. Our constituents have a right to judge our action on great questions of public policy; but when we come to deal with a question of closing debate, I submit that no one has a right to form an opinion as to the expediency of the clôture, and no one has a right to exercise pressure upon Members who has not sat and listened to the debate. If this Amendment is carried to a Division I shall support it, although I admit that the question is not one upon which I take a very strong view. The vagaries of Party Leadership in this House are the most extraordinary one could possibly conceive. We have heard the Leader of the House solemnly declaring that he cannot see his way to support this Amendment. Well, will hon. Gentlemen believe me when I say that on Monday, the 6th of December, 1882, there was found voting for an Amendment in terms precisely similar to those of the Amendment before the House "the Right Hon. William Henry Smith?" The Amendment proposed on the 6th of December, 1882, was—

> "To add the words, 'Provided also, That in any such Division the vote shall be taken by secret ballot.'"

That was proposed by "the Right Hon. Lord John Manners;" and that Amendment was supported, on a Division, by 55 Members, amongst whom I find Mr. Edward Stanhope, the Right Hon. Alexander Beresford Hope, Sir Henry T. Holland, Mr. Gorst, the Right Hon. Edward Gibson, Mr. Arthur J. Balfour, and Mr. Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett. I cannot understand how it is that these hon. and right hon. Gentlemen, having succeeded in making us converts to their views by the eloquent speeches they made on that occasion and by the votes they gave, can now, having got into Office, and having a majority at their back, and the opportunity of carrying out the principles for which they eloquently pleaded in 1882, and for opposing which they denounced the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) in unmeasured terms—I say I do not understand how these Gentlemen can now refuse to accept the proposal of my hon. Friend. I am at a loss to make out how they can accuse us of proposing unreasonable Amendments when we are simply bringing forward proposals which, as I have shown, were made by them, and debated at considerable length. The noble Lord (Lord John Manners), in introducing this Amendment in 1882, spoke for about an hour; a long debate ensued, and the Amendment was supported by the full force of the official

Members of the Conservative Party. The effect of the course followed by the Government upon the minds of us independent Members, who never get into Office ourselves, is to convince us that Gentlemen who occupy the Front Treasury Bench really do not vote on principle at all on these matters—that they lay down their rules and their principles in politics exactly as the Party exigencies of the moment require, and that they are prepared to swallow principles with the greatest celerity, notwithstanding that they have made most eloquent appeals on behalf of them only a few months before. As I said before, this is not a matter upon which I entertain a strong opinion; but I do say, in reply to the hon. Member opposite, that questions of Procedure in this House, such as the closure of debate, are matters that our constituents take no interest in, and upon which they are not entitled to exercise influence upon us. I maintain that it is desirable to protect Members from the influence of those in Office. The spirit of fair play which ordinarily exists amongst individual Members of this House is frequently—as we have too good reason to know—is frequently overruled when, at a late hour of night, the temper of Parties is aroused. Men do not like to set themselves against the whole bulk of their Party. If this Amendment goes to a Division I shall certainly support it.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Mr. SPEAKER: The remaining Amendments on the Paper are out of Order; therefore I shall now put the Main Question.

Main Question, as amended, again proposed.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Mr. Speaker, may I ask if you consider my Amendment out of Order?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes; I have ruled it out of Order.

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): I believe, Sir, that a debate would now be in Order on the Main Question you have just proposed, following the precedent set by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House in 1882. In that year the Main Question was debated for four whole nights, after the Amendments on the Paper had been disposed of, making 19 nights which had been consumed by the Tory Party in the discussion of a Rule of a much less drastic character than that now before us. That was 19 nights as opposed to 14 which have been occupied by the discussion of the present Rule. However, I do not intend to follow the bad example set by the right hon. Gentleman and his Party on that occasion, and I shall content myself with taking a Division against the Question you have proposed from the Chair.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 262; Noes 41: Majority 221.

AYES.

Acland, C. T. D.
Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Allison, R. A.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, Colonel R. H. L.
Anstruther, H. T.
Asher, A.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Asquith, H. H.
Baden-Powell, G. S.
Baggallay, E.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, G. W.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Bartley, G. C. T.
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Beach, W. W. B.
Bective, Earl of
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Bentinck, Lord H. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Biddulph, M.
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Boord, T. W.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Bruce, Lord H.
Buchanan, T. R.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Burghley, Lord
Buxton, S. C.
Caine, W. S.
Caldwell, J.
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Channing, F. A.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Charrington, S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Cochrane-Baillie, hon. C. W. A. N.
Coddington, W.
Coghill, D. H.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Courtney, L. H.
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, H. S.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Curzon, Viscount
Curzon, hon. G. N.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dodds, J.
Dugdale, J. S.
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Ebrington, Viscount
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Elliot, hon. H. F. H.
Elliot, G. W.
Ellis, Sir J. W.
Elton, C. I.
Evelyn, W. J.
Ewart, W.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Feilden, Lieut.-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, W. H.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Finch, G. H.

Finch-Hatton, hon. M. E. G.
Fisher, W. H.
Flower, C.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Fry, L.
Fulton, J. F.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. A. E.
Gent-Davis, R.
Gibson, J. G.
Giles, A.
Gilliat, J. S.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Gray, C. W.
Grey, Sir E.
Grimston, Viscount
Grotrian, F. B.
Hall, C.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hardcastle, F.
Hartington, Marq. of
Havelock-Allan, Sir H. M.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Heaton, J. H.
Hermon-Hodge, R. T.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hoare, S.
Hobhouse, H.
Holland, rt. hon. Sir H. T.
Houldsworth, W. H.
Howorth, H. H.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Hubbard, E.
Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hunt, F. S.
Hunter, Sir W. G.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
James, C. H.
Jarvis, A. W.
Jennings, L. J.
Johnston, W.
Joicey, J.
Kelly, J. R.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kerans, F. H.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
King-Harman, Colonel E. R.
Lacaita, C. C.
Lafone, A.
Laurie, Colonel R. P.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir J. J. T.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lea, T.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Lees, E.
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Low, M.
Lowther, J. W.
Lyell, L.
Lymington, Viscount
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
MacInnes, M.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclean, J. M.
Maclure, J. W.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
M'Lagan, P.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Mallock, R.
Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Marriott, rt. hn. W. T.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Matthews, rt. hon. H.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Admiral R. C.
Mildmay, F. B.
Mills, hon. C. W.
More, R. J.
Morgan, hon. F.
Morley, A.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Mulholland, H. L.
Muntz, P. A.
Murdoch, C. T.
Noble, W.
Northcote, hon. H. S.
Norton, R.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Parker, C. S.
Parker, hon. F.
Pease, A. E.
Pelly, Sir L.
Pitt-Lewis, G.
Plunket, right hon. D. R.
Plunkett, hon. J. W.
Pomfret, W. P.
Powell, F. S.
Quilter, W. C.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Reed, H. B.
Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Roberts, J. B.
Robertson, E.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Robinson, B.
Russell, T. W.
Salt, T.
Saunderson, Col. E. J.
Sclater-Booth, right hon. G.
Seton-Karr, H.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Shirley, W. S.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Spencer, J. E.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stanley, E. J.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stevenson, J. C.
Stewart, M.
Sykes, C.
Talbot, J. G.
Tapling, T. K.
Taylor, F.
Temple, Sir R.
Thorburn, W.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Tottenham, A. L.
Townsend, F.
Trotter, H. J.
Vernon, hon. G. R.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Watson, J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Webster, R. G.
West, Colonel W. C.
Weymouth, Viscount
White, J. B.
Whitley, E.
Whitmore, C. A.
Will, J. S.
Winn, hon. R.
Winterbotham, A. B.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.
Wroughton, P.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

NOES.

Blake, J. A.
Blane, A.
Byrne, G. M.
Campbell, H.
Chance, P. A.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Connolly, L.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Deasy, J.
Dillon, J.
Ellis, T. E.
Foley, P. J.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Gill, T. P.
Harrington, E.
Hooper, J.
Kenny, C. S.
Kenny, M. J.
Lane, W. J.
Macdonald, W. A.
MacNeill, J. G. S.
M'Cartan, M.
M'Donald, P.
M'Kenna, Sir J. N.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Doherty, J. E.
O'Kelly, J.
Parnell, C. S.
Quinn, T.
Stack, J.
Stanhope, hon. P. J.
Sullivan, D.
Tanner, C. K.
Tuite, J.
Wallace, R.

TELLERS.

Redmond, J. E.
Sheil, E.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): Mr. Speaker, I now move that this Rule be made a Standing Order of the House; and, in doing so, I have to express my own very great satisfaction that the Rule has been adopted by such an enormous majority of the House—a Rule which does not represent the views of only one section, or of two sections, of the House, but of the great majority of the House. I am sure it will receive the cordial and loyal acceptance of the whole country. I move that it be made a Standing Order.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this Resolution be a Standing Order of the House."—(*Mr. W. H. Smith.*)

MR. PARNELL (Cork): Certainly, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) is thankful for small mercies. When he speaks of the enormous majority by which his Rule has been passed, he must recollect that he has not succeeded in getting anything like one-half of the House of Commons to vote in support of it. I hope that this day two years, or even this day twelve months, the right hon. Gentleman and his Party will be as pleased with the Rule as they seem to be now. My object in rising was not, however, to follow the right hon. Gentleman in his remarks, but to suggest that this would, perhaps, be a favourable time for the Leader of the House to take the House into his confidence as to his intentions with regard to the remaining Rules of Procedure. I should like to know whether he intends to proceed with the remaining Rules or not? It would also be convenient to many hon. Members to know what Business the Government propose to take on Tuesday, the day upon which, in the ordinary course, the consideration of the Rules will be resumed.

MR. SPEAKER: The Question before the House is, whether this Resolution should be a Standing, or a Sessional Order. I do not think a general debate can take place upon a mere question of time.

MR. PARNELL: I merely wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman what he intends to do with regard to the remainder of the Rules. If you think it will be more in Order to ask such a Question upon the formal Motion that the House do adjourn I will put it then.

MR. SPEAKER: It would be more regular to defer the Question until then.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

*Resolved,* That this Resolution be a Standing Order of the House.

### SUPPLY—REPORT.

### ARMY ANNUAL BILL.

Resolutions [17th March] *reported,* and *agreed to.*

*Ordered,* That the Resolution which, upon the 15th day of this instant March, was reported from the Committee of Supply, and which was then agreed to by the House, be now read, and the same was read, as followeth:—

"That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 149,391, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on 31st day of March 1888."

*Ordered,* That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide, during Twelve Months, for the Discipline and Regulation of the Army; and that Mr. Secretary Stanhope, Lord George Hamilton, and The Judge Advocate General do prepare and bring it in.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 202.]

## *MOTIONS.*

### WATERWORKS VALUATION AND RATING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Edmund Robertson, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Valuation and Rating of Waterworks belonging to local authorities in Scotland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dr. Cameron, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. Barbour, and Mr. Hugh Elliot.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 203.]

### PARLIAMENT — ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): In answer to the appeal made to me by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Parnell), I have to say it is my intention to proceed with the other Rules of Procedure, and that on Monday, at half-past 4, I will state what Business will be taken on Tuesday.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

House adjourned at twenty minutes after One o'clock till Monday next.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

### *Monday,* 21*st March,* 1887.

MINUTES.] — PUBLIC BILL — *Committee* — Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment (10-49).

### INDIA—THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE CELEBRATION—RELEASE OF PRISONERS.

### QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY, in rising to ask the Secretary of State for India, Whether he will recommend for the release of prisoners to celebrate the Jubilee those prisoners who are under sentences for life and other heavy sentences for trifling thefts, and who had been subject to previous convictions; a list of which sentences was published in *The Madras Mail* of 12th September, 1884; and whether he will recommend the amendment of Section 75 of the Indian Penal Code by the insertion of the words "or any shorter time" after the words "transportation for life?" said, that he had put down the Notice on behalf of some prisoners; because, while they seemed fit and safe subjects for the exercise of Her Majesty's clemency, some of them who were in the Andaman Islands were so far from the seat of government that they might be easily overlooked. The noble Earl (the Earl of Derby), who had brought the question a short time ago before the House, objected that the prisoners to be released either had undergone sufficient punishment, in which case they ought to be released, whether there was a Jubilee or not; or, if they had not had sufficient punishment, it was not expedient to release them in order to give more *éclat* to a public celebration. Now, there were 10 prisoners sentenced for life in the list published by *The Madras Mail,* for very petty thefts, owing to a defect in Section 75 of the Penal Code, which, unlike another section of that Code, left no discretion to the Judge. *The Madras Mail* list also gave a description of 177 sentences between 1876 and 1884, which were very heavy sentences for petty thefts. Many of these sentences would now have expired; but the remaining portion, he thought, would be fit subjects for receiving the benefit of Her Majesty's gracious intentions on the occasion of the Jubilee. A leading article in *The Madras Mail,* commenting on these sentences, left no doubt as to the general opinion that the sentences for life were unjust, and that it was inexpedient to punish pickpockets more severely than burglars, and that the other sentences, though not so exaggerated, were also too heavy for such petty offences. One of those sentenced to penal servitude for life, named Alfred Lees, received his sentence on a second conviction for a petty theft in a shop. *The Madras Mail* was one of the best-conducted English newspapers published in India, and the editor, Mr. Lawson, had printed the list of sentences with the view to assisting in obtaining the amendment of Section 75 of the Penal Code. In 1884, he (Lord Stanley of Alderley) had asked the then Secretary of State for India, if he would recommend the amendment of the section, so as to leave the Judges some discretion, and he now repeated the Question, and hoped that his noble Friend the Secretary of State for India, with his experience at Quarter Sessions, would endeavour to remove the anomaly of punishing pickpockets more severely than burglars. As to the other sentences, he differed entirely from the noble Earl's (the Earl of Derby) theory that the Jubilee had nothing to do with the release of prisoners. It was quite a matter of opinion, in the case of a heavy sentence, whether it was enough, or too much, or too little; and if no part of a sentence was remitted, what became of the exercise of the Royal clemency? *The Calcutta Statesman* of February 19 announced that prisoners had been judiciously and extensively released in that city; but it had been done so privately that the editor had not been able to ascertain even the approximate number of those released. For his part, he thought that the prisoners had better have been released at midday in the most public manner. The noble Lord concluded by asking the Question of which he had given Notice.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Viscount CROSS): The celebration of the Jubilee in India is now over, and all the remissions of sentences which the Viceroy, after careful consideration and consultation with the local authorities, thought it advisable to grant, in honour of the occasion, took effect nearly a month ago. The cases to which the noble Lord refers can, therefore, only be dealt with in the ordinary way upon their merits, and, that being so, it does not appear to me that there is any reason why I should take the very unusual course of interfering with the discretion of the constituted authorities in a matter of this kind. The last part of the Question of the noble Lord is to be dealt with by the Government of India, to whom the whole Question will be sent.

## ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT (1882) AMENDMENT BILL.

(*The Lord Thurlow.*)

(NO. 10.) COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order).

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN (for Lord Houghton), in rising to move the insertion of a new clause before Clause 1, said, that the object of the clause was to recognize the interests which local authorities had in such matters. As the law now stood, when a Provisional Order was sought by a Company, they did not necessarily apply for the consent of the local authority, but went direct to the Board of Trade. It was true, however, that the Board of Trade took the opinion of the local authority, and there were then ample means of stating objections. The change which was proposed was that, in the first instance, the Company should go to the local authority and ask for their consent, and if that consent was refused, the Company had power to appeal to the Board of Trade against the decision of the local authority. The local authority would thus have a veto, which, however, the Board of Trade might override.

*Moved,* to insert the following new clause before Clause 1 :—

"Notwithstanding anything in the Electric Lighting Act, 1882, no Provisional Order authorising the supply of electricity by any undertakers within the district of any local authority shall be granted by the Board of Trade except with the consent of such local authority, unless the Board of Trade, in any case in which the consent of such local authority is refused, are of opinion that, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, such consent ought to be dispensed with, and in such case they shall make a special report, stating the grounds upon which they have dispensed with such consent."—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

Lord THURLOW said, he had no objection whatever to the new clause which had been proposed by the noble Earl, as it was an accidental omission in the Bill.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Lord Stanley of Preston) said, the Government had left the subject in the hands of his noble Friend (Lord Thurlow), who had shown so much interest in the matter, because they thought it would be more courteous so to do. The measure was the outcome of the Committee of last year, and, in fact, was similar to it, and the Government were prepared to support it, provided this and similar Amendments were accepted.

Motion *agreed to;* Clause ordered to be *added* to the Bill.

Clause 1 (Amendment of s. 27 of Electric Lighting Act, 1882. Purchase of undertaking by local authority).

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said, he had an Amendment in page 1, lines 22 and 23, which raised a question of principle. The Bill, as it stood, proposed that the period during which Electric Lighting Companies should enjoy the fruits of their enterprise should be extended from 21 to 42 years, and, in addition, it was provided that at the expiration of that period any Local Authority was to be at liberty to purchase the undertaking upon the terms of paying the then market value of the goodwill of the undertaking. He objected to such legislation, for it appeared to him that this offered Electric Lighting Companies a greater privilege than was necessary or desirable in the interests of the public. If, after the period of 42 years, Local Authorities had to pay for the goodwill of these undertakings, their purchase would become impossible. Not only would a monopoly be created, but it would be a perpetual monopoly, just as the terms on which gas and water undertakings could now be acquired were so exorbitant that their purchase was impossible. It would be quite sufficient to allow the Company a monopoly of 42 years, and then to pay for their plant, but not their goodwill. He would move, therefore, that the words relating to the goodwill should be struck out. It was true the Act of 1882 gave only 21 years, and that term had not been sufficient to induce persons to invest their capital in Electric Lighting Companies, hence the Select Committee enlarged the term to 42 years; but it did not insert the power to a Company to exact a sum for goodwill when it sold the undertaking. He thought it was necessary, on behalf of the public, to omit these words, as the term of 42 years would be sufficient to enable a Company to recoup itself; and he might point out that in Clause 2 the Board of Trade would have power to vary the terms of purchase, which would be sufficient protection to a Company.

Amendment *moved,* in page 1, lines 22 and 23, to leave out ("of the goodwill of the business of the undertaking, and")—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

Lord THURLOW regretted that he could not accept the Amendment. He felt that both his noble Friend and himself were of the same mind and working for the same end—trying to create a new industry, and to prevent the creation of a new monopoly; and he thought that the clause, as it stood, would effect that better than if the words were struck out. He could not see why Electric Lighting Companies should be put upon a worse footing than other undertakings. He was convinced that the provision in the Bill was necessary for the encouragement of that new industry, and he believed there were no other alternatives to it, but either to grant provisional orders for such a prolonged term as might enable undertakers to recoup themselves without charging a prohibitive rate, or to provide liberal purchase conditions at the expiry of a shorter period. He greatly preferred the latter alternative as flavouring least of a monopoly, and should feel bound to take the sense of the House on the Amendment.

VISCOUNT BURY said, he wished to endorse what had fallen from the noble Lord who had last spoken. Under the Act of 1882 Electric Lighting Companies had not succeeded, because the term of years offered—namely, 21, was too short to induce capitalists to invest their money in them with a reasonable prospect of advantage. He was, therefore, glad that a revulsion of public feeling had taken place in the matter, and that a longer term of years was now to be accorded to undertakers of electric lighting. He did not either think it unjust that the Companies should be paid for the value of their goodwill, and should therefore oppose the Amendment. He hoped that the words proposed to be inserted by the noble Earl opposite would not be agreed to. It was obvious that the Bill would not pass in the other House that Session; therefore if the Government would undertake to introduce, at some future time, a satisfactory measure dealing with this subject, he thought that the noble Lord (Lord Thurlow) would do well to wait and to be content with such an assurance, instead of pressing forward a Bill which could not get beyond that House during the present Session.

LORD BALFOUR said, he did not think that the Electric Lighting Companies could demand to be placed upon the same footing as the existing Gas and Water Companies. When the Gas and Water Companies were dealt with, the public did not make the best bargain with them; but that was no reason why they should now make the same mistake in dealing with the electric light. In his opinion, the Electric Lighting Companies ought to be glad to get such a Bill as this; if they waited for what they might deem to be a more perfect measure, they would run the risk of not getting a Bill at all. He trusted their Lordships would pass the Bill in the same shape as nearly as possible as it was passed by the Select Committee. He should be glad to see the words referred to in the Amendment struck out.

LORD BRAMWELL said, that, on the other hand, he trusted that their Lordships would not agree to the Amendment. He thought that the less Local Authorities were allowed to acquire Water or Gas undertakings the better it would be for the community at large. But supposing they were to do so, what was the substance of this controversy? It was this—capitalists said that they would provide the necessary capital for carrying out electric schemes, if the Legislature would give them time to obtain a reasonable amount of profit upon their undertaking; and that if such undertaking resulted in a profit, instead of a loss, they were to receive compensation for the risk of loss they had run, by being allowed to receive something like the reasonable value of their undertaking. The suggestion of the other side was, that the capitalists were to run all the risk of loss; and that, when their undertaking had become a success, they were to receive, not its full market value, but merely—he did not say the old iron value—but the value of the plant, less the amount of its depreciation. This was in itself most unreasonable. But it would be attended with this mischievous consequence—As time went on the work would extend, new plant would be required for them to replace the old; and, as the time approached when the Local Board would purchase the undertaking, the undertakers would be desirous to limit their outlay as much as possible. The consequence would be that the renewal of the plant would be scamped, and every effort would be made by the undertakers to lessen the value of that which was about to be taken from them by the Local Authorities. This policy of the Local Authorities was a dog-in-the-manger policy. They said—"We shall not do it ourselves; and you shall not do it except on the terms we are willing to grant, but which you will not accept." Their Lordships should remember that those unreasonable capitalists who desired to make a profit were bound down in such a way that the dividends were limited to 10 per cent, and that when new capital was required, it could be raised only on certain stringent conditions. He also asked their Lordships to bear in mind that not one of the witnesses called before the Committee said that 42 years would give time enough; and if it did, it was open to the objection that it would prevent electric undertakers from doing their best towards the end of the term. He, therefore, asked their Lordships to reject that which he had already said was one of the most unreasonable provisions ever proposed. As to the argument, "Beware of another place," what did that mean? It meant that if their Lordships did right here, others would do wrong "elsewhere," which ought not to be supposed, nor, if supposed, acted on.

LORD LINGEN said, that he agreed with the noble Lord who spoke last but one (Lord Balfour) that they were now dealing not with a case of vested interests already created, but one in which a new bargain was to be made, in which the interests of all parties could be fairly and judicially considered, without reference to the past. The figures brought before the Committee impressed him (Lord Lingen) with the magnitude of the question. The Birmingham Town Council, in 1875, acquired the gas and waterworks of that town, for which they paid £3,500,000. In that payment, £1,500,000 was for goodwill, and was not represented by any works which they acquired. It represented the interest of the shareholders, and what was understood by "a going concern." The decision, therefore, to which their Lordships might come was of very great importance to municipalities. As to municipalities coming forward as Trading Companies, it was to be observed that when monopolies were imported into local jurisdictions by consent, there was very little difficulty in the matter; but it complicated the case when the monopoly might be introduced without the consent of the Local Authority. That made the great difference between the case of towns and that of private persons who wished to have electric lighting introduced into their houses. It should be remembered that the Local Authorities had the interests of the entire community to consider. When these powers were given, it was not only for the lighting of the streets, but of private houses. If very hard bargains were driven with the public on the introduction of those practical monopolies, it was almost certain that, at some time or other, the feeling would be to break through them; and, probably, on much less favourable terms to the Companies that if, on the introduction of the enterprise, the promoters accepted reasonable and proper limitation. He thought a compromise might be effected on the basis of excluding the consideration of the very uncertain matter of future profits.

LORD HERSCHELL said, he was not able to follow his noble and learned Friend (Lord Bramwell) in the view that municipalities, which represented the public, had not a right to make the best terms they could in the public interest, when persons had to come to Parliament to get a monopoly.

LORD BRAMWELL: They have a perfect right to get the possible bargain for the public.

LORD HERSCHELL said, that the Public Authorities were bound to take care that rights were not acquired by Companies which would be injurious to the public. He agreed with the noble and learned Lord that it would be mischievous to pass a measure in such terms as to prohibit the introduction of a system of lighting, or of anything else that would be advantageous to the public. Hence they had to consider those two points—that, on the one hand, the municipalities should be able to make the best terms they could; and, on the other, that Parliament ought not to impose restrictions which would prevent the public from getting an advantage that large numbers of people desired. For his own part, he should much regret any legislation which might have the effect of interfering with the introduction of electric lighting in private houses by those who desired it. As to the question whether the terms of the

Bill were sufficient or not to promote the object in view, he thought one circumstance had been somewhat left out of sight. There could be no doubt that a monopoly was practically given to Gas and Water Companies which were first in the field, and simply because there was not room for more than a limited number of gas and water pipes under the public streets; but with electric lighting that would not be the case, because the space that would be occupied by such a system would be so comparatively small as to obviate all difficulties in this respect. He did not know whether, under the Bill, a municipality would be precluded from entering into competition with an Electric Lighting Company for the term of 42 years.

Lord THURLOW: Not so.

Lord HERSCHELL said, that in that case, if the system of electric lighting turned out a success, there would be no difficulty in giving the public a competing scheme, if unreasonable terms were exacted by the Company in existence. That might materially affect the view as to the terms which the promoters of a Company would have a right to ask; it would strengthen their right to ask that the undertaking, when it was acquired, should be taken upon terms which would fairly recoup them for the risks they had incurred. His noble Friend behind him had suggested a course which had been often taken in similar cases, and that was not merely to pay for the plant, machinery, and so on, but to take the average price of the shares for a number of years, and the earnings for a number of years. That would seem to him to be a reasonable course. He believed that municipalities would be conciliated by some such proposal, much more than if the Bill was passed in its present form.

Lord RAYLEIGH said, he objected to the omission of the words in question; and he did so not in the interests of capitalists, but in those of the public. What was now required was to encourage the start of a new industry; and if the words were omitted, it was clear that the terms then offered under the Bill would be insufficient to attract capital. The real point of difference seemed to be which was the safe side to go on. Was it the safe side to put too severe terms in the way of the Companies? This appeared to him to be the unsafe side. There was a general desire to encourage and develop this movement, and it would be a mistake to impose severe terms at the outset. If in the future it were found that there was a great rush of capital, it would be open to Parliament to revise the terms applicable to new undertakings, of which the risk would be much less. Unless they offered reasonable terms in the first instance, it would be impossible for the electric light to get properly under weigh in this country.

Lord GRIMTHORPE said, that he told their Lordships last year that the House of Commons in 1882 disregarded the evidence of all the competent authorities which was brought forward on this subject, and now everybody knew that the result was that the Act of 1882 had proved a complete failure. No other country has such legislation, and every civilized country except this has public electric lighting. By the attempt of the Committee of 1882 to go ahead of all mankind, they had fallen behind all mankind in this matter. The Select Committee of this House last year did the same thing; for he found, on looking over the evidence, that every single engineer and financier of experience who was examined was distinctly of opinion that the Bill, in the form in which the noble Earl opposite (The Earl of Camperdown) put it, would be again a failure. As the matter stood, they had to choose between the opinions and evidence of the most competent electric engineers and scientific men and financiers, on one side, and that of a number of Town Clerks and Aldermen, on the other, exactly the same class who, in 1882, had deprived the Kingdom of the advantages of the electric light, by the terms for which they stipulated. He hoped Parliament would not listen to them again, and repeat the mistake by accepting the Amendment. A great deal had been said about monopoly; but the word was altogether inappropriate to the matter in hand, and the arguments founded upon it were incorrect. There was no more monopoly of Electric Lighting Companies than of bakers. The point at issue simply was practically whether the property was to be sold for what it was worth, or the owners were to be obliged to sell it at a loss. Both parties argued that that was the issue and the effect of excluding or admitting what is called goodwill, though it may not be an accurate term to express the commercial value of a going concern; but it is universally understood. As to Gas and Water Companies, such an obligation as it was sought to impose in this case was never placed upon them, unless the practice had been very recently altered, and he saw no reason for imposing it on Electric Lighting Companies. He strongly supported the clause as it stood. It seemed to him that if this important industry was not to be treated unfairly, the Amendment must be rejected, or we shall be, in five years more, in exactly the position which the Act has brought this country into now.

LORD STANLEY OF PRESTON said, he was bound to say, personally, that he supported the Amendment moved by his noble Friend opposite (the Earl of Camperdown); but there was a wide and an honest difference of opinion in many quarters with regard to it, and he should be sorry to prejudice in any way the action which any noble Lord might wish to take in this matter. His noble Friend behind him made a kind of appeal to him to say that the Government would bring in a Bill dealing with this subject. He did not think it would be honest on his part to give his noble Friend such a pledge. He had already explained that it was owing to his having been prevented by circumstances from introducing any measure dealing with this question, that he told the noble Lord opposite (Lord Thurlow) that he thought it was advisable that he should proceed with this Bill, and that they should endeavour, as far as they could, to assist in passing it through the House. Therefore, he thought the matter ought not to be postponed, but dealt with at the present time. The question, then, was, whether the Bill would be of the use it was intended to be, if this Amendment were added to it. He could not help thinking that, in this matter, they ought to go step by step. He was bound to a certain extent by negotiations and arrangements which took place consequent upon the Committee of last year; and, standing as he did, therefore, in the position of having to deal with this matter, he was bound to say that he preferred the lesser Amendment instead of taking the larger step. In some way or other, the question of the goodwill might hereafter have to be considered; but he did not feel himself able to accept that at the present time, and, consequently, he must vote against the Amendment of the noble Lord. The extension of time, from 21 to 42 years, was a large concession; and he thought they would do well to leave the goodwill to be dealt with at some future time. He should vote for the Amendment.

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK said, his noble Friend who had just addressed the House spoke for himself alone, and not on behalf of the Government. This was not a matter on which the Government had taken a decided line, and, for his own part, he saw no reason whatever why a public body should get for less money that for which any private person would have to pay a larger sum. Therefore, he should support the Amendment.

THE EARL OF CRAWFORD said, he was sorry to find that the President of the Board of Trade had departed from the generous line indicated by Lord Salisbury, on the second reading of the Bill, as the proper method of treating this question. He was confident, speaking from three years' experience, that the working of an electric lighting undertaking was so difficult, that no Local Authority would have done what had been done by the personal care and attention given to the extension of electric lighting by members of the Companies. In regard to the alleged creation of a new monopoly, he held that there was no monopoly in gas, which had to compete against oil and candles; and electric lighting ought not to be put on any less favourable footing than gas, because it would have to compete with gas, oil, and candles. No monopoly was asked for, excepting that which the Companies could create for themselves by the excellent quality of that which they supplied, and the moderate price they charged for it. As to what had been said about paying for old iron, he acknowledged that there was a difference between buying new machinery and buying the same machinery which had been laid down in the ground for a definite purpose. The proper price to be paid by the purchaser would be the value at the moment, and that would involve a reduction for depreciation from the original cost. But with this must be a sum for the "goodwill," which would fairly represent the trade value of the business, which had been built up by the efforts of the undertakers, and this entirely apart from any question of value of machinery plant and other property.

The Earl of GALLOWAY said, he would recommend his noble Friend opposite (the Earl of Camperdown) to withdraw the Amendment, for he must see that the feeling of the House was against him. Their Lordships had to answer two questions. The first was, whether they were to deal out to Electric Lighting Companies the same measure of justice they had dealt out to other Companies; and the second was, whether they desired to incite the men of science to drive away from this country the best light in the world?

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN, in reply to the various questions which had been asked, said, he held that it would be most unfair that a Local Authority should have the power to compete with an Electric Lighting Company during the 42 years for which a concession had been granted; and he did not believe that a Local Authority would have such a power under the Bill. If the Board of Trade granted a concession to the private Company for 42 years, he apprehended it would refuse a similar concession to any other Company, or to a Local Authority for the same district. How could we know, without trial, that the provisions of the Bill would be prohibitory of electric lighting experiments under the new term of 42 years? On the question of goodwill, he would assent to a compromise, if one could be arranged. He was prepared to accept an Amendment which would pay the value of plant and other things mentioned in the Bill, with a percentage added on account of compulsory purchase. But he was anxious to exclude uncertain calculations and valuations of prospective profits, which would be due to the expansion of a town, and not to the outlay of an Electric Lighting Company. Therefore, he must ask their Lordships to decide on the Amendment.

On Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause?" Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 45; Not-Contents 10: Majority 35.

Amendment *disagreed to.*

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said, that, after their Lordships' decision, he did not think it necessary to proceed with the remaining Amendments on the Paper.

Lord HERSCHELL said, he did not quite understand why the words about "goodwill" had been introduced. He should have thought that if the undertaking were purchased on the terms of paying the value of the undertaking, that would have covered the whole thing.

Lord BRAMWELL said, he quite thought the word "undertaking" was sufficient.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Halsbury) said, he thought that the word was necessary.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Remaining clauses *agreed to.*

The Report of the Amendments to be received on Monday next; and Bill to be *printed* as amended. (No. 49.)

House adjourned at a quarter past Six o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Monday, 21st March, 1887.*

MINUTES.]—Supply—*considered in Committee*—Navy Estimates, Vote 2; Civil Service Estimates; Class I.—Public Works and Buildings; Class II.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments; Class III.—Law and Justice; Class IV.—Education, Science, and Art; Class V.—Foreign and Colonial Services; Class VI.—Non-Effective and Charitable Services; Class VII.—Miscellaneous; Revenue Departments (Vote on Account) £3,624 [100].

Ways and Means—*considered in Committee*—£1,251,076; £12,078,800, Consolidated Fund.

Public Bills — *Second Reading* — Army (Annual)* [202]; Isle of Man (Customs)* [199]; Small Debts (Scotland)* [42]; Pauper Lunatic Asylums (Ireland) (Superannuation)* [62].

*Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee*—Bankruptcy Offices (Sites)* [197].

*Third Reading*—Merchant Shipping (Fishing Boats) Acts Amendment* [168], and *passed.*

## *QUESTIONS.*

## ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—ALLEGED ILLEGAL ARRESTS—CHARGE AGAINST SERGEANT WHARTON.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Chief Secretary to the

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on 9th January, Sergeant Wharton, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, entered the house of a Mr. John M'Nulty, near Loughglynn, and arrested J. M'Nulty and eight other persons whom he found in the house; whether Sergeant Wharton searched J. M'Nulty and took money from his person; whether, on M'Nulty objecting to this treatment, Constable Anderson, who accompanied Sergeant Wharton, drew a revolver and threatened to use it against M'Nulty and the others; whether J. M'Nulty and the others were taken by Sergeant Wharton and his force before the Honourable Charles Ffrench, a brother of Lord de Freyne, whose tenants they were and whose rents they were accused of withholding; whether the entry into the house of Mr. M'Nulty by the band of armed constables, the arrests, the searching of Mr. M'Nulty, and the seizure of his money were each and all made without any warrant; whether proceedings against Mr. M'Nulty have recently been dropped by the Government; and, whether the Government propose in any way to recompense M'Nulty and the others for the treatment they have received?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Holmes) (Dublin University) (who replied) said: John M'Nulty and nine other persons were arrested, as stated in the first paragraph of the Question, without a warrant, on a charge of criminal conspiracy, when actually engaged in collecting money under the Plan of Campaign, which was seized by the sergeant. They were at once brought before Mr. Ffrench, as described in the Question, the nearest, and indeed only, available magistrate. He confined himself, after having taken an information, to ordering the discharge of nine of the accused, and sending M'Nulty's case for investigation to Petty Sessions, offering to accept bail for his appearance thereat. A rescue having been threatened Sergeant Wharton drew his revolver, and cautioned the persons interfering to stand aside; but he used no threats to M'Nulty. M'Nulty and five others were returned for trial from Petty Sessions; and, as I have already stated, in answer to a Question, in the exercise of the discretion I possess I have directed that the proceedings should not be continued by the Crown, but that no recompense will be paid to the accused.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman say whether there was any warrant?

Mr. HOLMES: I have already said there was not.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman state who was the magistrate before whom the men were brought?

Mr. HOLMES: I have stated it was the Mr. Ffrench described in the Question.

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman answer the second paragraph of the Question—whether Sergeant Wharton searched M'Nulty and took money from his person?

Mr. HOLMES: Oh, I omitted to state that the sergeant took money which had been collected by M'Nulty.

Mr. CHANCE: And the sergeant was not entitled to do so?

Mr. HOLMES: I hold he was perfectly entitled to do so.

## POST OFFICE (SCOTLAND)—ACCELERATION OF MAILS NORTH OF PERTH.

Mr. FINLAY (Inverness, &c.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether, in view of the great dissatisfaction in Inverness and the North of Scotland generally, with the slow rate at which the London Day Mail is carried from Perth to Wick and Strome Ferry, and of the fact that it now takes about 10 hours more than the London Night Mail to traverse the distance between London and Wick, he is willing to re-consider the possibility of accelerating the London Day Mail north of Perth, in accordance with the Memorials sent in to him from the Northern towns and counties on the subject?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): I am aware that the London Day Mail is carried from Perth to Wick and Strome Ferry by a slower train than that employed for the London Night Mail. But the postal revenue of the district would be altogether inadequate to justify the maintenance of two Mail Trains a-day throughout, running at the speed and under the conditions of the Night Mail Train. The payments made for the conveyance of Mails north of Perth are already so considerable that it may become a serious question on the next revision of the contract whether, if more moderate payments cannot be accepted by the Highland Railway Company, the liberal and effective postal service in the districts traversed by that line may not have to be reduced. I am sorry that I can hold out no expectation of a compliance with the prayer of the Memorials referred to.

### CRIME (ENGLAND AND WALES)—RETURN OF MURDERS BY ARMED BURGLARS, &c.

Sir ALGERNON BORTHWICK (Kensington, S.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return stating the number of murders committed by Burglars in the United Kingdom during the past 10 years; how many such murderers have been convicted; how many Persons have been wounded by the use of fire-arms by burglars; how many burglars in the Metropolitan Police District have avoided arrest by the use of fire-arms; and, whether he contemplates proposing any change in the law to deter burglars and others from the felonious use of fire-arms and other dangerous weapons?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): A Return such as my hon. Friend asks for, including the whole of the United Kingdom, could only be obtained by Circular from the Local Police Authorities, and would entail much labour and expense, and I regret that I do not feel able to comply with the request. If, however, my hon. Friend will be satisfied with a Return including only the Metropolitan Police District, I will ask the Chief Commissioner if he is able to give the information asked for; and, if so, I shall be happy to lay such a Return on the Table. It is not my intention to propose any change in the law with regard to the use of fire-arms and other dangerous weapons by burglars.

### FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACT—INSPECTORS IN IRELAND.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, considering the limited number of Inspectors in Ireland under the Factory and Workshops Acts, and their consequent inadequate administration, he will appoint an additional number of practical men as Factory and Workshop Inspectors?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I have consulted the Chief Inspector on this matter, and he informs me that he is not of opinion that the number of Inspectors in Ireland is too limited, or that the Acts are inadequately administered. There are, unfortunately, few industries requiring inspection in the South and West of Ireland, and complaints as to evasion of the Acts in those districts are very rare. The Inspectors resident in Ireland will receive occasional assistance from England; but I have no intention to add to the existing number of Factory Inspectors.

### ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—TOWN COMMISSIONERS OF BOYLE, CO. ROSCOMMON—SUB-INSPECTOR BABBAGE.

Mr. O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether complaints have been made to the Inspector General of Constabulary by the Town Commissioners of Boyle, County Roscommon, of the conduct of Sub-Inspector Babbage, commanding the police in Boyle, in disobeying their Orders, and neglecting to aid them in maintaining good order in that town; and, whether, under the provisions of the 70th section of 17 & 18 *Vict.* c. 103, the police are bound to obey all proper and legal Orders issued by the Town Commissioners for the government and good order of the town?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Holmes) (Dublin University) said, he would answer the Question on behalf of his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary. He had heard from the Inspector General of Constabulary that a complaint was made to him in regard to the disobeying by the Constabulary of a particular order of the Boyle Town Commissioners; but though the Constabulary had directions to obey all proper and legal orders issued by the Town Commissioners, with regard to this particular order which they had not carried out there was a doubt as to its legality.

### THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. CECIL ROCHE, R.M., BOYLE, CO. ROSCOMMON.

Mr. O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord

Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that Mr. Cecil Roche, R.M., was sent specially to Boyle to try a summons for non-payment of rates, issued by the Town Commissioners against Colonel King-Harman, M.P., and Mr. Webb, J.P.; whether Mr. Roche accepted Mr. Webb's hospitality, and put up at Mr. Webb's house during his stay in Boyle; whether Mr. Roche dismissed the summons against the defendants on the ground that a question of the lawfulness of the prosecutors' title to act as Town Commissioners had been raised; whether Mr. James Candon, the present Chairman of the Town Commissioners, has been appointed a Justice of the Peace by virtue of his title as Town Commissioner, under Section 29 of 17 & 18 *Vict.*, c. 103, and has held a Town Court fortnightly since his appointment; and, whether Mr. Roche sat and acted in the Town Court on the 9th ultimo with Mr. Candon, though he now questions the validity of Mr. Candon's claim to act as Town Commissioner?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University) (who replied) said: Mr. Cecil Roche was one of two Resident Magistrates sent at the request of the Town Commissioners to hear the case referred to. It is not a fact that he accepted Mr. Webb's hospitality, or put up at his house. The magistrates, of whom Mr. Roche was one, decided that, owing to the question of the Town Commissioners' title pending in a higher Court, they could not dispose of the question as to the rates. Mr. Candon having been appointed a magistrate, as described, by the late Lord Chancellor, Mr. Roche has naturally not felt it within his jurisdiction to question the appointment.

## MARRIAGE LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—MARRIAGES IN DISSENTING CHAPELS—RE-MARRIAGE.

MR. T. BLAKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has been able to obtain more detailed information as to the re-marriage of William Frederick Jaine with his wife, Fanny Jaine, at the parish church of Kimbolton on 16th February, after they had already been married at the Primitive Methodist Chapel in Leominster; whether such re-marriage was performed by the Rev. Augustus Garthwaite, Curate of Kimbolton, and with full knowledge that the parties were already married; whether, with such knowledge, he proceeded to enter the ceremony as a marriage in the Parish Register, and in the entry (No. 211) described the parties as being "bachelor" and "spinster," married after banns; whether the wilful insertion of such an entry is made a felony by the Statute 24 & 25 *Vict.*, c. 98, s. 36; whether this re-marriage was actually celebrated without either banns or licence, in contravention both of Ecclesiastical Law and of the Statute 4 *Geo.* 4, c. 76, s. 21; and, if any banns were proclaimed, on what Sundays, and at whose request, they were proclaimed, and what written record exists of the proclamation; and, whether he will direct the Public Prosecutor to take any action in the matter?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a further letter from the Vicar of Kimbolton Parish, and have also heard from Mr. Squires, the Primitive Methodist minister at Leominster, as to the re-marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Jaine. The Vicar repeats that his curate was not aware until the following day that a religious ceremony had been performed; but believed that the parties had been married before the Registrar only. The ceremony was entered as a marriage in the Parish Register, the parties being described as stated in the Question. The Act of 24 & 25 *Vict.*, c. 98, which makes it a felony to knowingly and unlawfully insert in any Register any false entry of any matter relating to any marriage, appears rather to be aimed at a different state of facts from that which I have mentioned. The marriage was solemnized without publication of banns, properly so-called; but there had been notice of the marriage three times given through the Registrar's Office as provided by statute, in lieu of banns. I am led to think from the correspondence that the curate believed that he was entitled to solemnize the marriage in church without banns under 19 & 20 *Vict.*, c. 119, s. 12, although no doubt he ought not in such a case to have entered the marriage in the Parish Register. Under all the circumstances of the case, the curate seems to me to have acted without full knowledge of the facts, and rather *per incuriam* than with any fraudulent intent; and, accordingly, I am not prepared to advise the Public Prosecutor to interfere.

Mr. T. BLAKE inquired, whether a marriage could be solemnized in a church without any other notice than that given at a Registrar's Office?

Mr. MATTHEWS said, he would like Notice of the Question; but, so far as he was aware, the production of the Registrar's certificate was sufficient to entitle parties to be so married.

Mr. T. BLAKE stated that the Secretary to the Registrar General informed him to the contrary.

### ARMY—SUPPLY OF HORSES FOR ARMY PURPOSES.

Sir WILLIAM CROSSMAN (Portsmouth) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Her Majesty's Government will agree to a Select Committee of this House being appointed to consider and report upon the supply of horses for Army purposes; and also to report whether, in their opinion, the supply could be in any way improved by the action of the Legislature?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): We have carefully considered this matter, and have come to the conclusion that there would be no adequate advantage in holding an inquiry by a Committee of this House at the present time into the supply of horses. The question of horse supply for the Army is of an urgent character; and I do not wish to be precluded by the appointment of such a Committee from taking any immediate steps that may be necessary.

### CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES—THE FISHERIES DISPUTE.

Mr. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he can now inform the House of the nature of the Despatch received from the Dominion Government suggesting a "*modus vivendi*" for a settlement of the Anglo-American Fisheries dispute, and when he anticipates that further Correspondence will be in the hands of Members; and, whether the prohibition of the sale of bait to United States fishermen in Newfoundland whilst permitted to French fishermen is in harmony with "the most favoured Nation" Clause of Foreign Treaties?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government will be desirous of informing the House of the course of negotiations with the Government of the United States upon the Fisheries dispute as soon as possible. I hope to lay on the Table the Despatch now being addressed to the United States Government before the Easter Recess. I hope the House will excuse me from entering upon the questions affecting the Newfoundland Fisheries in a fragmentary manner. Her Majesty's Government will be careful to observe their International obligations, while having due regard to the interests of Her Majesty's subjects.

### PRISONS (IRELAND)—CONVICT PRISON AT GALWAY.

Mr. PINKERTON (Galway) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What amount has been expended of the £10,000 voted last year for the erection of a Prison at Galway for convicts to be employed upon Harbour works?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): Serious difficulties occurred in the way of the carrying out of the proposed works; and I am informed that the only part of the money spent is the sum of £63 paid to an engineer.

Mr. PINKERTON: Does not the right hon. Gentleman think it would be advisable, considering the increased strain likely to be put upon prison accommodation in Ireland, to proceed with this work as expeditiously as possible?

### INDIA—INFANT MARRIAGE AND ENFORCED WIDOWHOOD.

Mr. E. R. RUSSELL (Glasgow, Bridgeton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether Her Majesty's Government have sanctioned, or have raised any objection to, the following passage in the Resolution of the Governor General in Council, on Infant Marriage and Enforced Widowhood, passed in October last—

> "When caste or custom lays down a rule which is of its nature enforceable in the Civil Courts, but is clearly opposed to morality or public policy, the State will decline to enforce it?"

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham):

Her Majesty's Government have neither sanctioned nor have they raised any objection to the passage quoted.

### INLAND REVENUE—DEED STAMPS, SCOTLAND.

MR. E. R. RUSSELL (Glasgow, Bridgeton) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he is aware of the present practice by which, when solicitors in Glasgow have to get deeds adjudicated upon by the stamp authorities, in order to fix the duties to be paid thereon, it is necessary to employ an Edinburgh agent to present such deeds at the Stamp Office in that city, expense being thereby incurred; and, whether the Government will take steps to arrange that in such cases deeds may be handed in at the Glasgow Stamp Office and transmitted by the Glasgow authorities to Edinburgh?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities), in reply, said, the facts were as stated in the hon. Member's Question; but whenever the inconvenience complained of was pointed out to the Board of Inland Revenue, they proceeded to have it remedied, and arranged with their solicitor in Edinburgh that he should receive direct from solicitors in Glasgow, by post, all deeds for adjudication, without employing any agents in Edinburgh.

### EVICTIONS, &c. (IRELAND)—RELATION OF LANDLORDS AND TENANTS—ALLEGED CIRCULAR TO THE POLICE.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the evidence given at Lifford, County Donegal, in the case of Hannah O'Donnell, charged with having taken forcible possession in Gweedore; whether there is now in existence a Circular to the police, such as was deposed to in that case by Sergeant Mahony, directing the police to interrogate tenants as to their relations with landlords, and to demand possession, or otherwise act as bailiffs for the owners of property; and, if he will lay a copy of it upon the Table of the House?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I think the hon. Member must have seen some incorrect report of the proceedings. I am informed that Sergeant Mahony gave no such evidence. There is no such Circular as is suggested in the Question.

MR. O'DOHERTY: Is not the right hon. Gentleman aware that the police so acted, as the informations in the case show? I can give the right hon. Gentleman a copy of the informations.

[No reply.]

### POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—EXTRA DUTY IN TRAVELLING POST OFFICES AT CHRISTMAS.

MR. LANE (Cork Co., E.) asked the Postmaster General, Why payment for extra duty, performed during the Christmas pressure in the travelling post offices in Ireland, has not yet been made; if he can state why payments for extra duty done in this branch of the Service are not made as punctually as in other departments of the Dublin Post Office; and, when these payments will be made?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): Considerable delay in making these payments has been caused by certain officers of the travelling post themselves, who omitted to submit their claims with sufficient promptitude. The amounts have now been passed and instructions issued for payment.

### BURIALS—THE BURIAL GROUND AT LLANFROTHEN, MERIONETHSHIRE.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the old burial ground of the parish of Llanfrothen, Merionethshire, has, for some years, been too full to allow of any more interments in it; whether, 20 years ago, a lady presented to the parish a piece of ground adjoining the old burial ground; and, whether the present incumbent of the parish refuses to Nonconformist parishioners the right of availing themselves of the provisions of "The Burials Act, 1880," in burials in the additional portion of the parish burial ground; and, if so, whether he can take steps to prevent this defeat of the law?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I received a letter this morning from the Rector of Llanfrothen, who informs me that the burial ground of the parish is not full, that many burials take place there annually, the last having taken place on the 17th instant. It is a fact that a piece of land was presented to the parish by a lady for burial purposes, but on the condition that the service should be conducted according to the rites of the Church of England. This piece of land was conveyed to trustees under 36 and 37 *Vict.*, c. 50. Presuming that the condition attached to the devise was inserted in the conveyance, the provisions of the Act of 1880 do not seem to me to have been evaded; for Clause 9 of that Statute enacts that the Act shall not authorise the burial of any person without the performance of any express condition, on which any right of interment in any burial ground vested in trustees, not being the burial ground of the parish, may have been granted.

### AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS — COMPARATIVE RETURN, 1881 TO 1886.

MR. HOBHOUSE (Somerset, E.) asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether his attention has been called to the "Return of the value of live stock and crops, showing the numbers, at various ages, of cattle and sheep, and the estimated produce of the crops, with the average prices of each year and of each kind from 1881 to 1886," prepared for the Royal Commission on "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881," and mentioned at page 9 of the Report of the said Commission; and, whether he would consent to a similar Return being prepared for England and Wales, so as to assist landowners and tenant farmers in effecting equitable re-adjustments of rents?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) (who replied) said: The Agricultural Department will consider the Return referred to, which has now been printed, and will decide whether it is possible to prepare a similar Return for England and Wales.

### AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT — REPORT FOR 1886.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.) asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, When the Report of the Agricultural Department of the Privy Council for the year 1886 will be presented?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) (who replied) said: The whole of the Report is in the hands of the printer, and it will be presented before the end of the month.

### CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT — IMPORTATION OF CATTLE AFFECTED WITH PLEURO-PNEUMONIA FROM IRELAND.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY (Forfarshire) asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether he can inform the House what steps the Irish Executive propose taking to prevent the shipment from Dublin of cattle affected with pleuro-pneumonia; whether the Veterinary Department consider the proposed new arrangements satisfactory; and, if not, whether he can state what course the Department proposes to adopt; and, if he will lay the Correspondence relating to the subject upon the Table of the House?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) (who replied) said: The Irish Government have passed Orders prohibiting the movement of cattle out of the infected districts in Dublin and the neighbourhood without the special sanction of the Lord Lieutenant; and further measures suggested by the Privy Council in this country are under the consideration of the Irish Government. The Correspondence is not complete, and cannot, therefore, be laid on the Table at present.

### METROPOLIS—GUY'S HOSPITAL.

MR. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, on the afternoon of 14th March, a man named Stack, suffering from a fractured leg, applied for surgical aid at Guy's Hospital, and his case was not attended to till 1 a.m. on the following morning; whether, on the same morning, after the leg was set, he was ordered to leave the place, as there was no room for him, a relative having to pawn her wedding ring to pay for a pair of crutches supplied by the Hospital; and, whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into the case?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Medical Superintendent of Guy's Hospital that the facts of Stack's case are as follows:—Stack was brought to the Hospital at 7 p.m. on Monday, and was found to be suffering from a simple fracture of the small bone of his leg. He was taken into the accident ward for the night and received immediate attendance; and, as is usual in the case of similar injuries, the limb was temporarily placed in sandbags, and in the course of a few hours, between 11 and 12, the limb was put up permanently in plaster of Paris bandages. Stack was discharged on the following day with a pair of crutches supplied at the expense of the Hospital, and without any charge to Stack or his relatives. He was discharged in the ordinary course, and not for want of room. When Stack came to the Hospital every bed in the ward was occupied; but one of the occupants, who was leaving the next morning, was placed on a stretcher, and thus made room for Stack. The Hospital Authorities seem to me to have done all that was proper on this occasion.

### BOARD OF WORKS (IRELAND)—FURTHER EXPENDITURE REQUIRED FOR COMPLETION OF ARKLOW HARBOUR — STATEMENT OF THE TOWN COMMISSIONERS OF ARKLOW.

MR. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Lords of the Treasury have considered the statement of the Town Commissioners of Arklow, in which they protest against the proposal of the Board of Works to raise an additional loan, on the guarantee of the rates, of £4,325 to complete the harbour; whether it is alleged that the original sum of £20,000, for which a baronial guarantee was given, in addition to the Treasury Grant, was ample to do the work, but for the large sum expended in repairing damages, owing to the collapse of the breakwater during its construction; and, whether, under the circumstances, the Treasury will increase the grant by a sum sufficient to put the harbour in working order?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The statement referred to by the hon. Member has been considered. It is alleged that the original sum was ample. Additional expenditure was, however, necessary in consequence of damage done by storms during the progress of the work, and of delay caused by discussion. In June last year a joint deputation of the Town Commissioners of Arklow and the local Harbour Committee unanimously approved the completion of the south pier on the Board of Works' plan. Unless the Town Commissioners are prepared to guarantee in the terms of the Act the additional capital required, I fear that the proposed north groyne cannot be proceeded with; but experience may show that it is not necessary. Two eminent engineers who were called in are of opinion that experience might show that the works already done would be sufficient for the purposes of a harbour.

### EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—MEDAL TO THE SUAKIN REGIMENTS, 1885.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN (Kent, Isle of Thanet) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he can hold out a hope that the Egyptian medal will soon be given to the officers and men, including the Indian Native Regiments, who served around Suakin in 1885?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The Egyptian medal has already been issued to all British and Indian troops who served at Suakin during any part of the period from the 26th of March, 1884, to the 14th of May, 1885, which has been held to be the limit of the period of warlike operations for which the medal is granted. I am afraid I can hold out no hope that the question can be re-opened.

### PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—VENTILATION OF THIS HOUSE—COOKSON'S WHARF, MILLBANK.

MR. W. H. JAMES (Gateshead) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, as stated in the Report of Mr. Fletcher, the Inspector under the Alkali Acts, before the Select Committee on the Ventilation of the House, there exists, a few yards south of the Houses of Parliament, at Cookson's Wharf, Millbank, a refuse heap, upon which castaway bedding, rags, bones, hair, animal and vegetable refuse out of Westminster is burnt periodically at night, as occasion requires; and, whether, if correct, he proposes to do anything to mitigate this nuisance?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Mr. Fletcher, in his Report, expressed the opinion that the unpleasant smell, resembling that of burning animal matter, experienced on the west side of the Houses of Parliament, early in the morning of July 9, 1884, arose from the burning of some refuse material at Cookson's Wharf, Millbank. I am informed by Mr. Fletcher that subsequent inquiry has shown that this burning of refuse was an isolated act, in violation of orders, which has not been repeated.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked, whether the establishment referred to, not being carried on for the purpose of manufacture, was not exempt from the operation of the Factory Acts?

MR. RITCHIE said, that was an entirely new point. The Question put to him was as to the nuisance, and as to that he had replied that it was an isolated act, and had not been repeated.

### AFRICA (WEST COAST)—THE ROYAL NIGER COMPANY.

MR. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, in the recent changes which have taken place in the Government of the Niger, sufficient steps were taken to secure the assent of the natives to the new arrangements; whether he will lay upon the Table of the House evidence to show that the natives were parties to the establishment of the authority of the Royal Niger Company; and, whether he has any information to show whether the late disturbances were due in any way to the natives resenting the imposition by the Company of heavy taxes, to which they were not accustomed?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The Charter to the Royal Niger Company was granted after most mature consideration. There is abundant evidence as to the general assent of the Natives, over 230 Treaties having been concluded with the Company. It is not proposed to lay upon the Table these Treaties, which, indeed, would be misleading, as they contained clauses giving exclusive rights which have become inoperative under the Charter. Reports show that the recent disturbances arose from robberies by a Native Chief, and not from the imposition of taxes.

### EDUCATION CODE, 1887—CLASS SUBJECTS—WELSH.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether Welsh will be included among the class subjects under Article 15 of the Education Code now lying upon the Table of the House?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): The hon. Member is aware that Welsh is now a "specific subject"—that is, it is taught to individual scholars, and grants are made in respect of each child who passes; but I am not prepared to make Welsh a "class subject," and, therefore, to refuse all grants unless the language is taught throughout the school.

### EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—THE NEW CODE, 1887—PUPIL TEACHERS AS QUEEN'S SCHOLARS.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether he will consider the desirability of so altering Article 124 of the Education Code so as to allow pupil teachers in Wales to be presented for examination as Queen's Scholars who have been under instruction for the prescribed time at one of the three University Colleges of Cardiff, Aberystwith, and Bangor, without residence at the Training College?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): It would be difficult to accept on the part of pupil teachers in Wales instruction at the three University Colleges of Cardiff, Aberystwith, and Bangor as equivalent to residence in a Training College, for the syllabus of subjects, the study of which it is thought necessary to enforce on candidates for certificates, is not adopted at those Colleges, and students would, therefore, be placed at a disadvantage in the examination, and would be less eligible as teachers afterwards.

### EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—THE NEW CODE, 1887—WELSH-SPEAKING DISTRICTS.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether, in the "Class Subjects" of Article 15 of the Education Code, the Education Department will sanction an alternative scheme of English adapted to schools in Welsh-speaking districts; whether, in the "Elementary Subjects," bi-lingual reading books, of the ordinary size, may be used in Welsh schools; whether Her Majesty's Inspectors in Wales are in a position to suggest such a scheme of bi-lingual teaching, and, if approved, whether it will be inserted in Schedules I. and II. of the Code; and, whether such a scheme will be made equally applicable to evening schools in Wales?

The VICE PRESIDENT (Sir William Hart Dyke) (Kent, Dartford): The hon. Member is aware that in Welsh-speaking districts it is already provided that the intelligence of the children examined in any elementary or class subject may be tested by requiring them to explain in Welsh the meaning of passages read, and I know of no reason to object to the use of bi-lingual reading books. The forthcoming General Report on Wales, which will be published separately, will show the attitude of Her Majesty's Inspectors on the subject, and will, I hope, satisfy the hon. Member that the Department is not insensible to its importance.

## EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—THE NEW CODE, 1887—THE WELSH AND GAELIC LANGUAGES—PUPIL TEACHERS.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether, for many years up to 1862, a grant was made by the Government to the pupil teachers who successfully passed in Welsh or Gaelic, and who taught in schools in Welsh or Gaelic-speaking districts; whether the Scotch Education Code of 1887 allows pupil teachers to obtain marks in Gaelic grammar, translation, and composition, in their admission examination to the Training Colleges, and directs a grant to be made to pupil teachers employed in giving bi-lingual instruction to Gaelic-speaking children; and, whether the Education Department will add Welsh to the four languages in Schedule V., Section 10, of the Education Code, and direct a grant to be made to pupil teachers employed in giving bi-lingual instruction to Welsh children?

The VICE PRESIDENT (Sir William Hart Dyke) (Kent, Dartford): A grant was formerly made to certificated teachers under the circumstances described in the Question; and by the Scotch Code of the present year the customary grant is made in respect of pupil teachers employed for the special purpose of giving bi-lingual instruction, but not required to make up the minimum staff. I am not, however, as at present advised, prepared to make the changes suggested in the last part of the Question.

## ADMIRALTY — DRAWINGS SUPPLIED TO FOREIGN POWERS.

Sir HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether there are any Rules in force, and what is the practice, in regard to the supply of drawings or information to Foreign Powers, or individuals, of vessels, &c., constructed in the Royal Dockyards, or by firms or Companies outside of the Dockyards; whether such drawings or information are sometimes supplied under the authority of the Admiralty; whether any moneys have been received by the Admiralty for their supply; and, whether any further steps will be taken in regard to designs which may be considered to be of a more confidential character?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): It is contrary, both to Rules and existing practice, for Government *employés* to supply drawings of ships constructed in the Royal Dockyards either to Foreign Powers or to individuals. Certain exceptions to these Rules have at times been made with the approval of the Admiralty; and in these cases the expenses incurred by the employment of extra draftsmen have been refunded by the persons for whom the drawings were made. Private firms tendering for the construction of ships and engines are, of necessity, supplied with specifications and drawings. New Regulations are about to be issued in reference to the publication of confidential designs.

## INDIA—THE PISHIN FRONTIER.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If the statement is correct that the Indian Government are about to post a force of observation on the Pishin Frontier; if the Government propose entering Afghan territory; and, whether they intend affording and material or subsidiary support to the Ameer of Afghanistan in case of a Russian advance?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Secretary of State has no information which corroborates the statement referred to, nor has he any reason to suppose that Russia is contemplating an advance against Afghanistan; but he has not authorized me to express any opinion as to the course he would take should such be the case.

## THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—IRREGULAR DETENTION AT NEW ROSS POLICE STATION.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) (for Mr. J. E. REDMOND) (Wexford, N.) asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether John Malone and Richard Magee, who were arrested and lodged in New Ross Police Station on the 21st February last, on a charge of insubordination, and who were on the following day brought before a magistrate, in a room of the police station, and by him sentenced to three months' imprisonment, were before sentence asked to give bail for their appearance at the then next Petty Sessions for the district; whether he will state the amount of bail required by the magistrate in each case; and, whether the prisoners declared that they were unable to give such bail?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. Holmes) (Dublin University), in reply, said, the prisoners had been inmates of the New Ross Workhouse, and had raised no objection to their being tried by the magistrate. The charge against them was not insubordination. They were convicted under the Vagrancy Act for being found loitering for an illegal purpose; and the fact that the magistrate did not ask them could they give bail did not affect the legality of the decision.

MR. SEXTON asked, was not the magistrate bound, under the 22nd section of the Summary Jurisdiction Act, to call upon the prisoners to find bail; and, whether the failure to do so did not render the decision illegal?

MR. HOLMES said, the magistrate was not required to do so in the case in question.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE RESOURCES OF IRELAND—THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Royal Commission on the Development of the Resources of Ireland have concluded their inquiries regarding arterial drainage; and, if so, whether they will report upon that subject prior to their entering upon the consideration of the other questions referred to them?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I understand from the Royal Commissioners that they have practically completed their inquiry upon the subject of arterial drainage; and, in accordance with the promise conveyed by my Predecessor in Office to a deputation of which the hon. Member was one, they intend making a separate Report upon this part of the Reference to them. They are now engaged on the preparation of that Report.

## CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIOTS AT YOUGHAL—LETTER OF CAPTAIN PLUNKETT.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the police officer, to whom Captain Plunkett telegraphed not to hesitate to shoot the people of Youghal if it should be necessary, was County Inspector Brownrigg; whether County Inspector Brownrigg was recently summoned before the Youghal Bench for an assault upon a local merchant, and fined; and, if so, whether it is the intention of the Chief Secretary to entrust this officer in future with such discretionary power as is named in the telegram?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The telegram sent by Captain Plunkett was addressed to County Inspector Brownrigg. With regard to the circumstances of the case mentioned in the second paragraph of the Question, I have to say what was stated by my Predecessor on a previous occasion—that County Inspector Brownrigg was summoned for an alleged assault while in the discharge of his police duties, and was fined a farthing, without costs—the presiding magistrate, in announcing the decision of the Bench, stating that the case ought not to have been brought into Court.

### WANDSWORTH COMMON — VICTORIA PATRIOTIC ASYLUM FOR GIRLS.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, prior to granting a lease of land attached to the Victoria Patriotic Asylum for Girls on Wandsworth Common, held in charitable trust, the Royal Commissioners of the Patriotic Fund sought and obtained the consent of the Charity Commissioners?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I am advised that the Commissioners of the Royal Patriotic Fund would not be required by law to obtain the assent of the Charity Commissioners to the grant by them of a lease of land for 21 years.

### LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—THE OFFICE OF CROWN AGENT — MR. AULDJO JAMIESON.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether Mr. Auldjo Jamieson, Crown Agent for Scotland, is a member of the firm of Todds, Murray, and Jamieson, who act as estate agents; whether the said firm are agents for the Ardencaple Estate, Argyllshire, where a deforcement took place in connection with the eviction of a farmer named M'Dougal, and for which Samuel M'Dougal has been tried and imprisoned; and, whether the Government will require that so important and responsible an official as the Crown Agent shall act as the servant of the Crown alone, and not as an estate agent in cases that may come before him in his public capacity?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I answer the two first paragraphs of the hon. Member's Question in the affirmative. As regards the third paragraph, I have to say that the Crown Agent, in matters of prosecution for crime, is solely an administrative official, and cases in no way come before him in that capacity. They are dealt with by the Lord Advocate and his deputies, without consultation with the Crown Agent of any kind; and it would be quite out of his province for him to interfere in any way with the proceedings, and he never does so. It is not intended to make any alteration on the existing practice.

### NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—PUPIL TEACHERS.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether teachers of national schools in Ireland, seeking promotion from the third to the second class, are required to present at the annual results examinations a certain proportion of their pupils in the higher classes; whether by this rule several teachers are debarred from all hope of promotion, in consequence of the districts in which their schools are situate being so thinly populated, and so poor, the people in many instances being unable to provide clothes for their children, that it is impossible for the teacher to secure the required minimum attendance of 100 days of the requisite number of pupils to qualify for presentation at the results examinations, while in such schools the number of passes in many cases on the whole average 87 per cent; and, whether, under the circumstances, he is prepared to recommend a modification of this rule in certain cases where the diligence and efficiency of the teachers are undisputed?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Commissioners of National Education inform me that every national school teacher seeking improved status and remuneration is expected by the Commissioners to have such a fair proportion of pupils in the higher classes as the circumstances of his school—whether in a thinly-populated district or not—warrant, and to have both junior and senior pupils carefully instructed. While there is no absolute rule fixing any precise number of pupils for the higher classes, the existence of such classes in other than infant schools is always an important element in determining the admission of teachers to examination with a view to promotion.

### POST OFFICE—COMMISSION ON POSTAL ORDERS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is true that a scheme has been submitted to him which will insure a proportionate commission on all postal orders; and, whether the Department intends to adopt that or some system founded on similar lines?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I have received, a few days ago, from my noble Friend the Member for the St. Alban's Division of Hertfordshire (Viscount Grimston) a scheme such as that referred to, and it is now undergoing a careful examination.

## POST OFFICE—CHARGES AT SHANGHAI.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is aware that British merchants in Shanghai can send their letters through the French Post Office there for conveyance to Europe by the English steamers of the Peninsular and Oriental Company at the rate of 2½*d.* per half ounce, while the same letters, if sent through the British Post Office at Shanghai, also for Europe, would be charged 5*d.*; and, whether he is disposed to take steps to remedy this apparent anomaly?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): Yes; I am aware of the circumstance to which the hon. Member has called attention. The explanation is that the French Post Office does not avail itself of the option given by the Postal Union Convention of collecting additional postage to meet the expenses of conveyance to distant places, while the British Post Office does avail itself of that option. In the case referred to, the French Office does not incur a loss in sending the letters by British packets for 2½*d.*; but even at the 5*d.* rate a considerable loss is incurred by the British Office, because it has to pay heavily, not only for the sea service, but also for a special train service across Italy and France. Obviously, any reduction of the British postage would involve additional loss; and I am not prepared at present to recommend the Treasury to incur that loss.

## INDIA (MADRAS)—PLANTATIONS OF CINCHONA.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Government of Madras planted cinchona for the purpose of obtaining a febrifuge for the Native classes; whether it is the fact that sales of Government bark are advertised in London papers; that the bark comes to Europe for the manufacture of quinine; and which drug being retailed at an average of some 300 per cent above the wholesale price (which to-day is 2*s.* 8*d.* per ounce for the best) puts it wholly and totally beyond the means of the classes the Madras Government intended to benefit; and, whether the present method of selling its bark in the open market in Madras is contrary to the understanding arrived at when the Government ceased to export bark on its own account?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): One of the objects, but not the only one, of planting cinchona, was that stated. Government bark is advertised for sale in London, and comes to England for the manufacture of quinine. Government gets quinine for its Medical Departments at wholesale prices, and makes the "Red Bark" into an effective febrifuge cheap enough to be within the reach of all classes. I do not understand what is the "understanding arrived at" mentioned in the last paragraph.

## ADMIRALTY—SHANK PALLISER SCREW BOLTS.

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, How many reduced shank Palliser screw bolts for armour plates (approximately) have been used in Her Majesty's Navy; whether they are generally used in ships now afloat; and, whether they are still being used to fasten armour plates on ships now under construction?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): From 25,000 to 30,000 Palliser armour bolts with reduced shanks have been used in Her Majesty's Navy. They are generally in use in ships now afloat, and are still used for ships under construction.

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT asked whether Captain Palliser had received any pecuniary benefit from his discovery?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he would like to have Notice of the Question.

### CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—OUTBREAK OF ANTHRAX.

Sir JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether any information can be given respecting the numerous outbreaks of anthrax that have taken place in various parts of Great Britain during the past six months, and whether they have been traced to the use of railway trucks for the conveyance of foreign hides, the same trucks being subsequently used with cattle?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) (who replied) said: An inquiry in reference to the recent outbreaks of anthrax is now being conducted by the officers of the Agricultural Department. There is no reason, however, to believe that the disease has been more prevalent during the last six months than previously. The Anthrax Order of September last imposes on the owners of animals the obligation to give notice of the disease, and on the Inspectors the duty of making Returns weekly; hence public attention has been called to outbreaks which otherwise would have escaped notice. None of the outbreaks have been traced to railway trucks in which foreign hides had been previously carried.

Sir JOHN SWINBURNE asked, what steps the Government were prepared to take to stamp out anthrax in Cheshire?

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he was not himself able to give an answer to that Question without Notice.

### ADMIRALTY—THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE CELEBRATION—THE NAVAL REVIEW — ROYAL NAVAL RESERVE AND ROYAL NAVAL ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS.

Sir SAMUEL WILSON (Portsmouth) (for Mr. Baden-Powell) (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether arrangements will be made in order to enable contingents of officers and men of the Royal Naval Reserve and Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers to take part in the Jubilee Naval Review; and, if so, whether it can be arranged that these contingents shall be representative of the different districts of the United Kingdom?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): The Jubilee is to be celebrated by a Naval Review to be held at Portsmouth on July 23, at which Her Majesty has signified her intention to be present. This Review will embrace a large number of battle ships, coast defence vessels, fast cruisers, torpedo boats, and gunboats; and, unlike previous Reviews, will not be merely a pageant, but the prelude to a series of operations at sea to test the efficiency both of men and ships. These operations will comprise the defence of our principal military and commercial ports and the protection of our coasts from the Downs to the north of Donegal Bay, and also the protection of our commerce near the entrance of the Channel; and in carrying them out all precautions will be taken which would be observed in time of war. We shall be glad to associate with these manœuvres a limited number of Naval Reserve men who may wish to volunteer for service on this occasion, to be selected from each district; also a certain number of Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers could be embarked in the coast defence vessels to be employed for the protection of the commercial ports. There will, I imagine, be some difficulty in the men forming these Reserves leaving their regular employment for the time required for the Review and subsequent operations, and there will also be a certain expense in conveying the men from their respective localities; but I hope these are not insurmountable difficulties.

Mr. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) inquired whether Members of the House of Commons would receive an invitation to the Review; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government would consider what arrangements would be made for taking them to Portsmouth, and for their accommodation when there?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: We are still a good way away from the 23rd of July; but if my hon. Friend will put the Question to me a little nearer that time, I have no doubt I shall be able to give him a satisfactory answer.

### INDIA—RAILWAYS—THE PISHIN VALLEY LINE.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for

India, Whether it is a fact that "Railway material for 100 miles of line is being collected in the Pishin Valley;" what is the distance from the existing terminus of the railway to Candahar; is this material collected with a view to an extension of the line to Candahar; and, will the Secretary of State promise that information shall be given to Parliament before railway surveys or works are undertaken beyond the British frontier?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): Yes; 100 miles. So soon as any designs for extending the railway are adopted, the Secretary of State will be happy to communicate the same to Parliament, should it be consistent with the interests of the Public Service to do so.

### WAR OFFICE—HORSE ARTILLERY BATTERIES.

GENERAL FRASER (Lambeth, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, in the event of it becoming necessary, in sudden emergency, to raise the Horse Artillery Batteries of the First Army Corps to war establishment, From what source he proposes to obtain the necessary horses and men; and, if from the Second Army Corps Batteries, in what condition these latter batteries would be left as regards numbers of horses and men?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): No batteries of the Second Army Corps would be drawn upon for the First Army Corps; and in the event of mobilization any deficiency in men would be made good from the Reserve. With regard to horses, it is the fact that economy prevents our maintaining a full establishment either for the Cavalry or the Artillery. The question of the best mode of supplying the necessary number of horses is engaging my earnest attention; but, in my opinion, it would not be solved by maintaining another battery of Horse Artillery on Second Army Corps strength.

### COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—MR. JAMES A. IRWIN, NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHER.

MR. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Board of Commissioners of National Education (Ireland) have yet concluded their investigation into the alleged connection of Mr. James A. Irwin, teacher of the Carrickawilkin (County Armagh) National School, with the Orange Society; and, what is the result of the inquiry?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Commissioners of National Education inform me that they were satisfied, on inquiry, that the teacher named had broken their Rules in the manner alleged, and they have removed him from their service.

### COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND) — ATTENDANCE OF MEMBERS.

MR. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the Return ordered of the Number of Meetings and Attendances of the Board of Commissioners of National Education (Ireland) will be laid upon the Table of the House?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I understand that the Return will be laid on the Table within a day or two.

### EVICTIONS (IRELAND) — THE ESTATE OF MR. S. E. SHIRLEY, CO. MONAGHAN.

MR. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has received any intimation that Mr. S. E. Shirley intends evicting 36 families on his Farney Estate, in the County Monaghan, on the 22nd instant; whether it is a fact that the tenants on this estate have served Mr. Shirley with the necessary originating notices, preparatory to going into the Land Court to have fair rents fixed; and, whether a police force has yet been applied for to carry out these threatened evictions on Tuesday next; and, if so, whether, pending the decisions of the Land Court in their cases, he will withhold his sanction to the Forces of the Crown being used for the purpose of carrying out the eviction of the tenantry of this estate, which numbers 2,000, and represents about 12,000 persons?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I require further Notice of this Question.

Mr. P. O'BRIEN: Arising out of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, I wish to ask him is he aware the evictions take place to-morrow?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Question only appeared on the Paper on Saturday, and I have not had time to obtain the necessary information.

Mr. P. O'BRIEN: In consequence of the unsatisfactory nature of the right hon. Gentleman's reply, I beg to give Notice that I shall recommend the tenants on Mr. Shirley's estate to protect themselves by adopting the Plan of Campaign.

### LAND ACT (IRELAND), 1870—TENANT PURCHASERS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is intended to include in the provisions of any Land Bill the cases of the tenant purchasers under the Land Act of 1870?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The Government propose, on an early day, to give their general views on the land legislation for Ireland.

### LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACTS—MR. JOHN ROE, DONAGHMORE UNION.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Mr. John Roe, solicitor to the lately dissolved Board of Guardians of Donaghmore Union, in the Queen's County, has received a sum of £300 out of the rates for fees under the Labourers' Acts; whether anything has really been done within the area of the said late Union in the way of housing the labourers; and, what work was performed by Mr. Roe in consideration for the sum mentioned?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): It appears, from the minutes of proceedings of the Guardians, that when the affairs of the Union were being arranged prior to its amalgamation with neighbouring Unions, the solicitor of the Board sent in his bill of costs, which had been allowed to run on since 1869, and amounted to £363. The Guardians agreed to allow him £300, which included whatever may have been due to him under the Labourers' Acts. The amount is not distinguished; but, of course, it could only have formed a very recent part of the debt, which had been accumulating for 17 years. The schemes under that Act fell through, as, owing to delay on the part of the Guardians in the presentation of their petition, the dissolution of the Union took effect before anything could be done.

### EVICTIONS (IRELAND—"STORMY EVICTIONS IN MAYO."

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to a paragraph on page 8 of *The Pall Mall Gazette* of Wednesday, 16th March, headed *Stormy Evictions in Mayo*, or if he has other knowledge of the facts referred to therein—namely, that the Resident Magistrate present at the eviction stated—

> "If the people offered resistance the police must shoot them down. . . . . A bailiff, named Gallagher, abused by an old woman when he was removing her furniture, drew a revolver and threatened to shoot her. . . . . A dying lad was carried from one of the cabins, and last night he received the last rites of the Roman Catholic Church;"

and, if he is aware that the rents, for inability to pay which those evictions were carried out, varied from 46 per cent above the valuation to twice, and even in one case four times, the valuation?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The statements referred to are either unfounded or misleading. The evictions were not stormy; there were only a few people present. No magistrate used any such words as are stated, nor did any bailiff act in the manner described. In one of the houses there was a sick child in its mother's arms; and the Sheriff's attention being drawn to it, he, out of consideration for this case, merely took formal possession, allowing the inmates of the house to re-enter it at once as caretakers, and disturbing none of the effects.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the last paragraph in the Question, as to the rents varying from 46 per cent above the valuation to twice and even, in one case, four times the valuation?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I know nothing about that.

### CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—EXPORT OF CATTLE FROM IRELAND—PLEURO-PNEUMONIA.

Sir JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that a letter was sent from the Veterinary Department of the Privy Council to the Local Authority of the North Dublin Union, to the effect that it is of the highest importance, in the interest of the Irish cattle export trade with Great Britain, that every possible step should be taken to prevent the spread of pleuro-pneumonia, and, under the circumstances, inviting the Local Authority to take into consideration the compulsory slaughter of 42 head of cattle that at present remain in five pleuro-pneumonia infected places in that Union; whether he is aware that the Local Authority have resolved not to cause their slaughter; and, seeing that the interest of the Irish cattle export trade with Great Britain is seriously affected by the frequent outbreaks of that fatal disease amongst Irish cattle in Great Britain, whether the Privy Council will forthwith enforce the provisions of Clause 6 of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Amendment Act of 1886 in Ireland?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The facts are substantially as stated. It appears from the minutes of the last meeting of the Local Authority that they proposed to take the matter into further consideration on the 6th of April; but they will be asked to do so at an earlier date. The question as to how far the provisions of Clause 6 of the Act of 1886 can be enforced with the least inconvenience and expense is at present engaging the attention of the Privy Council Veterinary Department.

### VETERINARY DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL (IRELAND)—CATTLE FROM AMERICA AND IRELAND.

Mr. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the attention of the Veterinary Department of the Privy Council in Ireland has been called to the statement that American cattle arrive in Liverpool and Glasgow in better condition than Irish cattle; whether this arises from defective arrangements in the cross-channel steamers, and overcrowding, or otherwise; whether it is the fault of the Board of Trade Regulations, or of those of the Privy Councils of Great Britain and Ireland, that nothing is done to remedy the state of things complained of; and, whether, in view of the attitude of certain Local Authorities in Great Britain, the Government will take energetic steps in this matter?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): It is true that such a statement as is referred to has been brought under the notice of the Veterinary Department in Ireland; but if the complaint against the condition of Irish cattle be well founded it cannot be traced to defective arrangements in the cross-channel steamers, either by overcrowding or otherwise. The Regulations on the subject are as carefully devised as possible. They are identical in England and Ireland, and are the same for cross-channel steamers as for those carrying cattle to Great Britain from other countries. The shipment of animals is superintended by officers of the Veterinary Department, who do all in their power to prevent any cruelty or infringement of the Regulations; and I am afraid that no further action on the part of the Department seems practicable.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) — ELECTION IN MOUNTMELLICK UNION.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the following 10 ratepayers in the townland of Derrygrule, in Mountmellick Union, have for years voted in all the elections in the electoral division of Mountmellick until 1885—namely, John Quigley, Mary Meehan, James Brien, James Quigley, Edward Jones, William Tanner, John Conroy, Richard Dickinson, Bridget Bergin, and John Walsh; whether the newly-appointed clerk, acting as Returning Officer, has disallowed the votes of the ratepayers mentioned, although they have paid the rates assessed on their holdings; and, whether the Local Government Board will take steps to protect the rights of the persons in question at the present election?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): This Question only appeared on Saturday, and was at once referred to the Local Government Board; but there has not been time for the receipt of their Report, as they had to refer to the country for the required information.

## SOUTH AFRICA—PONDOLAND.

Sir **LEWIS PELLY** (Hackney, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government recognize Pondoland as belonging to Great Britain or to any other Power, either absolutely or as a Protected State; whether any negotiations are pending between Her Majesty's Government and any other Power concerning Pondoland; and, whether Government are in a position to give assurances that Pondoland will not be occupied, either directly or indirectly, by any Foreign Power?

**The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES** (Sir Henry Holland) (Hampstead): My right hon. Friend has asked me to reply to the Question. Her Majesty's Government exercise a Protectorate over the whole Coast of Pondoland, and consider the country as being under their influence, and do not recognize a right on the part of any other Power to interfere in its concerns. I stated, in my answer of the 15th instant, that in August, 1885, in reply to a proposal for placing Pondoland under the protection of the German Empire, the German Government had stated that they were not in a position to entertain the Petition; and the hon. Member has probably seen in to-day's newspapers the statement from the semi-official *North German Gazette,* which confirms this view. No negotiations are pending between Her Majesty's Government and any other Power respecting Pondoland. Her Majesty's Government consider that no Foreign Power could occupy Pondoland without their consent.

## IRELAND — CONSTABULARY FORCE FOR THE NORTH RIDING OF TIPPERARY.

Mr. **P. J. O'BRIEN** (Tipperary, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that the regular Constabulary force for the North Riding of the County of Tipperary stands at 309 men; whether, out of that number, there are at present only 266 men in active service in the district; whether the sum of £1,000 is annually paid out of the Riding for what is termed extra police; whether, including the so-called extra police, the regular force is at present short of the number of 19; and, if so, whether he will fill up the regular Parliamentary quota, and relieve the ratepayers from this tax for extra police; whether he will inform the House, or give a Return, as to the number of persons at present under police protection, and the number of men employed in discharge of protection duty in North Tipperary; whether at the recent Spring Assizes at Nenagh, where the presentment for this Extra Police Tax was opposed, the presiding Judge, Baron Dowse, replying to the traverser, made use of these words—

> "It is imperative on me to pass this presentment, otherwise I would be most happy to concede to the just application. You must look for redress elsewhere;"

and, whether he will explain, while there is a comparative absence of crime in the county, as stated by Baron Dowse, why the ratepayers are burdened with this tax for extra police?

**The CHIEF SECRETARY** (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The full force of the North Riding of Tipperary is 309 men—namely, 266 free force and 43 extra men. The number actually serving is 290, leaving 19 vacancies, which, according to statute, are proportionately divided between the free and extra men. It is impossible that the full force should always be present in any county, as allowance must be made for occasional absence, and for recruits training at the depôt. I have already explained, with regard to extra police generally, that the chief reason why they are required is for the protection of individuals. In the North Riding of Tipperary there are six persons under constant protection, and 22 under protection by patrols—the number of police employed on this duty being six and 27 respectively, or a total of 33.

Mr. **T. P. GILL** (Louth, S.): The right hon. Gentleman says there are 33 of the police engaged in protection duty. Will he say what the rest of the extra police are doing?

Mr. **A. J. BALFOUR**: I have said there are 43 extra men, and I have accounted for 33, the greater part.

Mr. **J. O'CONNOR** (Tipperary, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us whether it is a fact that the Judge said it was the most peaceable county in the Circuit?

[No reply.]

### ADMIRALTY—NAVAL OFFICERS—LIEUTENANTS AND SUB-LIEUTENANTS.

Mr. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Mid) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, If he can inform the House what are the exceptional measures that will have to be taken in time of war to provide the requisite number of Lieutenants and Sub-Lieutenants to serve as watch-keepers, and to take command of torpedo and picket boats, and how many hours watching out of every 24 their Lordships consider to be within the range of non-injurious duty for the average Naval Officer?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): The exceptional measures alluded to would be, speaking generally, to call out all officers over whom the Admiralty had control, and who may be required—whether in the Reserves, retired, or specially employed. It has been generally held in the Service that three watches, or eight hours out of the 24, are the range of non-injurious watch-keeping duty which an officer can be called upon to perform continuously.

### AFRICA (EAST COAST)—THE KING OF JOHANNA.

Mr. A. E. PEASE (York) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to the following telegram that has appeared in the newspapers:—

> "Zanzibar, March 18.—The King of Johanna, the second largest of the Islands of the Comoro Group, having refused to receive a French Resident, the French Commandant at Mayotte promised that, if he assented, the French Government would endeavour to obtain an amendment of the Slavery Abolition Treaty with England. The King persisting, nevertheless, in his refusal, the French offered the Throne to the King's brother, who, however, declined to accept it. The French corvette *Nielly* was subsequently ordered to Johanna to bombard the place;"

and, whether he can confirm the truth of this report; and, if so, whether the Government will make representations to the French Government, with a view of preventing any further interference, on the part of the French, with the King of Johanna, and take such steps as may be necessary to support the King in his adherence to the existing Slavery Abolition Treaty with England?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government, although they were aware that differences existed between the Sultan of Johanna and the French Authorities at Mayotte, have no information confirming the intelligence conveyed in the telegram from Zanzibar. Mr. Holmwood, Her Majesty's Acting Consul General at Zanzibar, has, however, received instructions to report on the matter.

### ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—DETECTIVE CONSTABLE PETER MONAHAN.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many previous convictions for drunkenness, &c., were recorded against Detective Constable Peter Monahan; whether the young man Shea, whom he assaulted in Killarney, has lost the sight of the eye which was injured; and, whether it is in accordance with the Constabulary Rules and Regulations to continue as detective or policeman in plain clothes a man who has been convicted of assault and drunkenness?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he was informed that there were no previous convictions for drunkenness recorded against the constable. As had been already stated, he was not convicted of assault. It was not a fact that Shea had lost the sight of an eye. The constable had not been continued as a detective.

### ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—SERGEANTS JOHNSTON AND BRADY.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that a constable named Johnston was stationed in Tuam from the commencement of his service until the year 1885; whether he was then promoted to the rank of acting sergeant, and changed from Tuam to Cummer; whether he has been subsequently promoted to the rank of sergeant, and is now stationed again in Tuam, from whence he was first promoted, and whether this is contrary to the Constabulary Rules; if it is true that another sergeant named Brady, who had been stationed in Tuam only for four months, was ordered to another station to make room for Johnston; and, what are the reasons stated for the alleged exceptional method of procedure?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am informed by the Inspector General that there was nothing exceptional or contrary to the Regulations of the Constabulary Force in the transfers and promotions made in the cases of these men. The exchange of stations effected between the two sergeants was for the purpose of placing Sergeant Johnston in a barrack where there was accommodation for his family, a requirement which does not exist in the case of the other sergeant.

## THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — MR. JEREMIAH HEGARTY.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If Mr. Jeremiah Hegarty, late of the Macroom Workhouse, now of Millstreet, has been appointed to the Commission of the Peace in the County of Cork; whether Mr. Hegarty is owner of a public-house in the town of Millstreet, and is also bailiff to the Landlord Defence League in Cork; whether he has been for some time past, and still continues, under police protection; if it is true that his police guard have objected to the treatment they have received at his hands; what reasons have been given for granting police protection to Mr. Hegarty; on how many occasions this year has a supplementary police patrol been sent to survey the route by which Mr. Hegarty was travelling; whether such police were supplied on Mr. Hegarty's application; whether the only people who frequent his public-house are policemen and emergency men; whether, in view of these facts, it is his intention to bring the appointment under the notice of the Lord Chancellor; and, by whom was Mr. Hegarty recommended for the said magisterial position? The hon. Member desired to supplement the Question, and to ask whether it was a fact that quite recently Mr. Hegarty compounded with his creditors?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he knew nothing about the supplementary matter. Mr. Hegarty was a Roman Catholic gentleman of independent position. He was appointed by the Lord Chancellor on the recommendation of the Lord Lieutenant of the County and other local gentlemen. It was not a fact that he held a publican's licence, the business formerly conducted by him having been transferred to his son. It was not true that he was the bailiff of the Landlord Defence League. Neither was it a fact that he was under special police protection, or that the police had complained of the treatment they had received at his hands. The police gave him and his property such protection as they thought he required; but he could not say how often they had patrolled the roads in consequence.

DR. TANNER: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he thinks it right to appoint as a magistrate a late pauper of the Macroom Workhouse, and now a holder of a publican's licence; and, whether he thinks such an appointment will tend to the preservation of law and order in Cork?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant has nothing to do with the appointment of magistrates.

DR. TANNER: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell us when the license was transferred from Hegarty to his son; whether it was not done immediately before Hegarty was appointed a magistrate; and whether, therefore, Hegarty was not practically a publican at the time of his appointment?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The year before last, Sir.

## CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIOTS AT YOUGHAL — COMMITTAL OF CONSTABLE BULMER.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Constable Bulmer, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, was committed to gaol by Mr. Coroner Rice on Wednesday last, for refusing to answer questions tending to discover the person who bayonetted Patrick Hanlon, of Youghal; whether District Inspector Smith, to whom the Coroner handed the warrant for execution, has executed, or made any attempt to execute, the same; and, what steps the Government intend to take to insure the execution of the Coroner's warrant?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University) (who replied) said: I am informed that a warrant was issued by the Coroner for the committal of Constable Bulmer for refusing to answer a question which the constable, by the advice of his solicitor, declined to answer, on the ground that it might tend to criminate himself—he and his comrades having been previously charged by counsel for next-of-kin with wilful murder. As the warrant was considered by the District Inspector to be illegal in point of form, and as he would in such case have no protection if he executed it, he had held it over until he was advised as to its legality; but he undertook to produce Constable Bulmer if, and when, required in the meantime.

MR. CHANCE: What is the doubt about the warrant?

MR. HOLMES: I have given the reply I have received.

MR. CHANCE: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman answer the second part of the Question—namely, whether District Inspector Smith, to whom the Coroner handed the warrant for execution, has executed, or made any attempt to execute, the same?

MR. HOLMES: I have already answered that part of the Question. I have stated the District Inspector was in doubt as to the legality of the warrant.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I wish to ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman, whether it is competent for an Inspector of Police to decide for himself as to the legality or illegality of a warrant issued by the Coroner?

MR. HOLMES: I have already stated that it is not competent; but, inasmuch as a Coroner's or a Magistrate's warrant is no protection to the person directed to execute it, the District Inspector has a right to be advised upon it.

MR. CHANCE: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman tell what steps have been taken to see whether the warrant was illegal or not?

MR. HOLMES: The hon. Gentleman must be aware that the only answer I can give is the information I have received from those in the locality; but, of course, if the District Inspector's advice is that the warrant is legal, the warrant will be executed in the ordinary way.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): I wish to ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman, with reference to the question of the execution of the warrant of the Coroner at Youghal, when the warrant of the Coroner was issued? I am informed that it was issued last Wednesday. He can tell us, probably, whether that is correct; and how long the suspension of the execution of the warrant will be allowed to continue before the question is decided?

MR. HOLMES said, that the right hon. Gentleman was probably aware that he, in his capacity as Attorney General, had nothing whatever to do with this matter, and he had no information as regarded the date. The answer he had given was simply to the effect that the execution was suspended for a reasonable time, an undertaking being given that the man would be produced in the meantime, if required.

## WAR OFFICE—GOVERNMENT WORKSHOPS AND ARSENALS—INSPECTION BY REPRESENTATIVES OF FOREIGN POWERS.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it has been the practice, whenever the Representatives of friendly Powers have made formal applications to inspect Government workshops and arsenals, or to obtain copies of drawings and plans of warships, machinery, or armaments, to grant the facilities sought by such persons; and, whether it is the case that Naval designs have been furnished to the American, Russian, and other Governments?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The War Department allow Representatives of friendly Powers, whose applications are forwarded by the Foreign Office, to inspect such workshops as do not contain secrets exclusively held, or supposed to be held, by Her Majesty's Government; and the same rules apply to the grant of drawings and plans. The Admiralty allow Foreign Naval Attachés free access to inspect the Government Naval Establishments. It is not the practice to allow them to obtain copies of drawings and plans of warships, machinery, or armaments. In exceptional cases drawings of designs have been given.

### ARMY AND NAVY ESTIMATES—THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked, Whether the First Lord of the Treasury intended to proceed to-night with his Motion for a Select Committee to examine into the Army and Navy Estimates, and to report their observations thereon to the House?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, he had certainly hoped that the House would have accepted this Motion without debate. In the circumstances, it would not be in his power to proceed with it to-night. It was his intention to have made the Motion, in fulfilment of an engagement he made to the House; but it was not expected that a debate would arise upon it, seeing that full powers would be possessed by the Committee under the terms of the Motion.

### COAL MINES REGULATION BILL.

In reply to Mr. Arthur O'Connor (Donegal, E.),

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.) said, the Bill was in print, and would, he hoped, be in the hands of hon. Members to-morrow; but the question of when he would proceed with the second reading would depend on the course of the other Business of the House.

## *NOTICE OF MOTION.*

### CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT (IRELAND) BILL.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I beg to give Notice that I shall to-morrow ask leave to bring in a Bill to make better provision for the prevention and punishment of crime in Ireland, and for other purposes.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I wish, Sir, to say that, under the special circumstances of the Notice just given by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland, I shall to-morrow, at half-past 4, move that the introduction and several stages of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Bill have precedence of al Orders of the Day and Notices of Motion, including the Rules of Procedure, whenever it shall be set down by the Government as the first Business of the day. And, Sir, with reference to the inquiry addressed to me on Thursday night last by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), I beg to say that it is the intention of the Government to proceed with this Motion to-morrow, and, I hope, with the consequent Motion of which my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant has given Notice. In the event of the Bill being brought in to-morrow, or Wednesday, it will be printed at once, and the second reading will be taken on Monday next. We hope to proceed with the Rules of Procedure on Thursday and Friday.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-upon-Tyne): Sir, I beg to give Notice that to-morrow, when the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) makes the Motion that he has just announced, I shall move the following Amendment:—

> "That this House declines to set aside the Business of the Nation in favour of a measure for increasing the stringency of the Criminal Law in Ireland, while no effectual security has been taken against the abuse of the law by the exaction of excessive rents."

### PARLIAMENT—ORDER—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ORDER OF THE DAY FOR COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY—EXCLUSION OF MOTIONS.

Mr. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.): I wish, Mr. Speaker, to put a Question to you upon a point of Order. I see that there are two Notices standing upon the Order Book in the names of the hon. Members for North and South Antrim (Mr. C. E. Lewis and Mr. Macartney) for Tuesday, the 5th of April, a date when the House will probably be in recess for the Easter holidays. One of them is for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the alleged system of jury-packing in Ireland, while the other expresses approval of the action of Her Majesty's Government in reference to the telegram of instructions to the police sent by Captain Plunkett to the District Inspector at Youghal. I wish, Sir, to have your ruling, as a matter of Order, upon both of those Notices, having regard to your ruling in the case of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), who desired to raise a debate upon jury-packing when the Address in reply to the Queen's Speech was under discussion. You then ruled that it was not competent for my hon. Friend to allude to the question of jury-packing so long as there was a Notice standing on the Paper in reference to the subject. Now, Sir, one of these Notices refers to the question of jury-packing, and the other to the instructions of Captain Plunkett to the police of Youghal to fire upon the people if necessary. What I wish to know is, whether your ruling extends to the preclusion of Amendments to the Motion, "That you do leave the Chair," for the purpose of going into Committee of Supply upon the Civil Service Estimates; and whether your ruling will extend further to the preclusion of any debate upon the subjects to which these Notices apply in Committee of Supply?

MR. SPEAKER: I cannot presume to settle cases before they arise. I must see and hear what is said in debate before I can give an opinion.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I also wish to ask a Question, Sir, on a point of Order. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury has just announced that he will take the second reading of a particular Bill on Monday next. But that Bill has not yet been printed, seeing that permission has not been given by the House to read it a first time. Therefore, I wish to know whether the right hon. Gentleman is not contravening the Order of the House which prevents a subsequent stage from being put down before the previous stage has been taken?

MR. SPEAKER: I presume that before the Motion is put down for the second reading the Bill itself will have been printed.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I do not know whether I have put the Question quite clearly. At present the House has not given permission for the introduction and first reading of the Bill, nor has it been printed. Nevertheless, the right hon. Gentleman has announced that he will put down the Order of the Day for the second reading next Monday. What I wish to know is, whether, in doing so, the right hon. Gentleman is not directly contravening a Standing Order of the House?

MR. SPEAKER: Of course, I presume that, in the event of the Bill being read a first time, it will be printed in the interval between that stage and the second reading on Monday.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): In reference to your ruling, Sir, as to the Question put by the hon. Member for South Louth (Mr. T. P. Gill) relating to two Motions standing in the Order Book in the names of the two hon. Members for Antrim, relating to jury-packing and the telegram of Captain Plunkett, I wish to know whether, supposing it is necessary to discuss the question of jury-packing—

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I gave no ruling on the Question raised. I declined to give any ruling.

MR. CONYBEARE: I was only going to ask your ruling, Sir, in connection with a Bill of which Notice has been given by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, whether we shall be precluded from discussing the Question relating to jury packing in connection with that Bill, owing to the Notice of Motion which is already standing upon the Notice Paper?

MR. SPEAKER: I cannot see that any objection arises as a point of Order.

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### IRISH LAND BILL.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government can give any intimation as to the probable date on which they will introduce their Irish Land Bill?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): It is the intention of my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland to make a statement on this subject almost immediately.

## *ORDERS OF THE DAY.*

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### SUPPLY—NAVY ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

MR. COURTNEY in the Chair. [5.15 P.M.]

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £992,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of Victuals and Clothing for Seamen and Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st of March, 1888."

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): The discussion which took place on Thursday night in respect of the Navy was almost entirely confined to the special subjects of which Notice had been given by Amendment on going into Committee of Supply on the Navy Votes; and it was not possible, therefore, to enter into a general discussion upon naval questions and the policy indicated in the Memorandum of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton). I think, therefore, that the noble Lord has done well in giving an opportunity on this occasion for raising a further discussion upon the general questions connected with the Navy on the Victualling Vote. In opening that discussion, I am prepared fully to subscribe to all that was said by other hon. Members on Thursday night in regard to the Statement or Memorandum submitted to the House by the noble Lord, both as to its ability and completeness; and I hope that the example which has now been set will be followed in succeeding years, and that hereafter a printed Statement will be submitted to the House in substitution of the personal explanation which has hitherto been made by the First Lord of the Admiralty. At the same time, it appears to me that an annual Statement of this kind will have much more permanent interest than a mere formal speech in introducing the Navy Estimates; and, therefore, it is most desirable that such Statements should be perfectly impartial, and not of a partizan character. I regret to say that much evil has been done in past times in consequence of mixing up partizan statements in regard to the Navy and questions of policy in the discussions upon the Navy Estimates. Such a practice is, in my opinion, much to be deprecated; and I should have hoped that in a Statement of this kind it would have been most carefully avoided. I have to complain, however, that the Statement made by the noble Lord in some respects appears strongly to partake of a partizan character, and to be specially directed against the shipbuilding policy of his Predecessors, and especially of Lord Northbrook, who was First Lord of the Admiralty for four or five years. The parts of the Statement which I take objection to in this Memorandum are twofold. In the first place, the Memorandum, so far as it deals with a retrospective history of the Navy, contains this assertion. The noble Lord says that—

> "During the years from 1881 to 1885, while every other Naval Power in Europe was increasing its Naval Expenditure, England alone stood still."

The noble Lord further goes on to say that during that time England has been the only Power not to recognize the necessity of important changes in naval construction being brought to bear, with a view of obtaining thicker armour for ships and greater speed. It appears, he says, that other Powers have been largely engaged in producing vessels of greater power and speed; and that we alone have stood still, England having been the last Naval Power to recognize the new condition of affairs. The other statement to which I desire to call attention is contained in pages 14 and 15 of the Memorandum, which gives a valuation of the vessels comprising the Fleet, and also an estimate of the amount required to replace vessels which have become obsolete from old age or wastage. The noble Lord arrives at an estimate that £1,800,000 is required annually for replacing the Fleet, and he ends by saying that the expenditure for the years immediately preceding 1885 was very much less than that amount. Now, I think I shall be able to show that both of the Statements to which I have referred are untrue, and have no foundation in fact; and, further, that they are exactly the opposite of the real state of affairs. I do not mean to say that the noble Lord has made a wilful misstatement, but he has asserted a fact, probably on the authority of others, without sufficient consideration. If the noble Lord had gone a little further back in his historical retrospect and had included the three years before 1881, he would have then found himself in conflict with some of his own Colleagues, and especially the right hon. Gentleman who is now First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), and who at that time was First Lord of the Admiralty, in regard to whose administration some of the allegations made by the noble Lord may with great truth be said. I have no desire, however, to enter into a recriminatory discussion with the First Lord of the Treasury. I have not mentioned the matter for the purpose of bringing charges against the right hon. Gentleman, but simply to show what was the condition in which Lord Northbrook found the Navy, and the changes during his administration which were made in it. I find that the expenditure for new ships during the three years which preceded 1881 amounted to £1,430,000 a-year, which is very considerably below the point the noble Lord estimates as the proper average expenditure on new ships, and very considerably below what it was in past times and what it has been since. The Gunnery Vote had been reduced to less than £400,000. That, again, was the period in which special exertions were made by the French for reconstructing their Navy. Their increased expenditure commenced in 1876, and it reached its maximum in 1879; and for the three years he had alluded to it amounted to exactly the same sum as that expended in England—namely, £1,430,000 a-year. When my noble Friend Lord Northbrook came into Office in 1886, he recognized the fact that the Shipbuilding Vote had been brought down to a dangerously low point, as compared with France. I was a Colleague of the noble Lord in the Admiralty at the time, and I well recollect pointing out to him what I had frequently urged in this House during the naval administration of the First Lord of the Treasury—that, having regard to what was being done in France, the expenditure of the past few years in regard to the Shipbuilding Vote for the English Dockyards and by contract, especially that for iron-clads, had been brought to a very low point. I further expressed an opinion that unless a considerable addition was made to the Shipbuilding Vote there was likely to be great alarm in the country on the subject, and probably a scare would arise which, in the end, would involve a much larger expenditure. I always recognized, for my part, that there were special reasons for the great increase which took place in the expenditure in the French Dockyards. Their vessels were built of wood, armour-plated, instead of being completely constructed of iron. They were perishing away, and would not stand the wear and tear to which they were subjected. It was, therefore, found necessary to make great exertions to bring up the French Fleet to a proper condition; but yet the fact remained that in these three years the expenditure in the French Dockyards upon shipbuilding was exactly the same as the expenditure in the English Dockyards and by contract. My noble Friend fully admitted the necessity of doing considerably more in the direction of building new ships, and during each of the next four years he added largely every year to the Shipbuilding Vote, and the consequence was that the average expenditure for the next four years during Lord Northbrook's administration amounted to £1,900,000, or £500,000 above the average of the previous three years, and £100,000 a-year above the amount which the noble Lord opposite, in the Statement presented to the House, asserts to be necessary for the annual replacement of old vessels. Lord Northbrook brought up the annual expenditure upon new ships from the point at which he found it—£1,400,000—to the sum of £2,240,000 in the year 1884-5, and the average for the whole period was £1,900,000, showing an increase of 40 per cent on the average of the previous three years. This increase was almost wholly devoted to iron-clads and the larger class of cruisers. The expenditure on iron-clads has been brought up from £700,000 to £1,300,000, or 90 per cent. Therefore I say it is not true that during the years from 1881 to 1885 the naval administration in this country stood still. The fact is that during the same time the French Government made no further increase in their Navy Vote, and the expenditure in their Dockyards during four years averaged precisely the same amount at which it stood in the previous three years. Therefore, it is exactly the opposite of the truth to say that the shipbuilding in the English Dockyards stood still while there was a rapid increase in the French Dockyards. Precisely the reverse was the case—namely, that this country increased its expenditure by 40 per cent during the four years and by 90 per cent upon iron-clads, while the expenditure of the French Dockyards upon the same class of vessels remained stationary. During that period Lord Northbrook commenced eight iron-clads against four laid down by the French. Six of these vessels can run 17 knots an hour, whereas the average speed of the four vessels laid down in the French Dockyards is only 15 knots, showing an advantage in the case of the English vessels of no less than two knots per hour per vessel. Then, again, five of the English vessels are constructed to carry guns of 67 tons, whereas the French vessels only carry guns of 50 tons; and as to the coal-carrying capacity, I find that six of our vessels have been constructed to carry 1,200 tons of coal each, whereas the French vessels can only carry 600 tons, —thus showing that the English vessels are provided with double the amount of coal-carrying capacity which the French vessels possess. Lord Northbrook also laid down, during the same period, several very large and fast cruisers of the *Mersey* type, faster and better vessels than the French. All these vessels were either completed, or will be completed, within the present year, while none of the French vessels are within two years of completion. I think I have shown that the statements contained in the noble Lord's Memorandum are not in respect of the years 1881-4 justified by the facts of the case; and I with great confidence appeal to the noble Lord to alter his Statement, because I am quite sure he does not desire that a Memorandum of this kind, which gives a retrospect of the history of the Navy, should contain inaccurate assertions, especially when this Memorandum will hereafter in all probability be looked upon as an authentic record. I trust the noble Lord will realize the fact that his Statements are not correct, and that he will rectify them so as to bring them in accordance with the true facts of the case. In 1885 unquestionably Lord Northbrook agreed, under the pressure of public opinion, to propose to the House a special Programme, involving a further expenditure, which was to be spread over five years, of £3,100,000. This alarm was, I think, occasioned by public opinion not fully understanding, as I believe, the enormous accession of strength which is gradually being attained. The alarm had its origin, I believe, in the fear as to our relations with France arising out of that *damnosa hereditas*—Egypt. Lord Northbrook had always said, that while he believed that the rate of expenditure on new ships which he had attained would, if continued for a few years longer, have been quite sufficient, yet he was not unwilling to avail himself of public opinion to hasten the building of ships by a special Programme; and he therefore applied to Parliament for the special Vote I have mentioned of £3,100,000 to be spread over five years. The expenditure was subsequently increased to £3,500,000, and was spread over three years only instead of five; with this additional money two additional iron-clads and five belted cruisers —which are, in fact, second-class iron-clads—are being built. The result was that a very large addition was made to the Navy, and whatever credit is due for that is entirely due to Lord Northbrook, and not to the Board over which the noble Lord opposite now presides. Let me point out that none of the ships provided under the special Programme of 1885 are yet completed; and, therefore, if it is really the case, at this moment that the provision of the ships in the first reserve of the British Navy is more full and ample than it had ever been before. The noble Lord has claimed credit for the Navy of England being stronger than the Navy of any three other Powers.

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): No; if the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to correct him, what I said had reference to the number of ships on commission.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: Then the noble Lord said that the number of English ships on commission were equal to the strength of the three most powerful Navies.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: No; I said nothing about the strength of the Navy; but I said that the number of ships on commission of the iron-clad class was larger than those on commission of any three other naval Powers.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: At all events, we had three times the number commissioned; and I think if the noble Lord compares the strength of the vessels he will make a similar admission in regard to that point. I think he will also be prepared to make this further admission that at this moment, in regard to the vessels which are now in the first reserve, and are coming into it in the course of the present year, the Navy of England will present a comparison with other navies infinitely better than it has done with the navies of Foreign Powers for many years past. If that be so, it seems that the vessels being built under the special Programme of Lord Northbrook are not yet completed; is it not clear that this satisfactory provision has been made out of the normal Votes for the Navy from 1881 to 1885? The noble Lord has attempted to throw discredit upon the special Programme of Lord Northbrook in two ways. First, he said that the adoption of it tended to throw the Dockyards into confusion; and, secondly, that it by a sudden increase led to waste. I think he ought to have remembered that all the vessels which came under the Vote of Credit were ordered to be built by contract, and not one of them in the Dockyards. Therefore it cannot be the case that any of the vessels building in the Dockyards were interfered with by the special Programme, or that the work of the Dockyards was thereby placed in confusion. The noble Lord says it would have been far better if some of these ships had been built at an earlier period. Now, if the seven big vessels contracted for in 1885 had been contracted for three years earlier, we might have got some of them earlier; but, on the other hand they would have been inferior in many respects as to speed and other qualities. We have certainly got much more powerful vessels and vessels of much greater speed. In fact, the improvements in naval construction have been so rapid that three or four years make a great difference, and there can be no doubt that the vessels bought under that Programme are much better and more powerful than if they had been ordered three or four years earlier. Then as to the cost, it is no doubt certain that in consequence of the depression in the trade, the vessels have been bought at a far more reasonable cost than they could have been if contracted for sooner. I do not, however, wish to make much of that point, and I only put it against the attempt of the noble Lord to discredit the special Programme, and to assert that it would have been far better if the vessels had been constructed earlier. I have now done with this part of the case, and there is only one other point I wish to mention. It has reference to the contract for the engines of the *Renown* and the *Sanspareil.* Lord Northbrook is in Italy at this moment, and unable to make a personal explanation. I have, however, received a letter from him, in which he says that he assumes full and entire personal responsibility for what has been done in connection with these vessels. In the course of his letter he expresses surprise in regard to two points. One is, that the hon Member for the Govan Division of Lanarkshire (Mr. Pearce) should have been included in the reference with respect to a case in which he himself had been one of the tenderers. The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty has very hastily assumed that because the engines of the *Nile* and *Trafalgar* contracted for by the same firm a year later were at a somewhat lower price, therefore there must necessarily have been a mistake. That shows very little knowledge of business. The engines, though for larger ships, were of the same size, horse-power and pattern, and that very fact alone, undoubtedly, enabled the contractors—Messrs. Humphrys—to offer a lower price. The other point is, that Lord Northbrook should never have been informed that a special inquiry was taking place by a Committee of which the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood) was a member, and that he should have been afforded no opportunity of making an explanation on the subject. I think that many hon. Members will agree with the surprise expressed by Lord Northbrook upon these two points. I have felt it my duty to make this statement in regard to Lord Northbrook—I will not say in his defence, but in regard to the conduct of himself personally, and his policy and that of all of his Colleagues. I believe, myself, that the naval administration of Lord Northbrook during the period I have adverted to will bear full investigation, and will stand against any of the somewhat carping criticisms which have been made upon it by the First Lord. Lord Northbrook's fame has been mainly achieved as an administrator; and I believe that the present Government showed their appreciation of it by offering him a seat in their Cabinet. I should like to know what form the statement the First Lord would have assumed if Lord Northbrook had been one of his Colleagues at this moment? I cannot think that any reference to Lord Northbrook would have appeared in this document in so damaging and derogatory a form with regard to Lord Northbrook during the time he was First Lord of the Admiralty. Turning from these matters to the Estimates now before the Committee, I find that the Estimates for the coming year show a reduction of £793,000 as compared with last year. I confess that when I saw that amount I was somewhat surprised, especially when I recollected that the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) had left the Government, because, as he told us, he could not induce his Colleagues at the Admiralty and the War Office to assent to a reduction of even £500,000. It will be recollected that the noble Lord, in the explanation which he made at the beginning of this year, told the House that he had had a discussion with his two Colleagues at the War Office and the Admiralty with reference to a reduction of their Estimates. He said he would have been quite prepared to remain in Office if he could have induced them to make a reduction of £1,000,000. He said, further, that £100,000 or £200,000 less than that would have satisfied him, and that he was not prepared to say he would not have remained in Office if a reduction of £500,000 only could have been promised. He did not, however, find that either of his Colleagues was prepared to meet him in that respect; and therefore he was bound to send in his resignation. Certainly, in the face of that statement, I was surprised to see that the First Lord of the Admiralty claimed credit for a reduction of £700,000 in the Estimates of the year as compared with last year. I shall, however, be prepared to show that this reduction is, in fact, of an illusory character, and will not bear examination. There is an increase in the Gunnery Vote for naval purposes of £292,000. The effect of the Statement of the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) is that there has been that increase in the Vote as compared with last year. However, the comparison of the noble Lord, from the Chancellor of the Exchequer's point of view, should be made with the Estimates of last year, only including the addition of the Supplementary Estimates.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: That is always done.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: No, it is not—at all events, not for financial purposes. The noble Lord knows well that there will be further Supplementary Estimates in the coming year, as there have been in the past; and, in order that the Chancellor of the Exchequer may deal with the matter financially, he should make a comparison with the Original Estimates, and not with the Estimates including the addition of Supplementary Estimates. Now, the Supplementary Estimates were £272,000; therefore, deducting these two items, the real diminution, as compared with the Original Estimate last year, from the point at which the Chancellor of the Exchequer would look at the matter, is only some £240,000 lower; and I am not sure that that sum is not also illusory, because the Supplementary Estimates have been caused by hastening on the contract work, and enabling more money to be spent in the current year. If that work had not been hastened, it is quite clear that all the money paid under the Supplementary Estimates to the contractors would fall upon the coming year; and I should like to know from the noble Lord if that has been done which was so much complained of by the Auditor and Comptroller General, and whether the money was advanced to contractors for work in hand, or whether the work has not been hastened. At all events, I am right in saying that if this contract work had not been hurried so as to bring it within the present year what is due to the coming year would have been included in the Estimates of this year, and the result would have been exactly the same. There has been a benefit to the coming year at the expense of the next year to the extent of £240,000. Taking the two Estimates together—the Army and the Navy Estimates—there is a saving only, I think, of £260,000. I cannot understand why the Government, for the purpose of saving a Colleague so valuable to them as the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington, might not have advanced a little further and made a further reduction of the sum of £240,000. That would have been very easy to do, especially as the noble Lord pointed out that the liabilities at the end of the coming year would be very much reduced from what they were at the beginning of the year. Therefore, I think the Government might easily, by postponing the contract work for three or four months, have arranged that the payments should be made to come into the financial year, and then the further reduction the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington asked for would have been effected, and in that way the Government would have saved a valuable Colleague. I can only surmise that there was some other motive on the part of the Colleagues of the noble Lord for getting rid of him than the difference that existed between them of £240,000. The programme of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty in regard to new work is of a very moderate character. It provides for five protected cruisers of 2,500 tons each and a few smaller vessels. Looking at the very large increase which has been made during the last few years, I am not prepared to say that the noble Lord was bound to go further, but at all events it appears to me to be somewhat out of harmony with the noble Lord's demands last year when he supported the views of the noble Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford), that an expenditure of £5,000,000 to be provided by terminable annuities ought to be spent upon cruisers. The demand made by the noble Lord last year, was that it would be necessary to construct immediately no less than 20 large cruisers, and some 20 smaller ones at a cost of £5,000,000. I congratulate the Government at the conclusion at which they have now arrived. I think they are right in making a more moderate demand; and I congratulate the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty in having succeeded in restraining his noble Colleague, and in having brought the noble Lord the Member for East Marylebone so much within his demand of last year. One of the most interesting parts of the statement of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty has reference to the future. There is one statement to which I have already adverted shortly—namely, the valuation which the noble Lord has already made in regard to the effective ships in the Navy, and also the annual sum required for supplying the waste in the Navy. But I would observe that the statement contained in the Memorandum is a very different statement indeed to that which was made by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty in the course of the Recess at a meeting in Lancashire. In the course of that speech, the Secretary to the Admiralty estimated the effective ships of the Fleet to be of the value of £50,000,000; and he gave them an average life of only 15 years, bringing out the fact that an annual sum of £3,000,000 was required in order to replace the Fleet—in other words, he considered that £3,000,000 should be expended every year on new ships in order to keep up the Navy to its normal amount of value—namely, £50,000,000. He wound up in the manner usual with the present Board by making a fierce attack upon his Predecessors. He said that whereas £3,000,000 were annually required, Lord Northbrook had only provided £1,800,000, and hence the neglect of the Navy. When I read that statement I looked upon it as a very exaggerated one, and I thought there were some extraordinary fallacies connected with it. I had in past times made calculations of this kind, and I had brought out far different results. I, therefore, proceeded at once to make a valuation for myself from the information I had before me. My calculations brought out that the fair value of the existing vessels belonging to the Fleet was £35,000,000. I thought that 15 years was a very short life to give to our iron-clads. I find that out of the 56 iron-clads we now have of an effective character, no less than 20 have had a longer life than 15 years, including the *Hercules* and the *Sultan*, and there are 22 others—such, for instance, as the *Monarch* and the *Audacious*—all excellent vessels which have had a good deal more than 20 years' life. They are still valuable vessels with many years before them. We have not yet had sufficient experience of the cruisers of a larger type to allow us to form any data with regard to them, because it is only within the last few years that iron-clads have been substituted for wooden vessels; but the *Active* and *Volage*, built 18 years ago, are still very valuable vessels. In regard to our troop-ships, I may mention three of those vessels. The *Himalaya* was purchased 33 years ago, and is as good as she was on the first day she was constructed. The other two—the *Tamar* and the *Orontes*—were both of them built more than 32 years ago. Therefore, I think it is a mistake to assign so short an average of life as 15 years for our iron-clads; and, under these circumstances, I found that the sum required annually for the replacement of effective ships amounts only to £1,800,000, instead of the £3,000,000 put down by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood). I was very nearly writing to the Press to complain of the statement of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty on this subject, and to give my version of the value of the Fleet, and the annual cost of replacement; but I refrained from doing so believing that the hon. Gentleman would renew his attack in this House. I was rather surprised, therefore, when I looked at the Memorandum of the noble Lord to find that he had completely thrown over the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty; that he had abandoned altogether the hon. Gentleman's valuation, and had brought out a result almost identical with that which I, as an amateur, had arrived. Instead of taking the value of the vessels at £50,000,000, he brought them down to the point of £39,000,000 only, including the shipbuilding, and he conceives that 15 years is too short a limit to assign as the average life of our vessels. The result he brings out is precisely similar to that which I had done—namely, £1,800,000 compared with the £3,000,000 his Colleague the Secretary to the Admiralty proposed in the Recess. I think we are entitled to some explanation from the Secretary to the Admiralty upon this point, and to ask whether he concurs with the valuation now made by the noble Lord. If so, I think we ought to have some apology from the hon. Gentleman for the attack which he made upon his Predecessors, and which he founded on this mis-statement. It is clear, then, that if the noble Lord is right, and he believes himself his Estimate is a very fair one, and is, if at all, in excess, we may look forward to a considerable reduction in our expenditure on new ships in coming years, when the special programme of 1881 is completed. We are expending this year £2,800,000 on new ships, or £1,000,000 in excess of the noble Lord's Estimate. This excess involves a corresponding increase on the Vote for guns and gun-mountings. I feel little doubt, therefore, that we may look forward to a reduced expenditure of £2,000,000 in the total Votes, including the Gunnery Vote. Turning to another point, I have observed with pleasure, on reading the Memorandum of the noble Lord, that the Admiralty are making efforts for the reform of the Admiralty organization, both in the Admiralty itself and in the Dockyards. I can assure the noble Lord that on this side of the House we heartily sympathize with him, and are prepared to do our very best to assist him in carrying out any reforms he may make. I say this because I can recollect the time when it was very much otherwise. The last attempt to reform the Dockyard administration was made by my right hon. Friend the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) in 1870, and at that time a most tremendous political opposition was raised against the proposed reform, which did not confine itself to this House, but was experienced in the Dockyards themselves, and within the walls of the Admiralty also. The result was that every kind of obstruction was interposed in every way to the reform of the Dockyard administration, and I am sorry to say that in the end things went very much to the bad, especially under the *régime* of Mr. Ward Hunt. I attribute much of what has taken place since in regard to the Dockyards, to the unfortunate way in which this attempt to reform the Dockyard administration was received. I can assure the noble Lord that none of his reforms will be treated by us in that spirit, but we shall endeavour to assist him to the best of our ability in carrying them out. I am certainly afraid that he is attempting too much at once. Dockyard reforms can only be carried out slowly and with the greatest care, and the noble Lord will find that it is not so much the system that is at fault as the men. It is difficult to find good men to place in responsible positions in order to see that the reforms you propose to introduce are properly carried out. The present system of Dockyard responsibility is such as to prevent the growth of Dockyard reforms. There is one change which the noble Lord has made which I think is in the right direction, although I cannot say that I think it goes nearly far enough. The change I refer to is in the respect of the appointment of civil assistants to the Naval Superintendents of Dockyards. I say that these appointments are in the right direction, but they are only a very small step in the right direction. Let me point out to the noble Lord and the House what has really been done. The Admiralty have appointed a highly-paid officer in each of the Dockyards as a civil assistant to the Naval Superintendent. This officer has a salary of £1,000 a-year, which is more than is attached to the post of Chief Constructor in the Dockyards. At the same time, the civil assistant has no direct responsibility of any kind. He is not able to give a simple command or order to any one single man in the Dockyard; he is merely the assistant of the Naval Superintendent, to advise the Naval Superintendent, and to act the part of an aide-de-camp or a kind of a spy going about the Dockyard seeing if there is anything that ought to be done, and then advising the Naval Superintendent upon the matter. Perhaps even the discharge of this duty may do good, and I believe it has done good in finding out evils of various kinds, and bringing them under the attention of the Naval Superintendent. But the reform is one which I maintain does not go far enough, and I think it is absolutely necessary to impose responsibility upon these men, and to give them some definite function to perform with full command over others. I look with great alarm at divided responsibility. Let me suppose a case. There might happen to be a difference of opinion between the Chief Constructor of the Dockyard and the civil adviser of the Naval Superintendent—say in regard to some important point of naval construction. Divided responsibility in such a respect would be a most serious matter, and might lead to a naval disaster. Therefore, I cannot but think that the noble Lord will have at a very short date to go much further, and to give these important officers some real and direct responsibility in the Dockyards. That ought to be the true end and aim of any real Dockyard reform, and I do not believe that any satisfactory reform can be carried out in the Dockyards unless you are able to build up a complete system of management and control under one supreme civil Head under the Naval Superintendents. When you have done that, the Naval Superintendents in the smaller yards, such as Pembroke and Sheerness, will be found redundant and may be dispensed with. With respect to all that the noble Lord has said about stores, I fully concur. I recollect well that when those doctrines were upheld by the right hon. Member for South Edinburgh and Mr. Baxter, they were denounced as tending to reduce the strength of the Navy by depleting the storehouses. In regard to reforms in the Admiralty itself, I listened with some interest to the remarks made by the noble Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) upon that subject, especially in reference to the duties of the Naval Lords, in regard to which he said that great changes are taking place. He said that all of them in future would be consulted, and that they will all have to write minutes in regard to their own Department, and that nothing will be done without their approval. I listened to the noble Lord attentively, but I could detect no real change as having taken place. Therefore, I would ask the noble Lord to point out distinctly what change has been effected. The Order in Council distinctly lays down the responsibility of each Naval Lord; and in my time the Naval Lords signed the "Estimates." The noble Lord was obliged to admit in his speech that the Navy Estimates were flung at his head without his having been allowed to see them before they were presented, and that he was asked to put his signature to this important document without having been consulted in the matter. I should like to know if that is the result of these new Rules? Is it the outcome of the new Rules that the Naval Lord is required to sign his name to the Estimates without ever having seen them? If so, it appears to me to be a very singular arrangement; but I would venture to say that the refusal of the Naval Lord to sign the Estimates is an unprecedented occurrence, full of danger in regard to the future. The noble Lord cannot absolve himself from the general tenor of these Estimates even by refusing his signature to them, because every Naval Lord is practically responsible for the Estimates as a whole, and if he does not care to be responsible for them his proper course is to give up his post. Although, therefore, the noble Lord did not sign the Estimates he is responsible to the House and the country for them, and if he fails to do that he ought not to be there. His only alternative is to resign. There is one other point to which I desire to allude. The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty gave an explanation of what is to occur in the future when new ships are under construction. I understood him to say that each Naval Lord is to be asked what he wants in a new ship —each Naval Lord is to lay down his requirements—and then the Admiralty are to call upon the Constructors to build a ship in accordance with their demands. If that is to be the new plan of the Admiralty in regard to new ships I do not know where it may lead us. Certainly not to the construction of a good vessel. I hold that one of the most important and responsible duties of the Admiralty is that of determining the designs of the larger vessels. It has been my lot to have been at the Board of Admiralty on several occasions when vessels of an important type have been agreed upon, and I know of no more responsible and difficult duty than that of arriving at such a conclusion. On all occasions the Naval Lords have been fully consulted; but so also was the Scientific Department of the Admiralty, represented by the Chief Constructors. There has often been a divergence of opinion between those two branches of the Navy; but I have never known a case where agreement was not finally arrived at between the scientific element and the naval element of the Admiralty. I think I may say that the great changes which have taken place in the designs of vessels during the last 20 years have not been due to naval officers, but that they have been forced on the Naval Service, in a great measure, by the Scientific Departments of the Admiralty, and by the Scientific Departments of other countries —especially of France. If naval officers' advice alone had been taken we should have made very little advance indeed. Eventually an agreement has been come to between the scientific department and the leading naval officers representing the Admiralty. As a general rule, the object of the naval profession is a very conservative one on these subjects, and perhaps rightly; but I do not believe that the most eminent naval men would stand by that conservative feeling unless they were egged on by the scientific branches of the Admiralty. The consequence has been that the designs of our vessels have been the result of a combination between the best scientific and the best naval opinion. A big ship must be in the nature of a compromise in which various elements of strength are combined, as to which there is room for great difference of opinion. As a general rule, it has been possible to bring the Naval and Scientific authorities into harmony by some concessions on either side. The importance of this has already been brought under the notice of the House in the case of the *Nile* and *Trafalgar*. The facts of that case have not been disputed by the noble Lord. Their importance consists in this, that for the first time the scientific constructors were not consulted, but were directed what to design upon the sole advice of the First Naval Lord. An order was given by the Board of Admiralty to construct these two vessels on certain conditions laid down by the advice of naval officers. The constructors objected, and reported that the vessels were not what they ought to be for the enormous expenditure devoted to them, and that they were very deficient in certain qualities, especially in speed. The constructors entered their protest, and asked that a Royal Commission would be appointed similar to that presided over by Lord Dufferin. I am not going into the whole subject of the designs of these two vessels; but I confess that the result of the debate on Thursday last was to impress me with the highest importance of the demand which has been made for a Royal Commission. That step, I believe, would result in reassuring public opinion as to the vessels already constructed after the attacks which have been made upon them by the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed), which seem to me to be exaggerated, and most unfair to Sir Nathaniel Barnaby and Mr. White. I am afraid that the noble Lord, in the course which he has pursued, has promoted distrust in regard to some of the vessels which have been built, and that he has not stood up for the officials of the Admiralty as he ought to have done. I cannot help bearing in mind what the noble Lord stated last year as to the construction of the *Agamemnon* and the *Ajax*, and I think that having regard to the whole tenor of the dis cussion on Thursday it would be wise, at the present moment, to appoint a Commission of design, not with a view of altering any of the vessels now under construction, because that could not be done, but to reassure the public mind as to the character of the vessels now being constructed, and also with a view of laying down the conditions which are in future to be followed when new vessels are to be built. It is quite certain that before very long there will be a new departure in the case of vessels of large tonnage. I believe that the French Government are not commencing any new vessels of large tonnage, nor are they engaged, at the present moment, in laying down any large iron-clad at all. It is, therefore, evident that we are approaching some other line, and in view of that I think it would be well that a Committee of Design, similar to that presided over by Lord Dufferin, should be appointed again for the purpose of considering the designs on which the future construction of vessels should be based. I make this remark in no carping spirit. I think the programme of the noble Lord, for the coming year, is a wise and moderate one, and that it will afford an opportunity of considering what should be the character of our vessels in the future. It is quite evident that the days of iron-clads of the type of the *Colossus* and others are numbered, and it is right that the Government should be fully advised before taking a new departure. With regard to another point, I entirely agree with what has been stated as to the education of naval officers, and the results of the inquiry of the Ravensworth Commission. I regret what the noble Lord said about it; but I do not propose to refer to that matter now, although I shall certainly take the opportunity of expressing my views upon it at greater length on some other Vote. There is only one other point I desire to allude to. I read with pleasure the statement made by the noble Lord with regard to the *personnel* of the Fleet. He said that the waste of men is far less than formerly, and that the service has become more popular. I rejoice at that, for after all the *personnel* of the Fleet is by far the most important part of it. We can improvise in time of war to a great extent the *matériel* of the Fleet, but we cannot improvise officers and men of the highest quality. That must always be a work of time with respect to the *matériel* of the Fleet. No one can foretell what would be the requirements of the next naval war. My own opinion is that something very much more simple than the cumbrous and costly constructions of the last few years will be the platform on which our men will have to fight, and that science will discover something appropriate to the time, which will be improvised quicker than the iron-clads. What it may be we cannot foretell, but whatever it may be it will require hearts of steel to man our vessels. But having the greatest confidence in the *personnel* of the Fleet; knowing that our officers and seamen will be men of great courage and of the highest intellect, I feel that they will be adequate to any duty that may be imposed upon them, and that they will maintain the interests of the Service, and of the Empire wherever they may be called upon to act.

CAPTAIN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.): The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) stated that he is not quite sure the next Secretary to the Admiralty will know the form of vessel in which the seamen of our Fleet will have to fight. He, perhaps, thus explains his own position when Secretary to the Admiralty himself. At the beginning of his speech the right hon. Gentleman alluded to the fact, as being generally recognized, that questions relating to the Navy were not Party questions. Yet the gist of the whole of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman was that of a Party politician. Now I am afraid that it is this Party spirit which has injured the efficiency of the Navy in the past, and that if the efficiency of the Navy is really to be restored on a firm basis, it will be as well to discard any partizan feeling when discussing matters in which the Admiralty are concerned, and by hon. Members dropping their politics for the time. The right hon. Gentleman, in praising the policy of Lord Northbrook, quite forgot to tell us which policy of that noble Lord he was praising. Was it the policy of March, 1884, when this House brought a considerable amount of pressure to bear on the Representatives of the Government, when it was demanded that an inquiry should be instituted into the condition of the Navy, when it was asserted that the House and country were dissatisfied with the existing state of things, and when the proposal was resisted by the Representatives of the Admiralty in this House, and especially by Mr. Brassey—now Lord Brassey—on behalf of the Government? He said, in March, 1884, that the Admiralty were satisfied that

> "the addition they were making for the Fleet was sufficient to maintain our naval supremacy, and that it would be impolitic to propose the sensational Estimates which the critics of the Government policy demanded."

The right hon. Member for Stirling (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) maintained that it was

> "impossible for the Government to allow an inquiry to be instituted into the state of the Fleet on the supposition that its condition was unsatisfactory."

That was what Lord Northbrook's Administration stated in March, 1884; but in the month of November in the same year they came down to this House and asked for an additional expenditure of over £3,000,000, because they were then altogether dissatisfied with the condition of the Fleet. Which of these two policies of Lord Northbrook is it to which the right hon. Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) has been referring? I think he ought to have specified whether it was the policy of Lord Northbrook in March, 1884, or the totally opposite policy which he advocated seven months later. I trust that the Committee will hear from the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty a somewhat clear statement as to the responsibility which attaches to naval individuals in the Admiralty. I confess that, after the debate which occurred the other night, I have been more confused upon that point than I was before. I have never, since 1869, been able to understand the responsibility which attaches to Naval Lords. It was stated the other night that the *Impérieuse* and the *Warspite* are frightful examples of the bad system prevailing at the Admiralty. It was then pointed out that the case of the *Benbow* was an example of blunders owing to the goodness of the system, but badly applied. In one of these cases it was alleged that the system was bad, but in the other that it was good. The hon. and gallant Member for the Eastbourne Division of Sussex (Admiral Field) said that under the Order of Council in 1869 the whole position of the Naval Members of the Admiralty has become most unsatisfactory. That was contradicted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers), who issued that Order in Council. The right hon. Gentleman said that it was perfectly satisfactory, because it throws individual responsibility on Naval Lords of the Admiralty, and he emphasized that fact by saying that he made each Lord of the Admiralty sign the Estimates, in order to show that he was directly responsible for his own Department. The next thing which happened was that my noble and gallant Friend the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford), who is so distinguished an ornament of the Admiralty and the Naval Profession, stated that he had refused to sign the Estimates because he knew nothing about them, and had not had time to study them. Now, I do not think it is right that the House and the country should not be able to attach some responsibility to particular men for particular failures; and I cannot see how that provision is to be made while the civil element — what I may call the clerical element—controls. I cannot conceive how it is possible to say, in regard to the defence of this great Empire, involving as it does many critical questions, which only experts can deal with, that you should spend so much larger a sum every year in the clerical department of the Admiralty than on the expert staff. I cannot conceive anything more adverse to the establishment of a better state of things in regard to the naval administration. So long as naval officers are few at the Admiralty, and until you organize your Admiralty into departments under responsible naval men, with adequate naval staff, kept there long enough to know their business, I cannot see how you can get that business efficiently done. We must also have the guarantee which is provided by the American system—that not only shall the Admiralty and the naval administration be divided into departments, but that there shall be a Naval Lord at the head of each department. Unless that is done, you will never have that proper consideration devoted to the wider questions of policy which is necessary in order to secure the due administration of the Navy. I want to know from the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty, if the Naval Lords are responsible for the Estimates, how it is that they did not sign the Memorandum; how is it that it comes as a Memorandum of the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty alone, while the Naval Estimates, which are necessary in order to carry out his policy, are signed by a majority of the Naval Lords? If the noble Lord, and the other Lords, are responsible for the Naval Estimates, they should be responsible for the policy that is involved in them; and, therefore, they should have been called upon to sign this Memorandum. I trust I may be allowed to express a hope that the next Memorandum will be a Report from each Naval Lord at the head of each department, stating that he is satisfied that the Estimates are sufficient and necessary for the department with which he is connected, and then let the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty sign generally for himself that the Estimates are correct. That is a question of some importance, because if, under the Order of 1869, each Lord is responsible for his department, I cannot understand why the Memorandum appears as if it were the sole production of the First Lord. There is not one single word, from beginning to end, in that Memorandum as to the requirements of our coaling stations. I know the noble Lord will tell me that that is not in his Department; but I think it is a monstrous thing that the safety of the coals for the Navy in a time of war should not be vested in the Board of Admiralty, instead of resting with the War Department. It can easily be understood that the Navy will be helpless and powerless unless adequate stores of coal are secured, and yet there is not one word about the coaling stations in this Memorandum. If the noble Lord cannot guarantee an adequate provision for the coaling stations, I maintain that there is little use in spending money on ships. There is another point in connection with this Memorandum which has surprised me still more. Hon. Members will have read a very interesting paragraph about the *personnel* of the Fleet; but I think it is somewhat astounding that in these days the noble Lord should have omitted to mention the 10,500 Marine Infantry and 2,500 Marine Artillery under his control. It is astonishing to me that so large an Infantry and Artillery Force should be regarded as so minor a detail in the defence of the country as not to be worthy of mention in this Memorandum. Who is responsible for this omission? Still less can I make out why, in these circumstances, we should have the House of Commons dissatisfied, and the country agitated, because the Secretary of State for War proposes to break up five batteries of Horse Artillery in order to provide garrisons for the purpose of protecting the coals required by the Navy in different parts of the world. I cannot conceive why it should be considered at all necessary to break up five batteries of Horse Artillery in order to meet naval requirements, and to provide Artillery for garrisoning naval stations. But it will be found that the Board of Admiralty, or, at all events, the Naval Departments, have 2,500 Marine Artillery placed absolutely at their disposal. Nevertheless, the noble Lord has not even considered it necessary to mention them in this Memorandum. As an officer who has spent 15 or 16 years of his life in that Force, I think I ought to know something about its value. Yet my opinion is that, although the country is spending a great sum of money in order to secure an efficient body of Artillery, the Admiralty are misusing and misapplying it. I challenge contradiction to that assertion. I find that there is a mention of the Marine Service in the Memorandum; but it is only this—that a certain number of Marines are about to be turned into butchers and bakers. I admit that that may be right; but I do not know why we should break up a number of batteries of Horse Artillery, while it is proposed to turn the Marine Artillery into butchers and bakers. I think our naval defences in a time of war is too serious a matter to be trifled with in that manner. I should like to know whether there has been any communication whatever between the War Office and the Board of Admiralty as to the application of the Marines and the Marine Artillery to the defence of the coaling stations? There is not one word about that matter in the Memorandum, nor any allusion whatever to the employment of the Marines, except as butchers and bakers. What I want to know is, whether the question of defending the coaling stations under the Admiralty with a Marine Force has ever been put by the Admiralty to the War

Office? If that had been done, the whole matter could have been fairly inquired into, and the defence of these coaling stations would have been carried out at a cost infinitely less and in a far more efficient and satisfactory manner. The noble Lord must admit that when the Horse Artillery is broken up, the War Office will come to the Admiralty and call upon them to provide transport for the Artillery and their stores to coal depôts all over the world, backwards and forwards, and the country will have to pay for it. Marine Artillery would go out as supernumeraries in warships, and transport expense would thus be saved. There is another interesting point touched upon in this Memorandum. I am sure that the noble Lord the Member for East Marylebone is the last person to give credit to any Department which does not deserve it. One of the most interesting portions of the Memorandum is the statement with regard to the Naval Intelligence Department. I most cordially approve, and I warmly thank the present Board of Admiralty for, the step they have taken. It has been too long deferred already, and I think that the promotion and extension of that Intelligence Department is the wisest step the Admiralty have ever taken in its history in modern times. But I am sorry to say that I cannot give the Board any credit for the idea of this Naval Intelligence Department. The facts are these. The Naval Intelligence Department appears first in the Estimates of 1884 for the sum of £500. Lord Northbrook does not deserve credit for that, nor does Lord Northbrook's Administration. It was a totally inadequate Estimate, and merely a sop towards satisfying public opinion. The present Board of Admiralty are taking a further step in this direction, and I believe they are pursuing a wise policy—one of the wisest, indeed, which has distinguished the Admiralty for many years. More than 20 years ago I pointed to the necessity of establishing a Naval Intelligence Department; and I remember having had a bad time of it, on one occasion, at the hands of a Naval Lord of the Admiralty, because I dared to advocate certain views. At length the United Service Institution asked me to put all my arguments together and deliver a lecture upon the subject. I remember talking to a distinguished friend of mine—who has since left the Admiralty—upon the matter, and he implored me not to deliver the lecture, because the Admiralty did not want such a Department. My lecture, however, was given in 1881, and Lord Northbrook came down afterwards and said that it was very interesting, and that something should be done in the matter. Nevertheless, it was not until 1884 that Lord Northbrook produced the Vote for £500; and he might just as well have asked for 500 pence for all the good a sum like that was calculated to do. My estimate was, and still is, that the Naval Intelligence Department should cost at least £20,000 a-year. It has leaked out how this question of the Naval Intelligence Department has been dealt with in an Admiralty Minute; but it is somewhat like the performance of the play of *Hamlet* with Hamlet left out. There is not a single word in the Admiralty Minute which requires the Naval Intelligence Department to make itself acquainted with the vast and complicated operations of sea commerce. It is supposed that our commerce is, to a certain extent, always the same on the ocean, and there is not a single word said about the naval arrangements for the protection of that commerce, to the variations and tendencies of which these arrangements must conform. The natural laws which influence commerce are the keys to our ocean defence, and therefore I feel emboldened to ask the noble Lord what is to be the policy of the Admiralty in the event of war? Are we ready to maintain a blockade, and, if so, is the Admiralty prepared to keep up a force sufficient for blockading all the war ports of probable enemies, so as to prevent their iron-clads from getting out? In addition, to watch the great commercial ports of the enemy, are they in a position to guard the 13 great junctions of our commerce on the ocean? Are we prepared to maintain a sufficient naval force to hold those 13 junctions?—because, if we are not, we might just as well try to keep possession of the line of railway from the Victoria Station to Dover, and allow the enemy to take possession of Clapham Junction. Have we an adequate force for this purpose? Have we an adequate force to watch neutral ports so as to deny the enemy coal? The whole question of naval warfare is the coaling of our own cruisers, and the position we may be in to deny coal to the enemy. I am satisfied, and I challenge contradiction, that the Admiralty are not prepared and have not a sufficient force at command to do these things; and I want to know what is to become of the commerce of this country in the case of war, if you are not? I hope the noble Lord will understand that in speaking strongly on this matter I am not saying that he is to blame, or that the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone is to blame, or even Lord Northbrook. I blame no individual; but I say that the system is to blame, and I contend that you are imperilling the whole of your commerce by continuing to pursue this absurd course. Just one word more. It is important for this House and the country to have some standard by which it is to measure its naval requirements. It is of no use to say that we are equal in ships to three Foreign Powers, and, therefore, we need spend no more. That would be just as reasonable as to say that Sir Charles Warren has got more police than burglars, and therefore the Estimates for the Metropolitan Police ought to be cut down. In this Metropolis do you measure the strength of your police by the number of criminals? Do you not increase your police in proportion to the growth of wealth and the area over which it is spread? We are told that the growth of the Metropolis necessitates the increase of the Police Force by 150 police constables annually. So also in the Navy—it is not a question of money primarily, but of the necessities of the case. There ought to be some standard by which the requirements of the case can be measured. Abstract comparisons with the Naval Force of other countries are worthless. Our Naval Force must be measured by our requirements, and it certainly seems to me that the strength of our Navy has not been developed in the same ratio as our responsibilities. It may be quite true that the number of Her Majesty's ships in commission may exceed those in commission of any three other Naval Powers. That, however, means nothing. I trust that in connection with the next Naval Memorandum we shall have a map issued showing by ocean districts the amount of British commerce compared with that of France, Russia, Germany, and other Foreign Powers; also the number of ships and guns which England has on each ocean, and the number of ships and guns which foreign nations have. That would probably educate Parliament and the country as to the extent of our responsibilities, and the task which is imposed upon the Navy of this country. Abstract comparisons do nothing but blind people. The question of coal is all-important in these days, and it is regrettable to hear that Singapore is not adequately defended. I can say that the same statement applies to the Cape, notwithstanding the fact that the Cape is to us of the very utmost importance as a coaling station. Foreign fleets can coal at Madeira and at St. Vincent; and the moment a war breaks out, unless you have a sufficient squadron off these places to stop vessels from going in there to get supplies of coal, you would find it impossible to maintain the ocean routes for your commerce to the other side of the world, and your commerce would be absolutely paralyzed. Thus the neglect of the War Office as regards coaling stations increases Admiralty responsibilities. If that happens, who are you to hang? The noble Lord says—"I will not be hanged; I have nothing to do with the coals; they are not in my Department." I trust that in next year's Memorandum the noble Lord will not almost apologize for the expense, and hold out hopes of a reduction. I myself hope to see a greater increase of efficiency, and also a still larger expenditure. I cannot help thinking that it is nothing but moonshine to see your commerce grow and grow, and to expect to cut down your expenditure. At Singapore, for instance, where you import annually 300,000 tons of coal, the station is inadequately defended; and unless it is properly defended and maintained in time of war it would mean the stoppage of nearly the whole of your Mercantile Marine. Surely it is most unsatisfactory that a station like that should be left without proper defence, especially when we know that in that very Port of Singapore a greater average amount of tonnage is cleared and entered annually than in the whole of the Ports of the United Kingdom during the year Her Majesty commenced her Reign. We are told to cut down our Expenditure; but perhaps the Committee will allow me to mention the fact that when Her Majesty began her Reign the total sea commerce of the Empire was only one-fifth of what it is now. The tonnage entering and clearing British Ports is now ten times as great, whereas our Naval Estimates are not three times as great as at that time. Take the tonnage of the National Mercantile Marine entering and clearing the national ports, and compare the Naval Expenditure of this country with that of the other great Naval Powers. It will be found that Germany spends 7*s.* upon her Navy per ton of national tonnage entering and clearing national ports; Italy pays 15*s.* per ton for Italian ships entering and clearing Italian ports; Russia £2 10*s.* per ton for ships entering and clearing Russian ports; and France £1 1*s.* for her ships entering and clearing French ports. Thus you have Germany paying 7*s.*, Italy 15*s.*, Russia £2 10*s.*, and France £1 1*s.*, while the British Empire pays 2½*d.*

MR. PULESTON (Devonport): I have not risen for the purpose of making any comments upon the able speech of the hon. and gallant Gentleman who has just sat down (Captain Colomb), but rather to answer some of the observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), especially where he referred to the policy of Lord Northbrook while at the Board of Admiralty. It will be in the recollection of the Committee that what the right hon. Gentlemen said as to the pressure brought to bear upon the Admiralty was quite true. It must not, however, be forgotten that before that pressure of public opinion was placed upon Lord Northbrook, the noble Lord had stated that if the £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 which was then asked for was granted by Parliament, he would not know how to use it, or what to do with it. I think I am very nearly quoting the actual words of Lord Northbrook at the time. The noble Lord found it necessary, subsequently, to give in to the public opinion of the nation at large, and that public opinion was not certainly always in accord with that of the right hon. Member for Central Bradford. Both the noble Lord and the right hon. Gentleman came round to it, however, very quickly at last, and they passed Votes for the purpose of putting the Navy in a proper state of efficiency. Lord Northbrook, in the speech which he made on that occasion, declared his readiness to reverse his previous decision, and said that the money might be used with great advantage to the Navy and to the country. Therefore, I think that to quote what was said and done under the administration of Lord Northbrook is not saying very much, when we take these inconsistencies into consideration. I am sorry that any reference at all has been made to Lord Northbrook's administration, because I believe that the question ought to be discussed on its own merits, and in a manner befitting the importance and efficiency of the Navy, as well as the great interests of the country. The right hon. Gentleman devoted a large portion of his speech to the political side of the question, and to some views expressed by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, the noble Lord the Member for Paddington. I regret that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford should have devoted so large a portion of his speech to a political retrospect instead of discussing the real merits of the question. I do not desire to give any credit to one Party more than another for the steps which have been taken to reorganize the naval administration of the country; and the Memorandum of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) ascribes no credit either to a Conservative or a Liberal Government, but decidedly and emphatically refers to the desirability of the policy of continuity. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the regret expressed by Lord Northbrook that the hon. Member for the Govan Division of Lanarkshire (Mr. Pearce) was placed on the recent Committee over which the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood) presided, on account of the fact that the firm with which he is connected had tendered for the construction of the ships which were to form the subject of inquiry. I have nothing to say about that; but the country either requires technical knowledge to be brought to bear upon an inquiry into these subjects, or it does not. For my own part, I think it was of the highest consequence to have such knowledge as my hon. Friend possesses, just as it was to have the knowledge which my hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Sutherland) possesses as the head of one of the largest Steamship Companies of the country. My hon. Friend the Member for Govan has great experience in the building of large ships; and what we want and must have is the experience which he and gentlemen like himself can bring to bear upon these technical questions. Such experience, however, it would be impossible to obtain if we are to rule out every person who has an interest in the actual work. We must either adopt the one principle or the other; and if we say that we require the knowledge in these matters which a shipbuilder alone possesses, then the argument of Lord Northbrook which the right hon. Gentleman quoted falls entirely to the ground. The right hon. Gentleman has referred, in connection with the improvement and the reorganization of the Dockyards, to the difficulty of finding good men. I do not think that that is a difficulty which really exists, or that the present Board of Admiralty has found to exist. I question whether the right hon. Gentleman, when he was Secretary to the Admiralty, discovered that it was difficult to find good men. I think it is always possible to find good men in the Dockyards, and if necessary to find good men who will be willing to go there when they are wanted. I was surprised, therefore, that such a statement should have been made by the right hon. Gentleman, seeing that he has himself had considerable experience at the Board of Admiralty, and that he has always taken a deep interest in these matters. Nor can I agree with the further statement which the right hon. Gentleman made, that we should practically disestablish all the naval control in the Dockyards, and establish in its place a civil control.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I did not say that. I said that the business should be under Naval Superintendents, with a complete civil control.

Mr. PULESTON: That is just the same thing, and we have gone as far as that in the arrangements made by the present Board of Admiralty. I quite concur that £1,000 a-year is a large salary to give to a civil assistant, and I have said that I could not concur in having an officer so largely salaried for doing the work which is now performed by the Naval Superintendent's civil assistant in the Dockyards. But I think it would be carrying the principle to a grievous excess indeed in the wrong direction, if we were to give greater power to this gentleman, and place him practically over both the Admiral Superintendent and the Chief Constructor. I admit that the position he now occupies is a very anomalous one, because he has, in reality, no power whatever; and, worse than that, he takes away a considerable amount of responsibility from the Chief Constructor, the Admiral Superintendent, and others upon whom the real responsibility ought to rest. Now, I think that is a serious consequence arising from the appointment of civil assistants. I trust that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty, when he rises to take part in the debate, will reply to some of the remarks which I felt it my duty to make on a previous evening. In addition, I hope to get some information from the hon. Gentleman about the Naval Barracks. I think it is necessary to understand what is the use they are to be put to. Some £70,000 or £80,000 has been spent upon them, and I understand that only about £3,000 or £4,000 is necessary to complete them. It would appear that their non-completion is due to a desire to put off the matter, because only about £1,000 is appropriated for these barracks this year. It has been stated that the Marines are to occupy them when complete, and that the Marine Barracks at Stonehouse are to be sold to the Railway Company; but I believe there is no foundation for that assertion. It is a very valuable property, and I think it will be of some interest to know what the real facts of the case are. Therefore, I hope the noble Lord, or the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty, will give the Committee such information in reference to these matters as happens to be in their possession at the present moment. There is one item to which I now desire to call the attention of the Committee—namely, the sum of £12,000 for armour-piercing projectiles paid by the Admiralty this last year. That seems to me to be a mixing up in these Estimates of what ought to be paid by the War Office. I do not understand why this item should be in the Naval Estimates of last year, and I think that such an arrangement will lead, or rather has led, to confusion in the accounts. I hope the day is not far distant when the Admiralty will have full control over its own expenditure; because I believe that is a matter of importance, so far as the efficiency of the Navy is concerned; and because I believe that much of the delay and difficulty which have taken place would have been avoided if the Navy Departments had the control of their own armaments. With reference to the reorganization of the Admiralty in respect to Dockyards, to which reference has been made, I cannot help referring incidentally, before I sit down, to the fact that every reorganization in the arrangements of the Dockyards, and in the Department of the Admiralty, necessarily entails great expenditure. It is, no doubt, quite necessary that a number of clerks and others should be pensioned off, and that the pay of men who take their place should have increased the charge by £8,000 for the coming year; but I want to impress on the Admiralty that, while we are making economies in the Dockyards, and cutting down the wages of men and discharging men too, we must not forget that a keen interest is taken by these people, by their friends, and the country generally, in the figures which show an increase in the higher Departments, and that economies, if they are to produce contentment, should provide for reduction at the top as well as at the bottom.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I think it is desirable that I should dispose of the questions which have been raised by hon. Members who have already spoken, and I trust my hon. Friends who wish to speak on the Estimates will pardon me for intervening at this stage of the discussion. My hon. Friend the Member for Devonport (Mr. Puleston) has pointed out that there is a certain charge for armour-piercing projectiles, and he asked why that item is included in the Navy Estimates. The simple explanation is that the Vote for which the War Office is responsible was already so high that it was thought impossible to include this sum; and, for that reason, and rather than leave out a provision for these projectiles, we have included the charge in the Navy Estimates. In the same way, with regard to the armaments on which these projectiles are to be tried, although, under the present system, the War Office must provide the great bulk of the money necessary for the armament of the Navy, yet I hold, undoubtedly, that it is the right of the Navy, if they cannot get sufficient Supplies from the War Department, to get it under their own Vote. My hon. Friend the Member for Devonport also spoke of the Dockyard reorganization, and seemed to doubt the necessity of discharging a certain number of men from those establishments. We found last year that it was necessary to make a change which placed upon us the unpleasant task of having to discharge, at different times, a certain number of men; but a review of all the considerations brought home to the minds of the Board the absolute necessity for this. It was said at the time that it was our duty to find work for these men; but that doctrine is one to which I cannot assent, because it must be borne in mind that the Dockyards exist for the Navy of the country, and not for the men who are employed in them; and it is the duty of the Admiralty, therefore, to administer the Naval Department as efficiently and economically as possible, even though it may happen, and as, I fear in certain cases, it has entailed more or less hardship on individuals and distress upon localities. It is the desire of the Admiralty to put the Dockyards in a firm and impregnable position, so far as their work is concerned; but when, under the various alterations and reforms which are being pressed forward, the Dockyards become more efficient, and as soon as they are able to hold their own with private yards, there will be no opposition to asking that the great bulk of the work required by the Navy shall be done in them. With regard to the relations of the Admiralty Superintendent and the civil assistant, the principle on which we have endeavoured to proceed with regard to the Dockyards and the different Departments, is to make one man responsible for all that goes on there. If he wants more assistance we are willing that he should have it; but I am convinced that many of the undoubted blunders which have occurred in the past were owing to the system under which no one man was held thoroughly responsible for what occurred in a Department. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) says that he approves of this appointment of civil assistant; but, if so, I think it is unfortunate that he should have spoken of his work as that of a spy. The right hon. Gentleman has made use of a most unfortunate epithet; it is one which I think is not calculated to assist that officer in the difficult work which he has to do in the Dockyards. How is it possible that any man can discharge the duty of supervising labour at the Dockyards if a distinguished Liberal, one of the Members of this House, characterizes his work as that of a spy? The very word illustrates the way in which the right hon. Gentleman approaches the discussion of naval questions. He looks on the question from a Party point of view, and anything which is not associated with himself, or his Party, he feels bound to disparage and depreciate. He commenced his speech by saying that I have made a statement which is not true, and which is unfair to Lord Northbrook, and to the Board of which Lord Northbrook was the head. I have great respect for Lord Northbrook, and I should be very sorry to say anything that was unfair of him, or of the Board over which he presided. What are the statements which the right hon. Gentleman characterized as untrue, but which he did not prove to be so? I stated in my Report that "in the period between 1881 and 1885 every Naval Power in Europe save England largely increased its naval expenditure." Well, that is true. The right hon. Gentleman could not deny that it was true. But he says—"You ought not to have made that statement, because in the period antecedent to 1881 the Conservatives were in power." What on earth has that do with my statement? I submit that what must to a great extent influence the expenditure of this country is the expenditure of foreign nations. We cannot help noticing what foreign nations do in this respect, and it is apparent that during the period I have named, France and Germany had enormously increased their naval expenditure.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I stated that between 1881 and 1885, France had not increased her naval expenditure, and I called attention to the statement of the noble Lord as to the position of England during that time.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I showed the other day that while the expenditure of France had increased 30 or 40 per cent, our expenditure had only increased 16 per cent for the period 1876-1886; and it is the fact that between 1881 and 1885 the total expenditure of France largely increased, and I went on to say that "England was the last Naval Power to recognize these new conditions." That is true; and it was because of that the large Vote was brought forward by Lord Northbrook. All I asserted was that if that expenditure had been spread over a larger number of years, greater care would have been taken in disbursing it, and the nation would have derived greater benefit from the outlay. The Statement which I drew up and which is laid before the country, presents an accurate view of the naval affairs of the nation. If it happens to reflect on any particular Administration, what does that matter to the country—if it is true? I do not believe the House of Commons to be a hard master, in the matter of expenditure on the Navy, provided the Government take the House into its confidence, and make a full and frank statement. Every Government is liable to make blunders, and it is the duty of those who succeed them to seek to benefit by past experience, in order to remedy those blunders. If the Board with which I have the honour to be associated should commit blunders, is it to be supposed that a succeeding Government is to be deterred from commenting upon the faults of our Administration? What was the Administration up to 1885, which the right hon. Gentleman champions? Was it a satisfactory Administration? Does the Report in any way strain the facts? Why, one hon. Gentleman, who is perhaps the greatest authority on shipbuilding in the House, the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed) fell foul of me the other night, because he said I made far too favourable defence of what he calls the blunders of that Administration. What are the facts? In the Memorandum to which the right hon. Gentleman refers, he will find the following passage:—

> "With the important exception of being more deeply immersed than was anticipated, the *Impérieuse*, in her trials, fully realized the expectation of her designer, and notwithstanding her deep draft, she is now, taking the

> essentials of speed, armament, and armour into consideration, if not actually the most powerful, one of the most powerful iron-clad cruisers afloat of her tonnage."

And that is what the right hon. Gentleman calls undue depreciation of the vessel. The right hon. Gentleman was Secretary to the Board of Admiralty which occupied itself in laying down vessels of the *Impérieuse*, *Warspite*, *Admiral*, and belted cruiser class. There is a great dispute as to whether or not those belts were deep enough. Into that dispute I will not now enter; but the Committee will understand that where there is a narrow belt of armour over the vital part, so to speak, of the ship, it is essential that the draught of the vessel should be what was anticipated when she was laid down. Every one of those ships was more deeply immersed than she ought to have been. Why was that? Because, at the time they were laid down, proper cooperation did not exist between the different Departments relative to their complement and armour-plates. What happened with reference to the *Benbow?* She is a vessel which was to carry two 67-ton guns; but the armament was suddenly changed to two 110-ton guns; and the consequence was, that she had to carry additional weight on that account, and also on account of shot and ammunition. The *Rodney* was designed to carry 43-ton guns, and, after she was laid down, that was altered to 63-ton guns. In the case of the belted cruisers, the complement of men was put down at 350; but it was found that the crew necessary to work the guns was 421 men. Every one of these mistakes could have been prevented. I allude to this matter, not for the purpose of finding fault with the late Board of Admiralty, but in order to show to the country that the present Board have made an alteration which we believe will be beneficial. It consists in this—that when a design of a ship is approved by the Board of Admiralty, each single officer—the First Lord, the Comptroller, and Chief Engineer—should, in consultation with the designer, fix the weight of the engines, the number of the complement, and the exact nature of the armament, that they should estimate the exact weight necessary to supply that complement and armament; and then that they should attach their signatures to the contract, after which no alteration shall be made. I have alluded to the fact that these ships were more deeply immersed than they ought to have been, because that is a very great blunder, and because every one of them will have a belt of much less utility than it was intended to be. [An hon. Member: Are any of the belts under the water?] That depends much on the quantity of coal on board. The second mistake in the action of the late Board is to be found in the fact that, for the purpose of obtaining high speed, the designer was in the habit of associating the trial of vessels with what are called legend weights. The statements made in this House with reference to trials were thoroughly misleading. They were misleading because, if the vessel has her full supply of coal on board, it is evident that she cannot attain such a high rate of speed as when she has not her full quantity on board. Having detected this, it was my duty to show, as clearly as I could, what the Board of Admiralty unanimously decided upon to prevent its recurrence. The right hon. Gentleman seems to think that I wrote this Memorandum for the purpose of causing pain to those who held Office before us. If the right hon. Gentleman objects to that Statement, let him read the evidence laid before several Committees, and the Reports made by the Select Committee as to the state of things existing at the Admiralty in 1885. Let him read the evidence of General Graham on the Dockyards, and he will see that the language used is far stronger than anything I have said in this Memorandum, for I knew how much Party feeling entered into the discussion on the Navy Estimates in this House, and I was anxious to start with no such embarrassment. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say that the programme of work proposed to be laid down is of a very moderate character. What is the position in which we find ourselves? There is provision made for additions to the Navy which have never before been made in one year. We found that we were able to produce this result by placing all the power we could on the vessels that were building; and we felt, until that was done, it was not advisable to launch into a more extensive programme. But there was another consideration. If we had laid down a large number of sloops and gunboats, we should have been compelled largely to increase the Dockyard Establishments; but next year, when we have finished the iron-clads now building, there will be a considerable reduction in the Establishments. When we came into Office, there were in the Dockyards 86,000 to 100,000 tons in iron-clads perfectly useless to the country. They were all near completion; and the lesson we have learned is this—if you want to turn those vessels out of the Dockyards rapidly, you must lay them down at such intervals that you can afford full and continuous employment for each branch at the Dockyards. The policy which we have pursued is to complete all the vessels in hand as soon as possible; and then, when they are finished, to fill up the gaps by laying down fresh vessels. The right hon. Gentleman says there has been no alteration in the law which constituted the Board of Admiralty. But there has been an alteration in the system. Under the present law, and under the Order in Council, the First Lord of the Admiralty is primarily responsible to Parliament and the country for the Navy and the expenditure connected with it. The other night I stated that the two Orders in Council of 1869 and 1872 illustrated the different manner in which the Admiralty has been worked. Under the Order in Council of 1869, the right hon. Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) speaks of the Lords of the Admiralty as his "assistants;" his object being, as he practically admitted, to reduce the Board of Admiralty to the same condition as the Board of Trade, which has very little to do. Then the second Order was passed which rescinded the Order in Council of 1869. Then the right hon. Gentleman the present Chancellor of the Exchequer came into Office, and he passed a second Order in Council, which rescinded that of 1869, striking out that objectionable word "assistants," and putting the Naval Lords in their proper position—that of Colleagues of the First Lord. Since I, myself, have been at the Admiralty I have endeavoured — and Lord Ripon worked on the same lines—I have endeavoured to give as much authority as possible to the Naval Lords, each in his own Department. The first object of our desire, therefore, is to give the Naval Lords, as far as their own Departments are concerned, as much power as possible; and the second object is to ensure, so far as the general question of policy goes, that there should be full and adequate discussion at the Board. The question is raised in another sense by the omission of my noble and gallant Friend's (Lord Charles Beresford) name from the Estimates. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bow (Captain Colomb) seems to think it would be better if in future the names of all the Lords of the Admiralty were attached to the Memorandum laid before the House. I do not think that is possible. If you have a large number of people to draw up a Report, the probability is that the Report will not be very satisfactory. It is a curious fact that, previous to 1869, when the powers of the Junior Lords were greater than they are now—and when nearly all the business of the Admiralty was transacted before a full Board—it was not the practice of all the Lords, although they were responsible for the Estimates, to sign them. It was then insisted that all the Lords should sign the Estimates, and I find that the signatures came to be given as a matter of course. I thought that a somewhat objectionable practice; and, therefore, before these Estimates were presented, I asked my Colleagues whether they had any objection to sign them, and my noble and gallant Friend (Lord Charles Beresford) said that, inasmuch as he was not cognizant of all the Estimates and their details, he thought it was better he should not attach his name to them, although he fully agreed with the policy embodied in them. It is a matter for consideration whether anyone should attach his name to any document of this kind unless he has had an opportunity of going through the whole it. It is perfectly evident to the House, as business men, that the mass of complicated figures such as this, comprising 100 pages, cannot well go before each individual Member of the Board in that manner. What can be done was done in the present instance. The policy which is embodied in the Estimates was fully discussed, the shipbuilding programme was agreed to, and then it was left to my hon. Friend the Member for Ormskirk (Mr. Forwood) and myself to go through the Estimates and, in connection with the Naval Lords, who are responsible for each individual Department, put the figures into shape. I think, however, it is a proper matter for consideration whether, in subsequent years, it would not be better to go back to the old practice, and for all the Members of the Board to sign the whole document, or whether each of them should only attach his name, so that each Lord may sign those Estimates for which he is personally responsible. Now, with regard to the subject of the Intelligence Department, which has been referred to in the discussion, I am glad to say we have secured the services of about 10 of the ablest young officers in the Navy, and I believe they will be able satisfactorily to perform their duties not at a cost of £20,000, as an hon. Member has suggested, but at a cost of something like £4,000 or £5,000 a-year. It will be seen at once that, as the officers I have mentioned are on *The Navy List*, their employment in the Intelligence Department does not involve any additional charge, so far as pensions are concerned. Well, then, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) approved of the proposal to estimate the value of the Navy by giving a capital sum, as representing the value of the Navy, and appropriating an annual sum for the purpose of meeting depreciation and waste. I believe that the figures which are contained in my Memorandum will stand the test of time; but when the right hon. Gentleman draws a comparison between the figures in my Memorandum and the statement made by my right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty in Lancashire some time back, it is only right I should say that this idea and the figures are those of my hon. Friend; and I am sure both the Board of Admiralty and the House are much indebted to him for the ability and energy with which he has worked out the idea. I believe he puts before the House, in a plain and intelligible way, what is the sum which ought to be spent annually to keep our Navy up to the requisite strength. My experience is that it is no use placing before the Committee an enormous mass of figures; what, I presume, hon. Members would like to have is a simple account which, at one glance, will tell them what we are doing, what we propose to do, and what ought to be done. There are many business men in the House, and I believe this idea of annually voting a sum neither more or less than that which we consider to be requisite to make good the waste and depreciation of our Fleet is one which will commend itself to their minds. There is a considerable difference between the total of the capital account in this Memorandum and that which my hon. Friend gave in Lancashire; but his estimate in Lancashire included a number of things which are excluded in the Memorandum. My hon. Friend's estimate included all the gun-mountings and armaments; and if we take into consideration the total cost of the armaments and gun-mountings, which amounts to something over £10,000,000, there is practically only a slight difference between my hon. Friend's estimate and the estimate in my Memorandum of about £200,000. The estimate my hon. Friend gave in Lancashire was not an estimate worked out by actuaries as that contained in the Memorandum is, but it was a rough estimate made from the materials which he had during the time at his command.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I drew attention to the fact that the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood) arrived at the estimate of £3,000,000, and that then he stated that the late Board had only provided £1,800,000. The latter figure certainly did not include either armaments or gun-mountings.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I am not myself cognizant of all the details of my hon. Friend's (Mr. Forwood's) speech; he is quite able to take care of himself, and I have no doubt that, later on, he will satisfactorily explain any statement that he made. Then, allusion was made to the speech I delivered at the Mansion House on Lord Mayor's Day. Now, Sir, what distresses me very greatly is that it is the habit of certain writers in the Press to constantly depreciate everything connected with the Navy, and the result is that a wholly false estimate of the naval strength of this country is conveyed to the minds of people. I believe there are persons in this country who believe we have got the worst Navy in the world; and I believe it to be a great advantage to this country that there are here competent naval *attachés*, representing various foreign Governments, who are able to represent to their Governments what our real naval strength is. Therefore, on the occasion in question, I was anxious to lay before the country and the world a clear statement of the condition of things. I pointed out that we had as many ships in commission as any three naval Powers; but I never implied that we wished to fight, or considered ourselves a match for any three naval Powers that were in a thoroughly satisfactory condition. On the contrary, the views I then laid down were in full accordance with those expressed in this Memorandum before the Committee. We have made great progress with our iron-clads; we have now coming on a large number of efficient cruisers; but all naval officers will agree with me when I say that a great portion of our sloops and gunboats are obsolete and quite unsuited to the requirements of modern naval warfare. There is one remark I must make with reference to these gunboats and sloops. I find that a considerable portion of these gunboats and sloops are in their first commission, but that they are quite obsolete in respect to speed. I do hope that, whoever may be at the Admiralty, they will take care that, when small vessels are laid down, they are of the requisite speed and have sufficient power in them. Every year speed is becoming a more essential fact in naval warfare, and it is possible for a vessel of comparatively limited displacement to attain a high speed. I am sorry I have detained the Committee at so considerable a length. I have, I think, shown that this Memorandum of mine was drawn up in no partizan spirit, but with an anxious desire to secure efficiency without undue expenditure. When the present Board of Admiralty accepted Office, all of us were determined to do our best to attain that object. We were conscious we might have difficulties to contend with. We knew we might come in contact with some of the old usages of the Service, and have to confront local prejudices and class prejudices; but we felt that the duty imposed upon us was one from which we ought not to shrink. I am confident that if Boards of Admiralty will frankly lay their case before the House of Commons without exaggeration—if they point out what has been done, the manner in which it has been done, and what is required to be done—I believe this House will always give a most patient and attentive consideration to any such appeal. I believe, moreover, that no difficulty will be experienced in obtaining the money required to put the Navy in efficient condition, provided that there are guarantees that the money will not be wasted.

Mr. C. H. WILSON (Hull, W.): Mr. Chairman, it appears to me that the Statement of the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) is of a very melancholy character, because what does it mean? It means that the British Admiralty is only now—in the year 1887—learning a very elementary portion of its duty in the administration of the Navy. We, who are connected with the Mercantile Marine of this country, have been brought up to do exactly what the Admiralty now propose to do. In building ships for the Mercantile Navy it has been our custom to study every point—to consider what work particular ships have to do, what speed they are to go, and what weights they have to carry—but it seems to me that the building of ships for the British Navy has been very much a matter of chance. Why has that been so? Because of the system hitherto prevailing that ships have been laid down, and instead of being built as speedily as possible, the time of construction has varied, and in some cases has been as long as seven or eight years. I believe I am correct in saying that, at present, the capabilities of the country are such that the very largest iron-clad could be built within two years, and even in two years there are certain alterations which could not be avoided, on account of the strides now made in mechanical science. But these alterations ought to be allowed for in the Estimates. Instead of that, everything is drawn down to the very finest point, and there is no margin left for any contingency. What is the consequence? Even, according to the statement of the noble Lord, very few of our recently constructed vessels of war are up to the requirements for which they were intended. During the late war scare large sums of public money were expended, but still the old reckless system prevails. Now-a-days ships are ordered by the half-dozen; but when they are completed, it is found there are great deficiencies in them. If one vessel were to be built at a time as speedily as possible, we should be able to find out exactly what that vessel could do, and what improvements could be made. It must be borne in mind that we have, in this country, great private shipbuilding yards, owned by gentlemen who are very competent to be of great service to the State in giving advice in the designing and the construction of vessels for the Navy. Although we are, after all, greatly indebted to the professional gentlemen connected with the Navy, we cannot blind ourselves to the fact that their profession prompts them to take a somewhat shortsighted view, compels them to run in too narrow a groove. Now, if the Admiralty, when they have once made up their minds as to the class of vessel they think suited for certain services, would consult with the different private builders, I feel sure great improvements could be made in the designs of Her Majesty's ships of war. Having sat in this House for a great many years, I have noticed the repetitions of the same old stories. We have had hon. Members rising, generally from the Conservative Benches, and telling us that a great deal of money has to be spent. Their excuse is that the expenditure is necessary for the defence of the Mercantile Navy of the country. The Mercantile Navy wants defending, but the taxpayers of the country want defending also. The speech of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Bow (Captain Colomb) made me wonder whether the world was so big that there were so many British interests to defend. According to the hon. and gallant Gentleman's view, it is not £12,000,000 of money that is required to protect our interests in the different parts of the world, but I should imagine it must be something like £100,000,000 of the money of the British taxpayers. ["No!"] I think I am correct in saying that, if all the requirements of the hon. and gallant Gentleman were complied with, that not much short of an expenditure of £100,000,000 would be requisite annually. But I rose more especially to call attention to the peculiar agreement which has been made by the Admiralty, sanctioned by the Treasury, for what is called the subvention of merchant steamers for State purposes. Looking through the noble Lord's Memorandum, I find that the excuse for that subvention is, that £600,000 of the British taxpayers' money was wasted during the late war scare in hiring fast merchant vessels. I have not the slightest doubt that every penny of that £600,000 was wasted. I have not the slightest doubt that every penny that is going to be spent on this subvention of merchant steamers for State purposes will be also wasted. Although I do not like to bring, what may appear, mere Party politics before the Committee, there have been some whisperings that, when the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) stood as a candidate for the representation of one of the Divisions of Liverpool, a feeling prevailed in Liverpool that the people there had been badly treated by the present Government in the taking of the mails away from Liverpool and giving them to the North German Lloyd steamers sailing from Southampton. That may or may not have been the fact; but, any way, we do know that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not returned for Liverpool. Well, now, shortly afterwards we find that this agreement has been made with the White Star Company and the Cunard Company, by which a certain price has been fixed for the hire of certain of their vessels. Knowing what I do of merchant steamers, I am prepared to say that the price fixed for the White Star steamers—which are not modern steamers, which have an old class of engines, and which, in other ways, are not suited for the purpose intended—is utterly unreasonable and extravagant. The price fixed for the *Britannic*, for instance, is £130,000. If the vessel were put in the market it is very likely it would be impossible to get half that sum for it. A new vessel of the same class with modern machinery, could be built for a considerably less sum than the price named for the *Britannic*. But in addition to the price of £130,000 fixed, if the vessel is taken by the Government, 10 per cent is to be added to that price, which makes another £13,000; so you give £143,000 for a merchant steamer which is supposed to be of some service to the country as a fast cruiser, but which, I fear, will not be found to be the case. Now, let us consider what is the arrangement with the Cunard Company. The vessels of this Company to be taken are these—

the *Umbria*, the *Etruria*, and the *Aurania*. The price of the *Etruria* is fixed at £310,000. I am not prepared to make the statement as a fact, but I am under the impression, having made some engines, that a new vessel of the *Etruria* class, also with modern engines, could be built for, from £220,000 to £250,000. But in the case of the *Etruria* you also add 10 per cent, which makes £30,000, or a total of £340,000. In addition to that, you are going to give to the White Star and Cunard boats what a barrister would call a retaining fee of 15*s.* a-ton, making £5,400 a-year for each ship. What does that mean? It means that to a Company that is running in competition with other Companies, you are giving out of the taxpayers' money a subsidy which places them at an advantage over others who are competing with them in the same trade. Then you fix the hire of these vessels at 20*s.* a-ton per month. Any shipowner in the country would only be too glad to get 20*s.* per ton per month for his vessels. The fleet of the Peninsular and Oriental Company is about 200,000 tons; so a retaining fee of 15s. per ton per annum would sum up to £150,000 per annum. During the late scare, when transport vessels were wanted, and when so much money was wasted by the late Government, the hire of merchant steamers was down as low as 10*s.* and 11*s.* per ton per month. And when you have got these vessels, when you have spent this money on them, my own opinion is they will be utterly useless as armed cruisers, and that this agreement will result in a gross waste of public money. Another point in this subvention, but to which, perhaps, my remarks do not apply as strongly, is, that when new vessels are built which come up to the Admiralty requirements, they are to come under the terms of the subvention, and they are also to have a retaining fee. I am very doubtful, indeed, as to the wisdom of this arrangement; but, anyhow, the last provision of the subvention I have mentioned is very much better than that by which you take old unsuitable vessels, fix an enormous price upon them, give them a retaining fee, and also fix what is a very large and profitable price upon them for their hire. Those of us who are connected with steam shipping know that, every now and then, the country gets into a state of alarm, merchant steamers are taken up in a somewhat reckless manner, large hire is paid, and in some cases it has been a godsend to Companies to have their vessels taken; in more than one case it has saved the Company from premature bankruptcy. I do not apply this remark to this agreement; but what has happened ought to be a warning to this Government, and to any Government, not to make such a foolish agreement as this—a totally unnecessary agreement—and not to waste money in the way suggested. If the Government of this country think they have £50,000 a-year to spare—although I am now perhaps entering upon a different subject—let them grant that as an annual subsidy to the distress in the Metropolis, and we may excuse them; but as things stand, I unhesitatingly say that this is an agreement that ought not to be ratified by the House of Commons, and if there is an opportunity when the Vote comes forward of pronouncing against it, I shall certainly do so, either in Committee or in the House.

COLONEL **HUGHES-HALLETT** (Rochester): I should not have intervened in this discussion to-night had it not been for two Questions asked in the House this afternoon by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Great Yarmouth (Sir Henry Tyler) and the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Finsbury (Mr. J. Rowlands). These Questions induce me to ask the Committee to allow me to say a few words upon the subject referred to in them. It will be fresh in the recollection of the Committee that a short time ago some rather painful discoveries were made as to the sale of designs of ships of war at Chatham Dockyard; and I am reminded by what has occurred to-day of a Question I put during the last Session of Parliament to the First Lord of the Admiralty. I asked whether it was true, as stated in the American Press, that the United States Government had managed to obtain confidential plans and specifications of some of our ships of war. The noble Lord seemed to think that the Question imputed rather a breach of trust to some of our officials. Well, I happen to have with me the extract from the American Press upon which I based my question —having provided myself with it to-day on seeing in the Paper the Notices of th Questions to which I have alluded.

*The Army and Navy Register*, of Washington—a journal occupying in America a position similar to our *Army and Navy Gazette*, says—

> "Secretary Whitney"—that is the official at the head of the American Navy—"has determined to include in the list of new cruisers for which proposals are to be invited, the large unarmoured cruiser authorized by the Bill passed two weeks ago to increase the naval establishment, and has directed that for this vessel the plans prepared by Chief Constructor White, of England, for the ship known as No. 27, be used. These plans contemplate a vessel of greater power and speed than any cruiser now afloat—in fact, the very highest-powered vessel of the kind in the world at the time of completion."

Then follow the details and dimensions of the ship, with which I will not trouble the Committee. I think hon. Gentlemen will agree with me that I had some reason for asking the First Lord of the Admiralty the Question I did —they will agree that I was justified in asking whether the statement contained in this extract was true or false. Since then—only a few days ago—a statement was made in the papers to the effect that these very designs to which that Question referred were parted with by Chief Constructor White, when he was not in the employ of the Admiralty. Mr. White, therefore, is absolved from blame in this matter; but the Committee will remark that in the paragraph I have read, upon which I founded my Question, there was no indication of that kind. I am reminded of the observations of the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed) the other night, who mentioned what struck me as a strange piece of information—namely, that Mr. White, whilst Chief Constructor at the Admiralty, was allowed to do work—of course including the execution of designs —for the firm of Armstrong and Company, of Elswick.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: As I have several times before stated, Mr. White was in the Admiralty, and he left it when he became head of the shipbuilding yard of Messrs. Armstrong and Company. When the Chief Constructor of the Admiralty, Sir Nathaniel Barnaby, retired, I offered the appointment to Mr. White; but the greatest difficulty in the matter was the desire of Messrs. Armstrong and Company to retain him in their service. The only condition Messrs. Armstrong and Company made on parting with him, was that they might be allowed to consult him in certain contingencies with regard to uncompleted contracts.

COLONEL HUGHES-HALLETT: I simply mention what the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cardiff said, and I hope the Committee will understand that, not for one moment, do I impute blame to Mr. White. Passing that matter by, I should like to direct the attention of hon. Members to a curious publication which appeared in America not long ago, issued for private circulation by the Naval Constructor of the United States Navy. It appears from that publication that two years ago the United States Naval Constructor was requested and required by the Secretary to the United States Navy to go over to England with the view of learning all he could as to our "improvements in naval architecture, and especially with regard to the steel ships of war." In the preface to this book are set forth the communications made by the then Secretary of the United States Navy to this Naval Constructor, Mr. Philip Hitchborn. This gentleman was informed that the Bureau of Construction would defray all his expenses; that he was to keep vouchers of those expenses; but that when vouchers were not given, he was to keep the best record he could. Mr. Hitchborn came over to England, and visited Pembroke Dockyard first, where he met with some success. While there he obtained, in some way or other, detailed information from specifications of the size and form of the composite barbette ships *Anson* and *Howe*, and a photograph of the double bottom of the *Howe*. He was also supplied somehow with extracts of specifications of the *Forth* and the *Thames*, which were being constructed there at the same time. That was all the information he could obtain at Pembroke. At Devonport Dockyard his efforts were crowned with greater success; for he obtained geographical and descriptive estate plans of that Dockyard, and of the Keyham Steam-Yard or machine factory. These plans were much fuller than could have been obtained from the Ordnance Survey or any published plan. They are strictly Admiralty confidential information, and the question is how could Mr. Hitchborn have obtained them? He could not have obtained a staff of surveyors and naval architects to measure up and plot off these extensive establishments, because the proceeding would have had to be done in the open, and it would have been detected and stopped at once. He could not have obtained his information by a bird's-eye view, as the plans are geographically and mathematically exact in their details. Somehow or other he got hold of detailed information. He also procured information from specifications of the *Mariner*, *Racer*, and *Icarus*, sloops of 970 tons displacement; particulars of the *Royalist* and *Amphion*, sister ships; and some particulars of the *Tamar*, troopship, which had put in at that time for repairs. At Portsmouth Dockyard, Mr. Hitchborn obtained specifications and particulars of the following ships:—*Collingwood*, *Colossus*, *Camperdown*, *Impérieuse*, *Hecla*, and *Polyphemus*; a set of detailed working drawings of the *Calliope;* the detailed construction of the 'midship section of the *Mersey*, and a plan of the fighting-deck of the *Mersey*, with its general arrangement of machine-guns, etc. Then he went on to Chatham, where he obtained specifications, etc., of the fast cruisers *Severn*, *Arethusa*, *Leander*, *Phæton*, etc.; worded particulars of structural details of the *Rodney* and *Hero;* copies of the confidential detailed plans of the 'midship section of the *Rodney*; and particulars of the composite construction of the *Caroline*. I have now in my possession fac-similes of the drawings Mr. Hitchborn obtained, and I should be glad to show them to any hon. Member who may desire to see them. The question is, were these plans and specifications confidential, or were they not? If they were, how did this gentleman manage to get hold of them; and if they were not, there is no need to make any fuss about the disclosure of naval secrets, and no need to talk about the desirability of meting out punishment to anyone? I say, if these plans and specifications were confidential how did Mr. Hitchborn get possessed of them? The Dockyard officials would never have given them to him, nor would the Admiralty officials—it seems to me preposterous to imagine such a thing for a moment. The only inference we can draw is that these plans and designs and specifications were obtained from Pembroke, Devonport, Plymouth, Portsmouth and Chatham in the same way that they were obtained from Chatham the other day. I asked the Government a few days ago whether the man Terry who had been detected selling these designs at Chatham had ever been employed as naval draughtsman in any other Dockyard except that of Chatham; for if he had been at Pembroke, Devonport, Plymouth and Portsmouth, Mr. Hitchborn's possession of these plans and specifications might have been accounted for; but it seems that before his employment in Chatham Dockyard he was nothing but assistant overseer at some works in Sheffield. The conclusion we must come to, therefore, is that there were some other Young Terrys lying around at the other Dockyards, ready for some miserable gain to sell the secrets of their country. What Powers have been supplied with these plans? What other country, besides America, is in possession of this detailed information concerning the characteristics of our ships and the formation of our Dockyards. It is possible that some other Powers may have them. It is true that at the present moment we are at peace; but we never know now-a-days when we may have to expect war—we never know how soon or how far friendly relations existing between us and other nations may be broken. I hope hon. Members will bear this in mind, that though we may not suffer in time of peace through a foreign Power possessing the plans and designs of our ships, in time of war these very designs will be used against us to our detriment. It seems to me that it is nothing short of high treason, in time either of war or peace, for anyone to sell to a foreign Government any description of Her Majesty's ships. I do not know how hon. Members take it; but it does seem to me that designs and specifications relating to our vessels of war should be kept in the strictest manner confidential, all knowledge of them being confined to this country, seeing the enormous amount our taxpayers have to pay in respect of them. No considerations of courtesy or etiquette should permit any English official to make known to the Representative of any foreign Power such information as this; and I do hope and trust that if these designs are held by the Admiralty to be confidential—and I assume they are so held as we are told—although we are told that foreign *attachés* are allowed to look at them and examine them, but not to take them away—the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty will not content himself with issuing the new rules to which he has referred, and with putting up proclamations in the Dockyards—on the principle, I am very much afraid, of locking the stable door after the horse is stolen—but that if the existing law is not strong enough to punish these offences I have referred to, he will use his influence to get it amended speedily, so that it will be possible to visit with the very severest penalties, such as imprisonment with hard labour, those who recklessly and wilfully sell the designs of Her Majesty's Navy to foreign Powers, thereby imperilling the safety of the country.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine): I desire to give credit to the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty for the improvements which he has effected in the form in which the Navy Estimates have been laid before the House. I had an idea that the Army Estimates were better arranged than those for the Navy; but I see that a great improvement has taken place in regard to the Appendices of the latter, and I trust that any defect which still may be found to exist with regard to them will be remedied by the noble Lord. In regard to the naval guns, about which I spoke last week, I had not seen the details set forth in the Appendix, but I think there are still some defects in the information which should be remedied. When we had nothing but wooden ships, we had an accurate list not only of the number of the vessels, but of the armaments of those vessels. We had an establishment of four fleets each of 30 line-of-battle ships, making 120 line-of-battle ships, armed with 17,500 guns. Since, however, the old establishment was broken up, we have always been at a loss as to what the exact armament of the new Navy should be. Until we have an accurate system established, it will be impossible to found any conclusion upon the cost and the number of guns. At one time the establishment of guns seem to be 3,000 breech-loaders; but at another time we are led to understand that it is 3,600, and in the present Memorandum and Appendix there is not a single word of information on the point of the guns forming the armament of the Fleet now maintained. In connection with the list of ships which go to make up the £39,000,000 of capital that is expended on the present Navy, there is no mention of any kind of armament put in the ships. In regard, however, to the vessels now building in the Government Dockyards, and building by contract, there is a careful statement made as to the cost of armament, but no statement as to the calibre of the guns that are required. When I mention that the amount in the Army Estimates to be taken for the guns, &c., of the ships building is £1,062,200, it will be seen that the amount for guns is not alone sufficient, but also we need the calibres and numbers.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. FORWOOD) (Lancashire, Ormskirk): The armaments are set out in the Appendix. Under the name of each ship the armaments are carefully given.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR: The armaments specified of which I have a Memorandum are armaments for the general fitting out of the ships for service this year. But I will not fail to study the Table more carefully. As I understand the correction of the Secretary, the armaments given in the Appendix are for ships now building in Her Majesty's Dockyards and by contract. I fail, however, to see that the number and calibre of the guns composing the armament of Her Majesty's existing Navy are given. In connection with the one set of vessels fitting out, we have it set out that there are 308 guns, which is a very small number, indeed, compared with the total armament of the Navy. These are intended for the 15 vessels fitting out for actual service this year. It would be as well if we could have two complete lists prepared, showing the number and calibre of guns for the ships completed, and the number of guns for those building and fitting out and in service. I understand that in the case of these 308 guns, which are intended as the armament for the 15 vessels fitting out, there are no less than 15 different calibres. That is a great evil. Stores and projectiles are multiplied, and expense incurred for such varieties of guns. Great confusion also arises in consequence of describing some guns by the weight of the shot they throw, and calling others 10-inch guns and 18-ton guns, and 12-inch and 55-ton guns. These distinctions are confusing; and I feel convinced that if something is not done to rectify that evil, Her Majesty's Government will find some day that a great mistake will occur, which will be attended with disastrous consequences, in giving out guns, projectiles, and stores to the different ships. The matter is one of great importance, and I feel sure that hon. Members connected with the Naval Service will appreciate what I say. There is another point connected with the Admiralty to which I wish to draw attention, and that is the question of taking stores from the War Department. I cannot protest too strongly against this system of allowing the Navy to be supplied in these matters by the War Office; and I think the Secretary to the Admiralty would effect a great good by taking over stores from the manufacturers at first hand. It is not necessary to have these stores in the War Office magazines. Each vessel afloat or in the Reserve has its own complement of guns, stores, and ammunition, and might as well be at once handed over to the Admiralty. So also the 308 guns that I have referred to might be at once provided for in the Navy Estimates, and handed over to the Naval Authorities. Nothing but confusion will take place unless this is done. I further reiterate my advice that the Admiralty have in their gunners, boatswains, carpenters, and other ranks, men well fitted to act as storekeepers.

Mr. JENNINGS (Stockport): The naval experts who have taken part in this debate have expressed the opinion that we do not spend sufficient money on the Navy, and that a great deal more money ought to be devoted to this purpose every year. But I, on the other hand, think that the outside public are convinced that quite enough money is spent on the Navy, if it were wisely spent; and, in arriving at that conclusion, I have been very much influenced by the tone and tenour of the remarks of those who are best acquainted with the real condition of the Navy—especially the remarks of such Gentlemen as the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed). Now, Sir, in the Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty which has been laid before the Committee, the expenditure for the year ending 31st March, 1888, is estimated at about £12,500,000, and we are bidden to expect a reduction of £793,000 on the Estimates of the present year. It must be quite evident that this is a case of reckoning our chickens before they are hatched. No doubt, the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty expects to see his Estimates come out as they appear now on paper; but no Estimates ever come out at the end of the financial year as they have been originally placed before the country. What usually happens is that, towards the end of the financial year, it is found necessary to introduce Supplementary Estimates. This year, as the Committee is aware, they amounted for the Navy to £277,000; and the Estimates, about which such a great flourish was made 12 months ago, turn out to have been based on the fiscal principle of Mr. Micawber. I have very little doubt that the Estimates of the present year are destined to meet with a similar fate, and that we, none of us, shall know, until the end of March next, what the expenditure has been. In all probability, there will be a bundle of more or less important accounts tacked on to the Estimates before us this time next year. Last year, the late Secretary to the Admiralty explained to us that from 1874 to 1880, under a Conservative Administration, the expenditure upon the Navy averaged £11,133,000, and that from 1880 to 1886, under a Liberal Administration, the annual expenditure was £11,500,000. This amount has now been brought up to close upon £12,500,000; and I think the general tone of the Naval Members of the House is that £12,500,000 is not nearly sufficient to keep up an efficient Navy. I am myself satisfied, however, that the great body of the taxpayers think that it is a great deal too much to pay for such a Navy as we have, especially in times of depressed trade. When we consider that this amount is £4,500,000 more than the cost of both Army and Navy during the time of the Crimean War, I think that the conclusion at which the outside public have arrived is fully justified. It is, of course, easy to understand that there should be a considerable increase in the cost of the Army and Navy since the time of the Crimean War; but is it not a fact that it is chiefly the wastefulness which has increased? If it is not so, how is it that we have heard from the hon. Member for Cardiff that £1,500,000 has been as much wasted as if it had been thrown into the sea? And how is it, again, that we have heard from the First Lord of the Admiralty himself, of vessels the armour of which is below the water line? If this sort of mismanagement were stopped, and if the money were spent in a legitimate manner, and not upon fat contracts which do not benefit the nation—which benefit nobody but the favoured contractors—there could be no sort of question that the burdens which now press so severely upon taxpayers might be materially lightened, and we should have a far more efficient Fleet. We have been told, and, no doubt, with truth, that it is the practice—not a mere accidental occurrence—to build vessels on the Clyde, and to send them to Devonport to be pulled to pieces again, before they have done any work, or seen any service at all. The last Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General abounds in statements which show that the money of the taxpayers is not devoted to its legitimate use. Will any naval expert in the House explain to the Committee, and to the country, how it is that while the prices of labour have decreased considerably in every private shipbuilding yard, they have increased—indeed, more than doubled—in Her Majesty's Dockyards? The Admiralty itself pays far less for some of its materials than it did—as, for instance, iron plates which, in 1874, cost £19 per ton, in 1883 were £18 per ton. Lead and copper, in the same way, have decreased materially in price; but has there been any proportionate decrease in expenditure? Nothing of the kind. The expenditure continually advances, and the result is a continual disappointment to those who are expecting real and practical reforms to be set on foot at the Admiralty. I defy anyone to sit here as a mere outsider, knowing nothing whatever about naval matters, and listening to the statements that are made by those who do know about them, and not feel satisfied that the money wrung from the public by all sorts of objectionable taxes, such as the Income Tax, is neither rightly nor usefully spent. If they want to get some idea where the money goes, I would earnestly advise the Members who have not yet read them, and people out-of-doors, to get hold of the Reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General. I do not say that these documents are as interesting as the last new novel; but they are full of information which will show the taxpayers of the country that their money is being wickedly and wantonly thrown away. The Comptroller and Auditor General tells us, for instance, that advances are continually being made to contractors to which they are not entitled; and he says that the view entertained throughout the Dockyards is that because money has been voted by Parliament, therefore it must be spent, if possible, within the financial year. Well, with such an opinion as that prevailing in the Dockyards, of course, there would be no difficulty in spending twice or three times the amount of money voted. Therefore, it is no wonder that naval experts should come down here and tell us that our armoured ships are generally armoured below the water line, and that most of our iron-clads are only fit to be the coffins of those who man them. The Committee appointed to inquire into the matter of contracts said that there is no business-like co-operation between the heads of Departments, and that £15,000 has been paid to a contractor for work which he actually offered to do for £8,080. Then we are told that the contracts are not scanned closely. A witness, Mr. White, when asked why the contracts are not scanned closely, replies that it is, unfortunately, against the Admiralty traditions—that is to say, that it is against the Admiralty traditions that proper caution should be taken even in the purchase of materials and stores for the use of the Navy and the Service generally. All sorts of idiotic follies are committed daily in the management of the Navy. According to the Report on Contracts, sugar and Jamaica rum are sent out to vessels on the West India stations. Flour is actually sent from Deptford Dockyard to Hong Kong, and rice to India; and the only thing requisite to complete the operation is that vessels on foreign stations should occasionally send back coals to Newcastle. This last suggestion would not involve a more absurd and wicked waste of the public stores or of the public money than to send rice from Deptford to India, and rum to Jamaica. Then, of course, when a Vote of Credit is granted, there is a sort of Saturnalia of extravagance. Ships are taken up, and never used afterwards; cables are purchased, and never taken out of the manufacturers' yards; bills are sent in to the Admiralty for all sorts of useless articles. The Report just issued by the Committee appointed to inquire into the Dockyards reveals endless scandals. It is shown therein that there is no proper examination of goods delivered; consequently, we may safely assume that inferior articles are shot into the Dockyards at Bond Street prices, because contractors, as a rule, do not spare people who do not examine the consignments of goods they receive from them, and do not look into their proceedings. I will read a short passage from this Report. It says—

> "We were impressed by the fact that large quantities of tools issued from the Tools Store proved to have been of inferior quality; and although their failure had been frequent, it was left to an Admiralty Officer to bring the matter to notice, merely as the result of a casual visit to the Dockyard."

Then there are innumerable pensions to all sorts of persons, and extravagant salaries, and a system of occasional re-organization, the result of which is to saddle the country with still more pensions, and to encourage a system under which all sorts of hangers-on, and relations of hangers-on, and men who have been useful to those in Office, or who are likely to be useful to them at election time, receive payment out of the public funds. When complaint is made of this wild and wicked expenditure, the country is told that there is no possibility of saving anything in the Navy. And, when we humble Representatives of the taxpayers desire to express our opinion upon these matters—and I submit that, although we are not experts, we have no difficulty in possessing as much information upon the subjects I have dealt with as those who are experts—we are told that we are not competent to criticize such subjects, and that we ought to sit silent and vote, and so perform our duty to our constituents. Well, I believe that the public have had about enough of that system, and, whether under a Liberal or a Conservative Government, it will not last much longer. I am very sure that in these days, when the industrial classes are finding it more and more difficult to obtain employment, and when trade is depressed at home, and this country is being invaded from all quarters, while our trade is not allowed opportunities of extending itself into foreign countries in the same proportion; you will find that there is an increasing impatience of the heavy load of taxation which Administration after Administration places on the backs of the people. I believe that the Conservative Party has now got the best opportunity it has ever had, or in all probability is ever likely to have, of putting an end to this monstrous evil. One of the Leaders of that Party has publicly identified himself with the cause of Retrenchment, and has made sacrifices for it which have never been equalled, either in this age or in any other. I believe the public will look to this Party for the realization of the hopes of Retrenchment, of practical reform, and of a mitigation of taxation which have been held out not only by that Leader of whom I spoke, but by many of us in our addresses to our constituents—hopes of reform and of mitigation of that taxation which now weighs upon all classes with a severity which cannot much longer be endured.

ADMIRAL MAYNE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I wish to ask the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) one or two questions with reference to his Statement; and, first of all, with regard to the value of the ships in reserve. The *Ajax* is said to be worth £552,000, and we are told by Lord Brassey in his manual that the difficulty with regard to her is that she will not steer; but if she is such a valuable vessel, it would be well worth while making her efficient. But no mention is made of repairing or doing anything to her to enable her to go to sea, and if she is not fit for sea, she ought not to stand on this list at the value of £552,000. On page 240 it will be seen that she was laid down at the original cost of £548,000, and that there is an additional sum of £3,457 for completion to the 31st of March. The First Lord also mentioned in his Report and in his speech the question of speed, which we all know is one of the greatest necessities at the present day; but he does not account for the building of the vessels mentioned in his Report which are only to go 13½ knots. I refer to the *Rattler* and *Wasp*, Class 6 and 7 in number. If this calculation is made on the old system of trial, which the noble Lord himself has properly denounced, it would mean something like 10 knots in actual sea work. The trials of these vessels are spoken of as having been very satisfactory; but at the same time we are told that the protected cruisers and torpedo boats would give nearly double the speed, and consequently they could not escape from our own vessels by any possibility. Of course, it may be said that to obtain greater power the vessels must be larger. I should think that the cost of increased size would be well repaid by the increased speed that would be gained. I should like also to ask if it is the fact that upwards of £30,000 are to be expended in putting the *Garnet* in order? The original cost of the vessel was £102,288 in 1878-9, and I see that the cost for completion to the 31st of March, 1886, is nearly £19,000. I understand that upwards of £30,000 more is about to be expended for the purpose of putting her to rights. The *Garnet* belongs to a class of vessels of the *Gem* type—vessels which never steamed above eight knots in their best days, and which probably will never go at a greater speed than six or seven knots. She is therefore 10 years old, and obsolete, and yet it is proposed to spend upon her now nearly one-third of her original cost. The hon. and gallant Member for Kincardine (Sir George Balfour) appealed to me with reference to the guns of different calibre supplied to Her Majesty's ships. I do not know why the hon. and gallant Member refers to me; but of course I, in common with all practical men, support the view which he takes, that the fewer types of guns—and consequently the fewer different sizes of shot and shell, a vessel has on board—the better. I should think he would know that it is impossible for the Admiralty to take over the supply of guns to the Navy in a very short time, because they have to create a Department for the purpose before they can take the responsibility upon themselves, and they must have time to get their house in order for it. If it is done in too great a hurry it will be done badly. The First Lord has made a remark which strikes me as being very peculiar, and it is, that the £36,000, which the hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Devonport (Mr. Puleston) spoke of as £12,000, for armour-piercing projectiles, was brought into the Navy Estimates because the War Office would not supply the money. Surely it is an extraordinary thing that the First Lord of the Admiralty should say he wanted certain guns or ammunition for a particular purpose, and that the War Office should be in a position to reply —"You shall not have them," because it practically comes to that—it is a question of cutting down a particular Vote to the smallest amount. I should like to know what the country cares whether this £36,000 comes out of the Admiralty or out of the War Office Estimate! Certainly, it ought to come out of the grant of whichever of the two Offices is responsible for supplying the ammunition. It is right that the First Lord should have included this money in the Naval Estimate, because it was the only way in which he could do that which he believed to be necessary; but it was perfectly wrong that such a necessity should have been laid upon him at all. The First Lord spoke of civil assistants at the Dockyard being conducive to economy and efficiency; and I ask whether it would not be more economical and better for the discipline of the Dockyards that a Superintendent should be appointed for a fixed term of years? Superintendents are now appointed for a year, 18 months, or two years, depending upon their promotion and other contingencies, and by the time they have got to learn what is the work of the Dockyard and become thoroughly acquainted with their duties, they are relieved by another officer, who has again to learn the duties of his position. Then let me mention the sending of ships from one yard to another in an uncompleted state to be completed. I am aware that it may be said that this refers particularly to vessels being sent from the yard in the district which I represent to be completed at another; but my argument will be equally good in the case of a vessel sent from another yard to Pembroke, Portsmouth, or Devonport. It is utterly impossible that a ship can be finished in any other yard as cheaply as she can be where she was laid down. In the first place, the people in the yard to which she is sent have not the same interest in her; on the contrary, their interest would be to run up the expenditure on her to the highest figure. They would take care when they got hold of a vessel like the *Nile*, for instance, at Portsmouth, that she shall cost as much as the *Trafalgar*, which was built there, and of necessity much work must be done. Any practical man will admit it is quite impossible that a vessel can be completed as cheaply by another set of people as by those by whom she was originally built. There have been several questions asked with regard to obtaining designs from the Dockyards. I do not know that the noble Lord has informed us yet where the gentleman is who divulged the designs at Chatham, and whether there is any means of preventing him from now divulging all the secret knowledge he possesses to anyone who will buy it? As far as I understand, he is at liberty to do so at any moment he thinks fit. With reference to the remarks of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings), who has just spoken, I think he made a great mistake in drawing an analogy between times of depression and the state of the Navy, and that, if we were to be guided by his suggestion, the very difficulty which he wishes to remove would be augmented. If the money to be spent on the Navy were dependent on whether the country is suffering from depression or otherwise, we should get what the First Lord has said he is most anxious to prevent—namely, fitful, and consequently larger, expenditure. What can the efficiency of the Navy have to do with the question as to whether there is a greater or less amount of depression in the country? The noble Lord has said that we must proceed on some settled plan, and not on the plan of fits and starts such as has been adopted before. The question of the Navy has but one reference to the state of the country, and my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bow (Captain Colomb) has given us to-night a comparative statement, which shows that the amount expended in this country for the protection of its commercial tonnage is ridiculously small to that of every other country. I think the hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Devonport was quite right in his statement as to the necessity which exists for having professional men and experts upon Committees such as that which was appointed to consider the system of purchase and contract in the Navy; and I do not think it was worthy of the hon. Member who accused one of those who sat on that Committee of being biassed because a firm with which he was connected had tendered in respect of one of the vessels. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) has received such a severe handling from the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) that I do not think it necessary further to refer to his speech than to say that the vessels —the building of which he wished to stop last year—the *Nile* and the *Trafalgar*, and the designs of which he now considers should have been the subject of inquiry by a Royal Commission, are those which the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed) and others qualified to judge have spoken of as the very best that we have yet laid down.

Sir WILLIAM CROSSMAN (Portsmouth): With regard to the defence of our coaling stations, I have a few remarks to make. We have in the Royal Marines and Royal Marine Artillery some of the finest men in Her Majesty's Service, and those men are not employed altogether so advantageously as they might be. I have always been of opinion that the defence of the coaling stations ought to be intrusted to these men. This arrangement would leave at the disposal of the Secretary of State for War a number of men of the Regular Army who are now distributed all over the world. The defence of such stations as Hong Kong, Singapore, and Bermuda ought to be in the hands of the Royal Marines and Royal Marine Artillery; and in that way you would save the expense of transporting to those places the land forces who are now discharging the duty there. My hon. and gallant Friend opposite has said very truly that the coaling stations deserve every attention at the hands of the Government. These places are of the utmost importance for the operations of the Navy; and unless they are fortified properly our Fleet will not, in time of war, be able to keep the seas, and therefore I think their garrisons ought to be under the orders of the Admiralty, and not under those of the War Office. There is another matter on which I should like to make a few remarks, and that is the question of submarine mining. I have long been of opinion—and I have had some experience in this matter—that all the work in connection with submarine mining should be done by the Navy, and not by the Army. We require sailors for the guard-boats employed in the Service, but the mines themselves are in the hands of the Engineers. It is said that the Admiralty requires all the men they can lay their hands upon for the sea-going Fleet. I do not demur to that at all; but there are the Royal Naval Volunteers, who might be so organized that the Navy might take charge of this Department. The guns which are required to defend the submarine mines might also be in the hands of the Royal Marine Artillery. There is another point to which I desire to refer. The Staff sergeants of the Royal Marine Artillery are paid less in pensions than the men of corresponding rank in the Army to the extent of *3d.* a-day. The armourer sergeants also get less than the men in the Line. The alterations I suggest are of a trifling character, and as they are the cause of discontent among a fine body of men, I hope the noble Lord will take the matter into consideration.

Lord CHARLES BERESFORD (A Lord of the Admiralty) (Marylebone, E.): I rise to answer some of the questions which, in the course of this discussion, have been pointedly addressed to me. I may remark, in the first place, that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), having begun his observations with the expression of a hope that no Party sentiment would be introduced into the discussion, immediately entered upon subjects of a Party character. I think, however, that in the conversation which he had with my noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty he had rather the worst of it. My noble Friend did not intend to say anything of a Party character; his only object was to make to the Committee a clear statement of facts. The right hon. Gentleman first referred to the changes alluded to in that Statement. There are two principal changes connected with the Department. The first of these is the establishment of a regular Intelligence Department, where the Naval Lords meet together, at specified times, to discuss questions relating to the fighting capabilities of the Navy. That has never been the case before, and the reason why the change has been made is this—if you take 20 of the ablest seamen in the Fleet, and separately ask their opinion on this subject, they would all give a different opinion; but if you bring them together you will get a finite opinion from them. That is what has now been done. The other change relates to the building of ships. My noble Friend has explained that we wish to build our ships in a business-like way. The men who fight the ships will be able to give their opinion as to what is required in action, and this will be submitted to the constructors and experts whose business it is to produce the machine which is required for fighting. A ship under the new system will not take six or seven years to build; and there will be no alteration unless with the consent of the whole Board, who will have to sign the Order. There will be none of those alterations after a ship is laid down, in respect to engines and armament which will cause her to draw more water, and, in short, turn out something entirely different from the original design. I cannot understand why my right hon. Friend opposite has so strongly attacked the *Nile* and the *Trafalgar;* and I ask him whether the man who has to fight a ship has not a just right to have an opinion about her? There may be different opinions as to some parts of these ships, but as to their good qualities I do not believe that any seamen differ as to their excellence as fighting ships. I believe them to be good ships and less likely than others to be damaged in action, and therefore, as I have said, I cannot conceive why my right hon. Friend has taken such a violent dislike to them. My noble Friend has explained that the *Impérieuse* and *Warspite* are not what they were intended to be as to draught; but they are valuable ships, and can steam faster than any other of their class in the world. Moreover, they are belted, and are therefore ships of a very formidable type. I deny the argument that has been brought forward by the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed) with regard to the capsizing of unarmoured ships if a hole is knocked through the unarmoured ends. There has been an experiment made in the case of the *Hero*, which with 700 tons of water in her fore compartment steamed 18 knots without the slightest awkwardness. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Bow (Captain Colomb) made some interesting remarks, and with much of what he said I entirely agree. But I cannot quite see the object of his first proposal. He rather found fault with the Marines being made butchers and bakers on board ship. I have always endeavoured to have every man on board made useful. The number of non-combatants carried has always been a great danger in our Fleet. For instance, in ships of the *Invincible* class, we have as many as 65 per cent of non-combatants; while in the French Navy the number of non-combatants is only 5 per cent. I should like to see Marines more largely employed on board ship, because there is no better man than a Marine, and if you can make him a double-handed man, so to speak, you have the best possible man in him on board ship. Therefore, I do not quite agree with my hon. and gallant Friend on that point. Then we come to the defence of the coaling stations. I have always had a certain idea on that point; but I do not see that it is quite practical at present. I have always held that the Marine Corps should be doubled or trebled, and that it should be largely employed at all the outlying stations —at Malta, Gibraltar, Hong Kong, and Singapore, for instance. We should always have in that case fighting men there, accustomed to go in ships, accustomed, in fact, to do anything, and by their employment the expense to the taxpayer would be materially lessened. I do not know that this is exactly the opinion of my noble Friend (Lord George Hamilton) upon the point; however, he does not object to my saying what I think on these matters. Reference has been made to the Intelligence Department. Now, the duty of the Intelligence Department is to find out everything that is necessary for the use of the Fleet in time of war; to examine the plan of campaign. [*Laughter.*] Oh! a different plan of campaign to the one of which we have heard so much lately; it is a more decided plan, but still a plan of campaign. The Committee of the Intelligence Department has to see to the plan of campaign, and to see that all the trade routes in the world are guarded. In other words, it has to acquire all the information that is necessary that our Fleet in time of war should be possessed of. My noble Friend has recognized the necessity of this, and we have, at this moment, an Intelligence Department working diligently, and acquiring an enormous mass of information that has not been obtained hitherto. I do not blame anybody for that; up to this the Intelligence Department has not been developed on account of—well, I really do not know why the matter has not been taken up before this. We are asked what the present Board of Admiralty have done. Now, I think that our work is very clearly set out in the non-Party Statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty. We acknowledge that things are very bad, and we hope to make them better, and we point out what we have done in this direction. There was a great and wasteful expenditure in the ships in commission going into the Dockyards with large repairs. The present Board have stopped that; they say that ships are supplied with artificers, and they must do their own repairs. That is a very important matter. Then there is the immense question of Dockyard reorganization. My noble Friend has already referred to that, and my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood) will, no doubt, enlarge upon it in due course, he having had a great deal to do with the reform. Then there is the shipbuilding circular, which will save the country an enormous sum of money. Then there is the Intelligence Department; there is no use in having ships and men unless you have somebody to tell them what to do when war is declared. The hon. Gentleman, the Member for one of the Divisions of Hull (Mr. Wilson) made some remarks about what are called armed cruisers. I think the name is rather confusing; the name should be armed auxiliaries, or, better still, runners. England will suffer most in the first three weeks after war is declared; in other words, she will suffer in her food supply, and in a tax upon her enormous floating wealth. Our merchantmen will be attacked, and some of them destroyed, and then up will go the rate of insurance. Not only so, but merchants who have ships in port will not send them out; that is another difficulty which has to be thought out by the Intelligence Department. The principal use of these runners will be to go out as soon as war is declared, or directly you think war is inevitable, to one or other focus of our trade in different parts of the world.

Mr. C. H. WILSON: How many days' coal will they carry?

Lord CHARLES BERESFORD: At what speed?

Mr. C. H. WILSON: At 18 knots, which is considered necessary.

Lord CHARLES BERESFORD: That is a curious question. It depends where the ship is sent to, and the hon. Member will fully realize that fact. Take the *Etruria*, for instance, she will go much more quickly than the enemy; and she may go to India or to China.

Mr. C. H. WILSON: She cannot go to China—she only carries 10 days' coals.

Lord CHARLES BERESFORD: It depends upon the speed she goes. I believe that at full speed the *Etruria* carries 10 days' coals; but at a low rate of speed she is able to carry 25 days' coals. I think that explains matters. What we have got to fear is that some intelligent and energetic foreigner will take a small ship, and, getting on a focus of our trade, say, 24 hours before we get there, will possibly sink 20 or more of our ships. These runners are to prevent any accident of this kind occurring to our great commercial interests and floating wealth, when war is first declared. Then they would have to attend the Fleet; they would be like cavalry to an army; they would let the Admiral know what he was to expect, and where the enemy was, and they would be used for a thousand other things that our ordinary men-of-war would not be useful for. They are merely armed to protect themselves against vessels that they would meet of their own class, who would prey on our commerce for the first three weeks after war was declared. I am quite sure this great commercial country will recognize that the employment of these fast vessels is a first step in the right direction. The hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Jennings) made a very sad speech. According to him, everything is wrong. Where there is a great deal said of a thing it must be more or less true; but, after all, is it a right thing to sit down and cry because things are wrong? We are all doing our best to put them right. The hon. Member said that the only effect of the re-organization scheme had been to give pensions, and thus to increase the call upon the taxpayers. Now, the statement of my noble Friend is, in my opinion, an honest one. What the present Board of Admiralty wish to do is to put the Navy in the best state they can, and the only fault found in the noble Lord's Statement is that there is an inclination to show that we do not want quite as much money as before. I hope the hon. Member for Stockport will not this time next year be in a position to take any or quite so sad, gloomy, and funereal glance at affairs. The hon. and gallant Admiral the Member for Pembroke (Admiral Mayne) spoke of the *Ajax* and *Agamemnon.* It has never been considered that they are handy ships; but the run of these ships has now been filled in, and they may be taken as fairly good vessels; we must take things as they are, and not as they ought to be, and do the best we can with what we have got, always being careful to profit by experience. Reference has been made to the *Rattler* class of ships. A great many of my friends have said to me—"You had better resign, because the Admiralty are going to build these 'snails' as they are called." Now we have had much discussion in regard to this matter. The hon. and gallant Admiral is quite right when he says their speed is not great; but the conclusion we came to, after thoroughly threshing out the subject, was that if these vessels were required to carry their present tonnage and armament, it was impossible to get more speed out of them; besides it must be remembered that these vessels are peculiarly fitted for the stations to which they are sent. Upon the China, West African, and Pacific Stations, steel-bottomed ships are of no use, you must have copper-bottomed ships there, and as far as the fighting capibilities of these ships goes —they are only 660 tons—there is no doubt they are better than any other gun-vessel or small ship that they are likely to meet. We came unanimously to the conclusion that it was impossible to have heavy vessels of this description that would go fast. It must also be remembered that we are not building many of them. My right hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) wanted to know why I had not put my name to the Estimates. Well, it is a very natural inquiry for anybody to make, but I think the Committee will agree with me that it is a great mistake for anyone to put his name to a public document that he has not looked at. What is this document? It is a document which relates to the spending of £13,000,000 sterling of the taxpayers' money. My noble Friend quite agrees with me that I had not had time to look through the Estimates.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: What I asked was, how it was, under the new Regulation, the Estimates were submitted to the noble Lord at the last moment, when he had not time to look into them?

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: The Estimates were submitted to me at the last moment; but I do not blame anyone for that. The real question raised by the right hon. Gentleman is, whether I agree with the policy contained in the Estimates. I agree entirely with that Estimate; if I did not agree with it do you suppose I would remain at the Admiralty ten minutes longer; but that is a different thing to putting my name to the Estimates. What I represented to my noble Friend was that I would put my name to those Estimates I was responsible for. It has hitherto been the custom for all the Members of the Board of Admiralty to put their name to the Estimates; but I do not approve of that system. And I have no doubt my noble Friend will see his way to alter the system. When a taxpayer and the House take up the Estimates, and they see the name of every Lord of the Admiralty at the bottom of it, they naturally conclude that the whole of the Lords of the Admiralty are responsible for the whole lot of the Estimates. Now, I object to be responsible for any Estimates for which I am not responsible; I have no objection to put my name to the Votes under my own charge; but I object to the system which requires me to put my name to the whole of the Estimates, when I have not had an opportunity of examining them.

SIR JOHN COMMERELL (Southampton): There is one point which has been omitted by the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) in his able speech, and that is the state of the lieutenants' list. We have now hundreds of lieutenants, the larger proportion of whom have little or no chance of promotion. But, bad as this is for the lieutenants, it will be worse for the Navy in time of war. We have now 662 lieutenants on service in various ships, 38 in the Coastguard, and 81 unemployed. Out of this 38 and 81, I have no hesitation in saying that half of them could hardly be expected in time of war to go on active service. If war broke out to-morrow, and we had to commission all the various ships that we have ready, we should be hardly pressed for lieutenants; and I wish the First Lord of the Admiralty would intimate how, in the case of war, he intends to deal with the lieutenants' list. Then there is another hardship under which the lieutenants of the Navy suffer, and which I desire to bring before the Committee. A boy may now be entered in the Navy by his parents or guardians at the age of 13, and has no possibility of leaving the Service until he is 40. That is an anomaly and inconsistency. We are every day compelling military men who are in the prime of life, and who have learnt their duty, to retire into private life; while in the Navy we keep men from 13 to 40 without allowing them to retire. I should like to mention a particular case to the Committee which will illustrate the hardship which this system inflicts on naval officers. A very eminent officer, who had risen by his ability, put his son into the Navy when 13 years of age. The young man now finds himself, after 17 years' service, fourth lieutenant in one of Her Majesty's ships. At the same age I was a post captain. The young man, however, has no chance of promotion. In fact, his only chance is that of retiring after 10 years' more service on £240 a-year. Well, finding himself almost a pauper, with a wife and children dependent on him, and an income of only £180 a-year, he had an offer of an appointment on shore of £400 a-year, with a prospect of increase to £600 a-year. He asked to be allowed to retire. That request the Admiralty refused. Then he asked to be permitted to resign his commission. That also was refused. Then the young man, unfortunately, did a most unwarrantable thing. He left his ship on foreign service, thus committing an act of insubordination in which I, as an old officer, cannot support him or lend any sanction to. Still, the case is a very hard one, and one that I trust will yet receive the favourable consideration of the Admiralty. But what I complain of specially is that our lieutenants' list is in such a state that men, having been refused retirement, are tempted to commit acts such as this which I have described. I now desire to say something about the

Dockyards and the work done in them. My hon. and gallant Friends the Members for Devonport (Captain Price) and Pembroke (Admiral Mayne), being Dockyard Members, of course raised the old cry "There is nothing like leather." But although the work done in the Dockyards is most excellent, and I should be sorry to see the Dockyards decreased for one moment, still I maintain that there is in these days an actual necessity for vessels to be built by contract in other yards; and as to vessels being built cheaper in Her Majesty's Dockyards than they can be built by contract in the yards of private shipbuilders, I do not believe a word of it. What I particularly wish to urge upon the Admiralty is that private contractors should be employed in time of peace, so that they might have knowledge and experience of our requirements in war time and in a time of emergency. If that is not done, then the contractors will not be able to do what will inevitably be required of them by-and-bye. There are one or two other points to which I should like to make a brief allusion. The Committee knows very well that one of the heaviest items which it has to meet is the cost for repairs. If the details of these charges are examined, the cost, it will be found, is enormous. A vessel which has cost over £40,000 to build has a sum of £40,472 spent upon her for repairs. That expenditure was caused by the removal of the vessel's boilers, and the putting in of new ones. I do not think that in these matters the Admiralty are sufficiently careful. There is nothing so detrimental to a boiler as repairing and patching it here and there. It would be very much better to build a new vessel rather than renew boilers on obsolete vessels. There is another matter in connection with a vessel's boilers to which I think attention should be called, and that is the extreme steam pressure resorted to when a vessel is about to make her trial on the measured mile, or for a longer testing period. Everyone knows that the pressure put upon the boilers on these trials starts the rivets, strains the plates, and weakens their power of resistance, and it has been shown that while these vessels are to be worked up to 10,000 horse-power, a premium is given to raise the power to 12,500. That is not a safe thing to do, and these risks should not be undertaken for the sake of providing a premium for the contractor and a fictitious speed. After these experiments, the vessel in question cannot be worth much, and the Committee may depend upon it that the system of over-testing both guns and boilers is the greatest mistake in the world.

MR. T. SUTHERLAND (Greenock): I hardly think the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) defended himself very successfully against the complaint made by my right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) with regard to a blot—a small one, no doubt, but still a real one—which seems to exist in his otherwise excellent Statement as to the condition of the Navy. I refer to the comparison which he instituted between the shipbuilding policy of the present Board of Admiralty and the shipbuilding policy of the Board of Admiralty which preceded it. I must say that the comparison he drew was rather unfortunate, because anyone conversant with Admiralty affairs is aware of the fact that if that comparison had been carried some little distance further back it would have been found that the policy of the Conservative Government was of a still more unsatisfactory character. Unquestionably, between 1874 and 1880 the policy of the Conservative Administration was anything but a policy of shipbuilding. It was essentially a repairing policy. Had it not been for the measures taken at the moment when some alarm was felt owing to the danger of a war with Russia, and certain vessels under construction for Foreign Governments were purchased, the shipbuilding transactions of that Administration would have been very small indeed. But, on the other hand, I am not able to give to the Admiralty under Lord Northbrook the credit which has been claimed for it by my right hon. Friend (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) of having had a continuous and constant policy on the question of shipbuilding, because I must say that I believe, with the hon. and gallant Member for Bow (Captain Colomb), that when the First Lord of the Admiralty or his deputy in this House comes down in the month of March and announces one policy, and then in the following November announces a total reversal of that policy, such an Administration is hardly deserving of that confidence which we desire at all times to give to these who are responsible for the Admiralty. And, Sir, if proof were wanted—and it hardly seems to be wanted, for the fact appears to be almost universally admitted—that our Naval Force at that time was by no means what it ought to have been, and that our shipbuilding operations were not by any means what they ought to have been, it will be found in this fact, and in this fact alone—that when the Liberal Government came here in 1884 and asked for a Vote of £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 sterling to supplement the Navy, we had scarcely a fast cruiser in our whole Fleet. Seeing that the greatness, the wealth, and the power of this country depend upon the security of its Commercial Marine, it is hardly necessary to say what straits we were in at that period. But the great question which we have to consider at the present moment is not the precise character of the Statement laid before us by the First Lord of the Admiralty, but it is whether the Naval Force which we now possess, and which we shall possess when those ships at present in construction are completed, is adequate and sufficient. Now, I must say that the Statement put before us by the Admiralty does not afford me much consolation upon that point, and I will say why. I think that the Admiralty, in their anxiety to afford us information, have been running too much into figures and getting away from ideas. They have laid too much stress upon the details of the system which they propose for meeting the waste of the Navy by means of a system of depreciation. There is not, and there cannot be, a "depreciation fund;" but they have told us about the appropriation of a certain amount, which, if it were to be applied according to commercial principles, would represent a fund, year by year, drawn from profits accruing from Admiralty sources. I think, myself, it is much to be regretted that calculations of this kind should be laid before us, because I doubt very much the soundness and reality of such arrangements. In commercial affairs it is undoubtedly the case, in connection with Shipping Companies, that they put aside out of their profits a certain amount for the renewal of their Fleet. That is a sound principle in connection with the Mercantile Marine; but it must be remembered, in the first place, that they make these profits, which is not the case at the Admiralty. Practically, then, the question which the Admiralty has to consider is not whether they can get the Chancellor of the Exchequer to vote £1,500,000 or £1,800,000 in one year for the purposes of the Navy, but they have to consider what is the condition of the Navy at the beginning of the year, and what is its condition at the end of the year. How far are our ships up to the level of the present time, and how far are they able to face the power, in the event of war, of foreign nations? Such a question as that is not a matter of a depreciation of 4 per cent or 5 per cent, but it is a radical question as to the sufficiency or insufficiency of the Naval Forces of the country. Therefore, I say it is a mistake to place before us any financial calculations of that kind, which, however interesting they may be to right hon. Gentlemen to examine in their own rooms, are by no means to be depended upon as a guide for the future policy of this country in dealing with questions affecting the Navy. Now, to refer to another point, I may say that I highly approve the earnestness which the present holders of Office at the Admiralty have shown in reforming the procedure existing in that Department. There can be no doubt that there has been great need for reform in several directions, and I am bound to say that the present Conservative Administration and the late Administration have been fortunate in having at the head of the Department not only an able First Lord, but two most able Financial Secretaries, who, from their commercial experience in connection with shipping, have been in a position to lend material assistance to the Government. In reading the Reports which have been laid before us by the First Lord of the Admiralty of the reforming work, it is quite obvious that the reforms there indicated have not been begun a single day too soon. I hold it to be nothing less than a scandal that at this period of the 19th century, and with the knowledge we have of what the construction of war ships should be, that this House should have such revelations made to it with regard to the errors which seem to have been committed with respect to the Navy, and more especially with regard to those belted cruisers—their draught of water, their power of carrying coal, and their power to do that which is the first duty of a cruiser—namely, to cruise. One reads the astounding statement in the Report of the First Lord of the Admiralty that cruisers of 5,000 tons and upwards were only constructed to carry 440 tons of coal. With that quantity of coal on board, these vessels would only be able to have above water 11 inches of their armour-plating of five feet wide; and a still more remarkable statement is that with 900 tons of coal on board, that being the bunker capacity, the whole armour-plating would be six inches below the water mark. When one reads these statements, we are bound to say that it is almost incredible that such occurrences could have taken place under any Admiralty administration whatever. It is obvious that these vessels must be comparative, if not absolute, failures in the very essential duty which they were constructed to perform, which was to remain at sea a sufficient length of time, having in themselves adequate means of protection against an enemy, and being able to carry sufficient coal to enable them to cruise, for the purpose of protecting other vessels. With regard to another matter, I mean the contracts for ships and machinery, I do most sincerely hope that the measures which the Admiralty have adopted, and which they intend to carry into practice, will be successful in providing against such blunders as those to which I have referred and which one reads of in these Reports; but I must say that I think what is required at the Admiralty is not merely what the noble Lord mentioned, and what is referred to in his Memorandum — namely, that papers should be signed by this officer or that, and that they should guarantee by their signature their approval of this measure and that matter. What is required at the Admiralty is that there should be more of the spirit and less of the letter, and that there shall be more efficient means devised by which all these Heads of Departments, Lords of the Admiralty, and Directors of Departments, shall be made to co-operate together, not on paper, but in reality. Now, in regard to the reforms to which I have referred, I must say I am very much interested—I might almost say amazed—in reading the Report of that Committee over which my hon. Friend the Member for Ormskirk (Mr. Forwood) presided in reference to the purchase of stores for the Navy. I refer more particularly to the contract for machinery for the *Renown* and *Sanspareil*, which occupied so much of the attention of the Committee. My right hon. Friend the Member for Bradford has said that Lord Northbrook had taken upon himself the whole responsibility in connection with that contract, and I was glad to hear that that was the case; because, while the Report of the Committee appeared to lay the blame upon this system and upon that individual, and notably upon the constructors and engineers connected with the Admiralty, I considered the whole blame rested immediately, if it rested anywhere, with the Lords of the Admiralty themselves. Therefore, I was glad to hear that Lord Northbrook was willing to take the whole responsibility in connection with that transaction upon himself. Now, in what light did that transaction strike me, as a man who has a good deal to do with matters of a somewhat similar kind? Well, I may say the first light in which it struck me was this—namely, that the firm of engineers who obtained that contract (Messrs. Humphreys and Tennant) knew exactly the length of the Admiralty's foot, and knew exactly how to pitch an offer which would meet with approval at the hands of those who had influence to cause its acceptance to be made. Putting aside this peculiar feature of the case, I am not prepared to say that Lord Northbrook was wrong in accepting that particular proposal, because it is perfectly clear that if one contractor offers to give machinery to effect a speed of something like half a knot more in an iron-clad vessel than was sought for or expected, or if one contractor could give half a knot more than another, I should say the First Lord of the Admiralty might make a great mistake if he did not accept that offer—unless he were justified in refusing it by those who understood affairs of that kind, who gave him advice and showed him that great injustice would, in all probability, be done to other tenderers who were tendering in a more liberal and *bonâ fide* manner. I must say that I think that in this particular case very great injustice was done to the firm of which the hon. Member for Jarrow (Sir Charles Palmer) is the head, inasmuch as their tender was some £17,000 or £18,000 lower than that of Messrs. Humphreys and Tennant; and he was not, as he might have been, asked whether he could not, by some alteration of the pitch of screw, or by other means, develop the same power as the other engineers professed to be able to do. But, Sir, with regard to these reforms, I am not altogether able to adopt the idea which appears to be entertained by the Committee over which the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty presided, that the way to prevent mistakes of this kind occurring in future is to entrust the duty of dealing with matters of this kind to one Department of the Admiralty rather than to another. For my own part, I think that the Director of Contracts has quite sufficient to do to attend to everything relating to the Department under his charge, and I am by no means able to endorse the idea that the mere transference of the shipbuilding and engineering contracts to that Department will be any remedy whatever, or any advantage, in Admiralty business. What is required is this—that these different Departments, Naval and Civil—the contractors department and the military department within the Admiralty—should be controlled, I care not by whom, but shall be so controlled, and so made to work together, that errors like those we have heard of to-night cannot possibly occur. I must say, in reference to the observations of the hon. and gallant Member for Bow (Captain Colomb), that I shall probably shock him, and some other hon. and gallant Gentlemen, by stating that what I think the Admiralty is most deficient in is continuous civil administration. I do not, in saying that, wish for one moment to deny the necessity of having military and naval men at the head of all proper Departments at the Admiralty. Give them higher rank if you like — [Admiral FIELD: We do not want that.]—call them something better than Lords of the Admiralty if you like—give them higher pay, if you choose—but what you want in order to promote a healthy and efficient state of affairs at the Admiralty is continuous civil administration, which you have not at present. I said I was sure I should shock the feelings of some of my hon. and gallant Friends, and no doubt I have done so; but, at any rate, such is my opinion. These Gentlemen who sit on the Government Bench are, no doubt, able business men, but they have many other duties to discharge besides the duties with which they are entrusted within their Office. They change Office, perhaps, on an average, once in six months. I am not sure whether it will be a full six months before we have a change of Government again. At any rate, these changes recur with remarkable frequency, and yet it is to the fleeting influence of these Gentlemen that we look for a sound financial state of affairs. and a sound financial state of affairs is what we look to as the basis of all efficiency in the Navy or anywhere else. I say that the Admiralty is in that respect singularly and unfortunately deficient. And, after all, what is the Admiralty? It is a great fighting machine. It is impossible to have a better Representative than the noble Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) connected with it as a fighting machine; but it is also a great manufacturing and administrative machine. Do you mean me to tell me that if you had acquired a great administrative machine, such as, for example, the London and North-Western Railway, you would get the management you required for its success without entrusting it to permanent civil financial control? I am aware of the difficulties that there are in connection with this matter, and which probably there always will be in connection with it; but that is the conviction which has pressed upon me, and I say that, until you insure a permanent Civil administration of the Navy, in concert with practical and naval administrations, which is even more important, you will never have that adequate management which is necessary to prevent great mistakes, such as those we have had to deplore. There are only two other things that I will mention in connection with the Statement of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty. The first is one which I am exceedingly glad to see—namely, an observation he made with regard to encouraging officers of the Naval Reserve to join Her Majesty's ships when cruising. I am glad to see that, in order to succeed in that, he has been good enough to arrange that officers of the Naval Reserve, who merely rank as sub-lieutenants, should mess with lieutenants on board ship; and if he had only added to that that he would be prepared to pay these officers, to some extent, for what they may lose by joining Her Majesty's Service for a year or so, I am quite certain—speaking not only for myself, but for many others—that the large Mail Steam Companies with which we are connected would only be too happy to co-operate with the Navy in strengthening and enlarging the body of men to be at the command of the Admiralty in the event of war. The next matter I should like to say a word upon is of a somewhat personal character, and I mention it because I should, perhaps, be misunderstood if I were to pass it over. I refer to one part of the noble Lord's Statement which he speaks of the Cunard steamer *Oregon*. That vessel is mentioned as the only ship that was armed as a cruiser during the late Russian scare. I beg to say that two steamers belonging to the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company were armed, not in Liverpool and not in London, but one was armed at Sydney, and one was armed at China—a very much more important feat than arming a vessel in Liverpool. I beg to say that these ships were practising their officers and men and guns off Hong Kong and Sydney at the time the *Oregon* was taking on board its armament; and I also beg to say that the crews and officers of these ships—every one of them—volunteered for Her Majesty's Service. In justice to the service that is under the flag of that Company, I think I was entitled to mention these circumstances in correction of, or in amplification of, the remarks in the noble Lord's Statement. Sir, I have only to add that, while I endorse heartily the views which have been expressed so abundantly on this side of the House—views of sympathy and respect for the Statement made by the noble Lord—I do hope and trust that we shall not, in dealing with the Navy in future, rely upon any paper figures or paper depreciation, but that the Admiralty, whether it be Liberal or Conservative, or Liberal Unionist, will take stock of its affairs in quite a different fashion to what it has sometimes done in the past, and will maintain the Navy as the Navy of this country ought to be maintained.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I would ask the permission of the House to interpose for one moment to express a hope, which I think the Committee will not feel to be an unreasonable one, that the observations which may yet have to be made on this Vote will be condensed as much as possible by hon. Gentlemen who may wish to speak. We are now arriving at the time when it is only reasonable that the Vote on Account for Civil Services should be taken in order to enable those hon. Members who wish to express opinions upon the subject of that Vote to make their remarks. The Vote on Account must be taken to-night; therefore, it would only be reasonable to allow some time for its discussion.

CAPTAIN PRICE (Devonport): I do not intend to occupy much of the time of the Committee, not more than five minutes; but, as I represent a Dockyard constituency, I should like to be allowed to say just half-a-dozen words. The hon. Member for Greenock (Mr. T. Sutherland), who has just sat down, commenced his speech with some comparisons between the naval policies of different Administrations. He did not carry that argument to excess, and I do not intend to find any fault with him about it; but he stated that the Naval policy of the Conservative Government of 1874 was a policy of repairing. I just wish to remind the Committee that the reason of their policy being one of repairing was, as was stated at that time, that there were only 14 iron-clads which were fit for the sea service of the country. That, I think, is a sufficient answer to the statement, or rather the reproach which the hon. Gentleman seemed to cast upon the Conservative Government of having followed a repairing policy during those years. My hon. and gallant Friend who sits in the Gangway below me made some remarks about us Dockyard Members wishing to have more ships built in the Royal Dockyards. Well, I think the hon. and gallant Gentleman rather has us at a disadvantage. If we speak from interested motives, I would remind him, at all events, of this, that those hon. Members who represent Dockyard constituencies may be counted, if not on the fingers on one hand, at all events on those of two hands. Those who take the opposite view, or what I may term the contract view, are very numerous indeed in this House. There are a large number of shipbuilders in this House, and a larger body of hon. Members who represent constituencies where these "fat contracts," as they have been termed, are given out. And that is not all—when the Government appointed the Committee to inquire into the question, so that the House of Commons might form an opinion as to which is really the most effectual and most economical way of building ships—whether in private yards or in public yards—what was the sort of Committee appointed? We had one appointed in 1882, and on that Committee every Member, with one exception, was the Representative of a constituency in which private shipbuilders had yards, or was himself a shipbuilder. There never was such a Committee appointed. If the Admiralty wanted to get at the rights of these cases, and were to appoint a Committee composed of the Representatives of the Dockyard constituencies, the House would say that it was eminently unfair and absurd. But the late Government went to the other extreme, and appointed a Committee almost, if not entirely, composed of private Dockyard Representatives. The Secretary to the Admiralty himself is closely allied with the shipbuilding interest, and it is impossible that we can arrive at a fair comparison of the cost of ships built in the Royal Dockyards and private yards under the circumstances. I remind the Committee that we are at the present moment building ships costing millions of money at seaport towns which are utterly unprotected, and which in the event of a naval war might be destroyed by the enemy's gunboats in 24 hours. I wish to renew the appeal which I made the other night in favour of granting commissions to our seamen. I rose at a very unfortunate time on that occasion; it was half-past 1, the House was then very thin, and I believe my noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty was unprepared with an answer on the subject, because the only answer he made was that there was some difficulty with regard to half-pay. Now there is no such difficulty at all, and I am sure that my noble Friend, if he looked into this matter, must have seen that he had made a mistake. If a warrant officer is given a commission, and he reverts to half-pay, what is that half-pay? Why, there is no fixed figure at all; there is no reason whatever why the same chance which is given to the warrant officer should not be given sometimes to the chief boatswains and chief gunners. I hope the noble Lord will show a little more interest in this subject, and I hope hon. Members will back me up in what I say. First of all the chief gunners and boatswains ask that, when they retire from the Service, they shall be given retiring rank as lieutenants. That will not cost one penny to the taxpayer, and there is no difficulty with regard to it, either social, technical, or professional. They also ask that a certain number of commissions should be given on the active list to warrant officers. There is nothing new in that; they are already entitled to it by the Order in Council, passed in 1856, whereby it was laid down that these commissions should be given from time to time to deserving men. That Order, however, has been made a dead letter from the time it was issued to the present day, and no warrant officer has since then received a commission. Before that time, when I entered the Service, which was in 1855, there were officers in high positions who had risen from before the mast; but there is nothing like that now in the Navy. In the Army there are many officers who have risen from the ranks, but in the Navy it is utterly impossible, owing to the policy of the Admiralty, that any seaman should rise from the ranks to be a commissioned officer. I apologize for having made these few remarks in addition to what I said the other night, and I trust that my noble Friend will be able to give me a more satisfactory answer than he did on that occasion.

Mr. R. W. DUFF (Banffshire): I have only a few remarks to make with regard to the observations which have fallen from the hon. Member for Devonport (Captain Price). As pointed out by the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty, there are very considerable difficulties in the way of giving commissions to warrant officers. I believe that the Admiralty have been very anxious to do something in this direction; but, as was stated by the First Lord the other night, the chief difficulty in the way is with regard to the warrant officers' education. I do not suppose my hon. and gallant Friend (Captain Price) would say that a warrant officer should receive the rank of lieutenant unless, to a certain extent, he was qualified in this respect and able to navigate a ship. If the warrant officers were able to pass an examination, then, I believe, the main difficulty in the way of this would be removed. I may mention that, from what I saw at the Admiralty, I believe a step has been taken in the right direction. When I went down to the school at Greenwich, I found that they did not teach navigation; I pointed that out, and I believe steps were taken, and it was arranged that navigation should, in the future, be taught to the boys attending the school. My opinion is that if these men passed an examination, the Admiralty would be glad to apply to them the same system which obtains in the Army. The noble Lord, in his remarks to-night, referred to something which fell from my right hon. Friend the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) with regard to Admiralty admininistration. I do not think it is quite fair to my right hon. Friend to say that he wanted to place the Board of Admiralty on the same footing as the Treasury, and I do not think that this was the intention of my right hon. Friend. Although I do not approve of all that was done, I feel bound to say that the general organization of the Board of Admiralty was very much improved by my right hon. Friend. I think the old system of sitting for five or six hours over any small question that came before them was a very absurd one; but my experience was that the work was very competently done. We had Minutes, and knew everything that was going on in the Department. I do not think it was the intention of the right hon. Gentleman to usurp the position of First Lord and take out of his hands the work which properly belonged to him. I am sorry to return to the statement which I made the other day—that the First Lord has introduced some things of a Party character into his Statement. My noble Friend the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) said the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty had rather reversed the argument of my right hon. Friend the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre); but I think that a reference to the figures will show that that is not the case. We have been told that the Navy was let down very much between 1881 and 1885, and the hon. Member who made this statement describes the policy of Lord Northbrook as one of dawdle. If that is so, then the policy which preceded it was one of stagnation. The hon. Gentleman gives us credit for spending £1,800,000 on shipbuilding; but if I take the figures for the last three years of the Beaconsfield Government which preceded Lord Northbrook's, I find only £1,500,000, £1,388,000, and £1,426,000 expended under the Shipbuilding Vote. If the whole Vote 6 and 10 and gun mountings are taken, it will be found that the average expenditure of Lord Northbrook's Board from 1881 to 1884 was £448,000 in excess of that of the previous Government. Therefore, I think that when the First Lord began his period of comparison with 1881, it is difficult to believe that the noble Lord is not giving a Party complexion to this matter. Reference has been made to the calculation as to depreciation which has been arrived at by the First Lord, and also by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty. They do not quite coincide; I do not, however, want to lay great stress upon that point. But I myself made a calculation on a somewhat different basis from that of the noble Lord and the Secretary to the Admiralty. I take the calculation on the number of vessels condemned between this time and last year; what the cost was originally; and what was the cost of repairs. I remember that the noble Lord the Member for East Marylebone requested us to get rid of and blow up a great number of ships. I find that the cost to the country through depreciation during the year of the vessels actually condemned was £1,863,000. But if we take the vessels which my noble Friend wanted to get rid of, the depreciation would amount to £2,100,000.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: What I wanted was to get rid of the vessels which came home from abroad—that is to say, that they should not be repaired when they came home. There are at this moment 32 ships at ports on foreign stations which are unfit for repair.

Mr. R. W. DUFF: I give the noble Lord credit for that; but I am going to speak of eight composite vessels included in the list of the noble Lord. It is certainly very unsatisfactory that vessels which were only built in 1880 and 1881, and which have been only three years at sea, should now be condemned; and if these Navy Estimates are referred to a Committee of this House, I trust there will be a searching investigation into the character of these vessels, and how it comes that vessels only eight years old, and only three years at sea, are now condemned. There is one point which I do not think has been referred to, but which the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty refers to in his Statement. It is with regard to our vessels on foreign stations. I gather from his Memorandum that we are going to adopt a new policy—that we are not going to have such a large squadron on foreign stations. I suppose this decision was arrived at after consultation with the Colonial and Foreign Offices, because there was a Committee representing the Foreign and Colonial Offices, and they came to the conclusion that we wanted 83 vessels and 15 gunboats on foreign stations, and last year we had 99. I have no doubt many of these vessels were of very little use indeed; anyone who has spent any time on a foreign station, as I have done, knows that to foreign stations we send the most disgraceful old tubs that ever carried a flag; and even third-rate Powers, such as South American Republics, have more powerful men-of-war than we possess in those waters. I am glad to think this system is to be stopped; it is better to have fewer ships, and have them efficient, than to have many inefficient ones. The policy which puts an end to the present system I shall be very glad to support. Some remarks were made by the hon. Member for West Hull (Mr. C. H. Wilson) in regard to the employment of auxiliary vessels; I quite approve of the general policy of the Admiralty in taking up these Cunard and other vessels. My noble Friend the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) explained very properly the use of these vessels, and, therefore, I shall not detain the Committee longer on this point. I do not profess to have sufficient knowledge to express any opinion as to whether the Admiralty have made a good or a bad bargain on the terms in which these vessels are engaged; that is a point upon which the hon. Member for West Hull and the hon. Member for Greenock (Mr. T. Sutherland) are better able to give an opinion than I am; but the policy of securing the fastest vessels we can get, and having such vessels ready at a moment's notice, is, I believe, an economical one, and a sound one so far as the country is concerned. Now, my noble Friend the Member for East Marylebone referred to the Intelligence Department. I think that the present Board of Admiralty are quite right in increasing that Department, and I give my noble Friend every credit for having developed the Department. But in that celebrated Memorandum which found its way into *The Pall Mall Gazette* I think the noble Lord went a little too far when he said that we really had no provision for war at the Admiralty, or words to that effect. That is rather strong language to use, and I am sure he will not endeavour to maintain it when he considers that it really amounts to a reflection upon the noble Lord sitting beside him (Lord George Hamilton), who has, previously to the present, occupied the position of First Lord of the Admiralty. There are at the Admiralty certain private and confidential documents which, if one could refer to them, would clearly show that provision is made for time of war. I cannot give the noble Lord the Member for East Marylebone credit altogether for having created the Intelligence Department, because to do that would be to cast a grave reflection not only upon the First Lords, but upon the Naval Lords. When I was at the Admiralty my Colleague (Lord John Hay) took a great deal of trouble to work up the Intelligence Department; and, therefore, that Department is not altogether a new institution. Now, my noble Friend the Member for Marylebone said there was no dock in the Pacific. I see that £55,000 is taken for such a dock at Esquimalt in this year's Estimate, and I believe the dock is complete. The other night I ventured to trouble the House—I am afraid at great length—with the question of education of naval officers. I am not going to refer to that now, except to say that when the First Lord of the Admiralty replied the other night he had to deal with a multiplicity of subjects, and was unable to give as much time as he would have liked to this subject. It is a subject which does occupy a good deal of thought in the Navy. There are a variety of opinions entertained upon it; some take the view I do, and I know many who do not. It is a matter in which the Navy are very much interested; and I had hoped that if the First Lord of the Admiralty did not give his view upon it, his Colleague and my Successor, the hon. Member for the Ecclesall Division of Sheffield (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), might possibly have given his view upon this question. I hope that on some future occasion the Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett)—naval education coming, as I believe, in his Department—will be able to enlighten the House upon the subject. I do not think there is any other matter on which I need detain the Committee, and I can only say that I am sorry that the duty of making these few criticisms should have fallen upon me, as the only Representative of the late Board of Admiralty. The criticisms I have addressed to the Committee have been made in no unfriendly spirit, and I shall be very happy to give the Admiralty my cordial support in carrying out this programme.

Mr. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Mid): In the last paragraph of his Memorandum, the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) describes the steps he proposes to take for the utilization of the auxiliary resources of the country. With the policy which is involved in the noble Lord's proposal I heartily concur. Upon the question of our defences, perhaps the Committee will allow me to refer to the defence of our coaling stations. Now, in the Memorandum which the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) circulated in relation to the Army Estimates, the right hon. Gentleman remarks that more than one Colony has fulfilled its engagements with regard to defences, and that we are bound in honour to find the necessary funds to enable us to fulfil our part of the engagement. Now what I want to point out is, that it is hopeless to expect our Colonies to enter into engagements with this country, as proposed in the last paragraph of the noble Lord's (Lord George Hamilton) Memorandum, if we are not prepared to fulfil our solemn obligations. The present is a most opportune time to make a few remarks upon this question, because, in the noble Lord's Memorandum, there is no reference made to our coaling stations under the heading of "Utilization of Auxiliary Resources." The most important auxiliary resources which the Navy ought to be able to look to in case of war are the resources which our coaling stations afford. Our coaling stations make good harbours of refuge, but unless they are put in an adequate condition of defence they will be a source of danger to us instead of support. Under the heading "Coaling Stations," the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, in his Memorandum, says—

> "It is well known to everyone who has looked into the subject that more than one station of primary importance still remains undefended."

This, surely, is a most unhappy condition of affairs. We have involved our Colonies in serious expenditure on the strength of our word, and we are in honour bound to fulfil our part of the contract. I ask what encouragement is there for Australia or any other Colony to fit out a squadron, when they know that, owing to changes of Government and other causes, the word of Parliament is not worth anything? I should like to get from the Government a definite pledge that our obligations towards the Colonies shall be fulfilled. I think I can see a way in which this can be easily done—at least, so far as Singapore is concerned. In page 22 of the noble Lord's Memorandum, it is admitted that our commerce is not protected as adequately as that of other nations, but that by utilizing our merchant vessels we can, in case of war, quickly recruit our strength. Now I have a Question on the Paper to-night as to whether the Government can see their way to give an adequate and localized naval force for the defence of Singapore, as they have no guns to send there? What I want to know is, whether the Government will, in order to fulfil its definite pledge to the Colony of Singapore, obtain at once from one of our Ship-building Companies an armed vessel for the defence of Singapore? It is unnecessary for me to dilate upon the necessity of defending Singapore, especially when we consider the importance of Singapore as a place of defence for our enormous trade. The total value of trade at that port during the year exceeds £200,000,000 sterling; and during the American Civil War, within three days of its being known that the *Alabama* had rounded the Cape, 17,000 tons of shipping, all American, were seeking refuge in this harbour of refuge. I do, therefore, most earnestly ask the Committee to give these matters their most urgent consideration.

MR. MASON (Lanark, Mid): I shall not detain the Committee more than a few minutes; but I have an appeal, as a Representative of the taxpayers of the country, to make to the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty. I feel it necessary to make a few remarks upon the important Statement submitted to us by the Admiralty on the present occasion. I congratulate the Government upon having supplied the House with such a valuable Statement to take the place of the Statement previously made in the House upon the Navy Estimates. It is a very important matter that we should have such a Statement put before us, enabling us to thoroughly understand the Estimates before we come to vote the money. This Statement contains a capital account, showing what we really possess in the way of value of ships. It is very right and proper that this Capital account should be opened; but it is also very important for us to know upon what principle this Capital account is opened. I am rather disposed to think that this Statement is open to criticism, so far as figures are concerned, and I shall point out one or two things upon which we ought to receive additional information. To begin with—the First Lord of the Admiralty takes credit for reducing the Estimates by £793,300, compared with the expenditure of the preceding year, and he says—

"A reduction of expenditure generally implies a decrease of the effective strength of the service with which it is connected. We are fortunate enough to be able to reverse this rule in the present instance."

And he adds—

"These satisfactory results have been attained partly by policy, partly by improved methods of administration; but a careful review of the expenditure of the past six years is necessary in order that the significance of our present position, and the causes at work in establishing it, may be understood by Parliament and the country."

What is that policy, and what are these improved methods of administration? There is not a very full statement made as to what these are; but, on page 5, the statement is volunteered that—

"In 1885, under popular pressure, the Government of that day admitted the insufficiency of its previous arrangements, and, with the assent of all Parties in the State, Lord Northbrook, the then First Lord of the Admiralty, proposed to expend, in addition to the ordinary shipbuilding programme, the sum of £3,100,000 in the building of ships by contract in private yards. An additional sum of £1,600,000 for guns was also proposed to be added to the Ordnance Votes of the Navy, which are included in the annual Estimates of expenditure of the War Office. The Chancellor of the Exchequer estimated that this outlay would be spread over five years, ending March 31, 1890, and form a portion of the expenditure of the country for that period. The work has been executed with such rapidity, that nearly the whole of this expenditure has fallen upon three, instead of five, years."

That seems to explain pretty much the cause of the decrease of the Estimates this year. It has been provided for by a former Government, and yet the present Government take credit for the reduction of £793,000. It must be remembered, however, that by mixing up Army and Navy Estimates we have the one nearly balancing the other, or, in other words, we have pretty much the same sums to be voted this year that we voted for the Army and Navy last year. I do not think this is a satisfactory state of things to the taxpayer. It is monstrous that we should be called upon to vote these enormous Estimates for the Army and Navy. So much for the Admiralty taking credit for a condition of things which they tell us they have improved. I do not think they have effected the improvement they desire to show. We are told what they are going to do in the way of laying down new ships, and I should like to know whether the First Lord of the Admiralty intends to build these new ships by contract or in the Royal Dockyards? I believe that work can be done by contract cheaper and better than it is done in the Royal Dockyards. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] I say yes. I am perfectly satisfied that if the First Lord of the Admiralty were to state the result of his experience candidly to-night, he would say that the value which the country has got from contract work has been infinitely better than their work in the Royal Dockyards. I am sure it would be satisfactory to the country to know that we are going to build some of these 13 ships by contract rather than in the Royal Dockyards. It seems to me that this Statement is not at all satisfactory with regard to what it tells us in regard to the value of the Fleet we have. An Estimate is given us here of the value of the Fleet, and of the estimated annual expenditure necessary for replacement. I confess I have looked into this Estimate; but I am totally at a loss to understand how the depreciation has been calculated. I should be obliged if the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty, or some other Member of the Government, will explain the figures which are given on page 14. The First Lord of the Admiralty makes out an Estimate for the depreciation and replacement of the Navy. For the first class of ships, or for armour-protected and partially-protected iron or steel vessels, he takes 22 years from date of completion, and 4 per cent. It seems to me that 22 years at 4 per cent give only 88 per cent. Then second, or of corvettes, sloops, torpedo-cruisers, gun vessels, gunboats, troopships, and other vessels, he takes 15 years, at 6 per cent, which is 90 per cent. Then, for torpedo-boats, steam launches, &c., he estimates 11 years at 9 per cent—namely, 99 per cent. For the fourth class—small vessels, tugs, and yard-craft—he estimates 18 years and 5 per cent, which gives 90 per cent; and, for the fifth class of vessels, he takes 22 years at 4 per cent—namely, 88 per cent in the whole. I shall be glad if the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty will explain these figures a little more closely, and show how vessels will be replaced at such a depreciation as that now given. Then, with regard to Dockyard administration, which I cannot help thinking is in a most unsatisfactory condition, I take the Statement simply as it stands. He says—

> "In the meantime, I have given directions that no vacancies in the Admiralty and Dockyard clerical staffs are to be filled, as there is reason to believe both are redundant."

Why, everyone has been saying that such has been the case for years, and now here we have got a confession of it. I trust a practical effect will be given by the reduction of the redundant members of these staffs, and that the taxpayers of the country will not be called upon to pay for a staff that is not necessary. The taxpayers of the country are at present very heavily taxed. The income of the country is not what it was, and there are a great many hard-working men in this country who find it difficult enough to maintain themselves and families. Now, Sir, there is just one other point I wish to direct attention to, and that is the transference of the supply of naval armaments from the Army to the Navy itself. I do not think that that is a matter which should be so difficult as is indicated in this Memorandum. The noble Lord says—"To place one Government Department towards another in the relation of purchaser and manufacturer is no easy matter." I can see no difficulty in the matter at all. It is a matter of ordinary common-sense business, and I cannot understand why it should not be arranged without the slightest difficulty. At present we have these monstrous Estimates of £31,000,000 sterling for the Army and Navy mixed up in a way that no intelligent man can ascertain how the money is spent. Now, I quite endorse the view of right hon. Gentlemen on the Government Bench in regard to the utilization of the auxiliary resources of the country. I think that is one of the best things this Government has brought before us. The swift steamers which are being built for the Merchant Service of the country will prove a valuable auxiliary, and I do not sympathize with the criticisms passed from this side of the House against the proposal of the Government in this respect. After the experience of the *Alabama* in connection with the American War, the utilization of the auxiliary resources of the country is a wise step in the right direction; and I believe it will prove a most economical step. Only one other remark in conclusion. I congratulate the Government upon their proposal to appoint a Committee for the examination of the Army and Navy Estimates. I ventured to raise this question of sending the Army and Navy Estimates to a Committee for investigation three days after I entered Parliament, rather more than a year ago. I did not expect that the question would have borne fruit so soon; but I am glad to think that the Government have taken up the idea, and that we are to have such a Committee as I suggested. I believe we shall have some light thrown upon the expenditure by the Committee upon the Army and Navy, and that we shall be able to examine the Estimates with some idea of how the enormous sums of money are really spent, and that we shall be able, by-and-bye, to cut down the Estimates, and really to get value for our money, which I do not believe we at present get. I trust the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty will be able to see his way to give us the explanations I have asked at his hands.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Committee will remember that on the last occasion we discussed these Estimates an understnding was arrived at that, on this Vote, a general discussion should be taken. There is a Vote on Account to be taken to-night, and as we have spent now some six hours in this discussion I think the Committee will allow the Vote to be taken. I understand there are a certain number of Gentlemen who wish to raise a discussion on the Vote on Account; and, therefore, it is quite clear that the longer the discussion on this Vote occupies, the longer the consideration of the Vote on Account will be delayed.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty will remember that on the last occasion he acceded to my request that I should have some opportunity of bringing certain matters relating to the Navy before the Committee. We have been promised an evening to discuss general matters upon this Vote. Up to this the remarks have been entirely general, and it seems extremely hard that several of us—who have got matters of importance to bring before the Committee—should now be asked to give up the right which we have been accorded by the Government. If I and others waive the right to bring matters relating to the Navy forward this evening, will the noble Lord undertake that we shall have an opportunity of doing so on some future and near occasion?

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): I would make the same appeal to the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton). I have a good deal to say on various matters; but, after what has fallen from the First Lord of the Treasury and the First Lord of the Admiralty, I am too loyal a supporter of the Government to obtrude my views on them to-night. But I claim the right to speak on the matters I feel a great interest in on some future occasion. It is a monstrous thing that we should be muzzled—that these important naval matters, which only come under consideration once a year, should be before us without naval men having an opportunity of stating here, on the floor of this House, what our views are. Whilst listening to observations on one side and the other, I have been seriously provoked by some things that have been said, and I wish to have an opportunity to reply.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I should like to know why it is absolutely necessary for us to give a Vote on Account to-night? Right hon. Gentlemen say it is absolutely necessary. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes; but why is it absolutely necessary? I can understand that it may be absolutely necessary to obtain the Vote by the 31st March; but this is the 21st. No doubt it is necessary that the first Votes in the Army and Navy Estimates—the Votes for men and money—should be given before the 31st March, so that they may be included in the Appropriation Bill that will be brought in and passed by the end of the financial year; but I ask for information as to whether it is really necessary, and, if so, why, that the Vote on Account for 1887-8 should be included in that Bill? Why it cannot be included in another Bill, brought in at some later period of the Session, I cannot understand; and I therefore hope someone in authority will rise and endeavour to remove our doubts upon this matter.

MR. JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street): I desire to add any pressure it may be in my power to exercise on the Government to that of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen who have spoken on this side of the House. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Devon a short time ago, stated that the whole of this discussion had taken place between naval Gentlemen and Gentlemen interested in shipbuilding. As I represent a constituency which does not participate in any shipbuilding interest, and as I am not a naval man, I think I have a right to say a word or two on the subject of these Estimates, and have a right to ask that an opportunity shall be afforded me to do so.

**Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR** (Donegal, E.): The noble Lord tells us that the Committee is anxious to proceed with the Civil Service Estimates. ["No, no!"] Well, that is what I am told. It is said that that is the reason why we are to vote this money for the Navy without adequate discussion. There are a great many Members of the Committee who are anxious to discuss the Navy Estimates. I, myself, ventured a few evenings ago, when the Speaker was in the Chair, to make some observations as to the Navy Estimates; but I am afraid I was not able to impress the noble Lord (Lord George Hamilton) with that sense of the importance of the matter which weighed on my mind. At any rate, he did not take notice of my observations. Well, I am anxious to know whether the Committee attach any importance to them? I endorse what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the late Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler), as to the complete and radical difference that there is between this Vote on Account of the Civil Service Estimates, and the Supplementary Estimates for the Army and Navy Services, which must, of course, be included in the Appropriation Account that deals with the present financial year. But the Estimates we are asked to proceed to do not relate to this financial year at all, but to the financial year upon which we have not yet entered. They may be included in a subsequent Appropriation Bill, and in that way all the requirements of the law may be completely met. These representations of the noble Lord as to the absolute necessity of taking a Vote on Account for the Civil Service Estimates is altogether without real foundation. It is a monstrous thing that having submitted to curtailment of debate on going into Committee on the Navy Estimates, on the complete understanding that we should have an exhaustive discussion of the whole Estimates, on the first Vote taken this night the Government should attempt again to curtail debate in order to proceed to another branch of financial business.

**Mr. W. H. SMITH**: The hon. Gentleman is under a misapprehension as to the necessity of taking this Vote on Account to-night. I assure him that it is absolutely necessary, in order to comply with the law, that the Vote on Account of Civil Services Estimates should be taken to-night. ["No, no!"] It must be taken before the commencement of the coming year. It has always been taken with those Votes which are practically Votes on Account for the Army and Navy. The hon. Gentleman is aware that not a single farthing can be issued for the service of the country, unless the money has been provided under a Ways and Means Bill. That Bill will be introduced the moment the Vote is taken, and we have obtained money in Ways and Means for the Army and Navy. No Civil Servants will be able to receive their salaries on 1st April unless they are provided in a Bill, set up as a Ways and Means Bill. I will tell the Committee how this Vote on Account has been taken for the last 7 years. In 1881 it was taken on the 16th March, in 1882 it was taken on the 24th March— [Mr. H. H. Fowler: The 24th? This is only the 21st.] There was some specific reason for the Vote being taken on the 24th March in 1882. I cannot tell precisely what it was. In 1883 the Vote was taken on the 15th March, in 1884 on the 20th March, in 1885 on the 16th, and in 1886 on the 18th. Curiously enough for the last four years—namely, in 1883-4-5 and 6, this Vote has been taken on the same night as the Army Vote. Hon. Gentlemen may receive my assurance that the Vote must be taken and included in a Ways and Means Bill. The days on which the Vote may be taken vary in different years, owing to the manner in which Saturdays and Sundays may intervene and follow after; but I assure the Committee that this is the last day on which we can take the Vote on Account, so as to comply with the law.

**Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER**: I am sorry to dispute the statement of so high an authority on financial business as the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury; but I cannot accept his statement in the face of the exception to the rule he has laid down which he has himself quoted, and which shows that this Vote has been taken on the 24th March. It is impossible to introduce a Bill, pass it through all its stages, and obtain the Royal Assent for it between the 24th and the 31st of March; therefore, there must have been an occasion when the Vote on Account for the Civil Service was not granted before the introduction of the Appropriation Bill passed at the end of the financial year. It is a common thing to take Votes on Account in May. The final appropriation of money for the purposes of the State is made in the Appropriation Act at the end of the Session. I agree that this Vote should be taken before the end of March and of the financial year, and I think it is necessary that there should be a Vote in Ways and Means before the 31st; but I am respectfully doubting that it is unnecessary to do what the right hon. Gentleman proposes, and include this Vote in the Appropriation Bill which the Financial Secretary to the Treasury must bring in at once.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I am sorry to be obliged to differ from the hon. Gentleman who has held the Office of Secretary to the Treasury later than myself; but I am sure he will find, if he inquires into the matter, that no money can be paid for Civil Services, or for the Army or Navy, unless it is included in an Act of Parliament that has received the Royal Assent before the 31st March. In regard to the case of 1882, which I mentioned, and to which the right hon. Gentleman has alluded, I am strongly of opinion that the Vote was put in in Committee, which is an irregular transaction, and one which ought not to be recognized in this House. To be regular, the Committee should take the Votes as a whole; and I am satisfied, from my experience of Treasury arrangements, that it is necessary that this Vote should now be taken.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.)*: I should like to point out that if it is as the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury says, the difficulty which has arisen is solely owing to his own act. His contention is, that one Vote must be taken for the Army, one for the Navy, and one for the Civil Services, in time to pass the Appropriation Bill. Well, he had his Votes for the Army and Navy some time ago, and what was there, I should like to know, to prevent him from putting down the Civil Service Estimates at the beginning of the evening? It was not necessary to take the third Navy Vote to-day; at any rate, if we have been led into any difficulty, it is the fault of the First Lord of the Treasury, or the Secretary to the Treasury, for not having put down the Vote on Account for Civil Services before the Navy Estimates. Having put down the Votes wrong, they now come to us, at half-past 11 o'clock at night, and seek to prevent us from discussing these Estimates. We, on these Benches, should like to discuss the Civil Service Vote proposed for our consideration, for at least five or six hours; but we are told that it must be taken at 12 or 1 o'clock in the morning. I think the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, having acted as he has done, is bound to tell us, going over the period from now to the 31st March, day by day, how it is impossible for him to allow us an opportunity to discuss these Estimates. He ought to tell us how many days are required for the passing of the Appropriation Bill. I think it is eight—and the subject is one with which most of us are pretty familiar, seeing that the question of the days required for the passing of the Bill is very much mixed up with the question of our holidays. If it takes eight days, we still have two days more for these discussions; but, probably, it does not take as much as eight days, so that there may be even more than two days for the consideration of the Estimates. Under any circumstances, it is always possible for us to suspend the Standing Orders and get a Bill through in a day. In the House of Lords they very frequently do that, and why should not we follow that course? I certainly think we should not give up the discussion of these Estimates. There are two burning questions I wish to raise on the Navy Estimates; but in addition to that I desire to talk on the Civil Service Estimates, in regard to which there are a whole crowd of Notices put down. I think we ought to have a statement from the Government showing that it is impossible to put down Supply for to-morrow. I believe he would find it easy to do that. The House would, no doubt, allow him to withdraw the Notice he has given for to-morrow, so as to enable him to take Supply. He would even then have five or six days before him for the Appropriation Bill. Seeing that the right hon. Gentleman had such a simple course open to him as to have put the Civil Service Vote down first on the Paper to-day, but has not availed himself of it, I think the Committee would be entitled to refuse to yield to him. He seems to be wrong all round, and not to be sufficiently alive to the fact that there are half-a-dozen ways out of the difficulty.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I quite agree with the First Lord of the Treasury that this Civil Service Vote should be included in the Ways and Means Act before the end of the financial year, otherwise the Civil servants cannot be paid; but, on the other hand, I am not inclined to accept his statement that the Vote cannot be obtained in Committee on the Bill. It has been done—I am told that it has been frequently done, and that there is nothing irregular about it. It may not be customary; but that has nothing to do with the question of regularity. It was done in 1882, as the right hon. Gentleman himself states, and that being the case, why should not it be done now?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: In reference to the observations of the hon. and gallant Member opposite (Colonel Nolan), I would remind him and the Committee that I stated distinctly when in Committee last Thursday, that it was proposed to take a Navy Vote and a vote on account for the Civil Service to-night. I said that, in order to meet the views of hon. Gentlemen who appealed to me for an opportunity for discussion on the general question of the Navy Estimates. There was no breach of understanding, therefore——

Colonel NOLAN: I never said there was a breach of understanding.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) says that this Vote on Account has been put in in Committee on the Ways and Means Bill, and no doubt that is true; but it is an irregular transaction. It is an irregular course, and one which I, for one, do not recommend the Committee to take. The custom is that the Vote shall appear in the Bill in the form in which it has gone through its several stages, and the Rule of this House is not to suspend the Standing Orders in respect of the passage of Money Bills. I never, during my 19 years' experience, remember two stages of a Money Bill being taken on the same night in this House, and I certainly should not be the one to depart from that Rule, which I consider a sound one in financial matters. I hope the Committee will allow the Vote immediately before us to be withdrawn, and put off to a future day; or to be disposed of at once, so as to allow the Vote of Credit to be discussed.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): I am afraid that we are introducing a new form of clôture. Surely it is not contended that in voting practically the main principles of this huge sum for the naval services of the country, a single night's debate ought to satisfy the Representatives of the people. I cannot imagine that the First Lord of the Treasury can be serious in putting forward any such contention. What has happened to-night? The Committee has been engaged in listening to experts upon the Navy, the discussion having been varied by mutual complimentary bandying between the occupants of the Front Opposition Bench and the Treasury Bench. But hardly any serious discussion and inquiry as to whether this huge sum is necessary for the defence of the Empire has been entered upon by any single Member, nor has the Government ever attempted to show its necessity. Surely, it is not wrong to remind hon. Gentlemen opposite that certain professions were made in their name by the noble Lord who is now absent (Lord Randolph Churchill), and who, whether present or absent, counts for a great deal. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] If we are not allowed to proceed with this conversation, all I can say is that I never witnessed such an exhibition in the House of Commons before, as that upon a general question of policy in regard to these great spending Departments, it is not allowed a single Member to occupy five minutes of the time of the Committee. With regard to the subject before us, I would not undertake to say that the right hon. Gentleman would be likely to get his Vote for the Civil Services, even supposing the debate on the Navy Estimates were to be adjourned, at this time of night. One of the first duties of Members of Parliament is to deliberate on these finances, and to suggest to the Government the possibility of effecting the reductions in certain directions, and I see no reason why the independent Representatives of the taxpayers of the country should yield to the demand of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman cut the ground from under his feet by the list he read. He told us that the Vote on Account was taken on one occasion on the 24th March; and in order to have imported any value at all to the case he was attempting to make out, he should have assured us that as much time has been given to the discussion of the Votes in Supply this Session as is usually given in other years up to this date.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: More time.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH: All I can say is, that I have sat in this House and listened night after night to discussion on various branches of the Estimates; but there has been no opportunity afforded us of discussing these matters. But whether that is so or not, both Parties have been charged by the country to secure economy in these great spending Departments. Now, I want to ask has there been economy in the Army and Navy? We have an undertaking given to us that next year some economy will be brought about. It is said that there can be no economy effected this year, or at any rate no substantial economy. But as to that, it might be remarked that right hon. Gentlemen opposite probably do not feel any great responsibility in regard to next year's Estimates. Therefore the postponement of any plan of economy is all in their favour. If the noble and gallant Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) continues to possess influence in the Government, we are not likely to have much economy in connection with naval matters for years to come. I have not forgotten the impression he made from this side of the House, when he condemned half the Navy as either obsolete or rotten, and wanted £5,000,000 spent on it one year, and £6,000,000 the year following, with another sum in reserve as large as the first two put together. All I can say is, that hon. Members will be deluded if they reckon upon economy being initiated by the Government now in Office, or by any Government that is likely to succeed them. If economy is brought about it will be through the exertions of independent Members sitting on both sides of the House. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members may laugh; but I venture to say that the denunciations of the extravagance of the late Government, which came from private Members in this House, was not all idle talk. I should be glad if the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Admiral Field) succeeds in obtaining the opportunity he desires. If he does, I have no doubt he will pour a very powerful broadside into his noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty. I consider that this Committee is bound to make a stand, and to refuse to allow this hustling and shuffling of the Estimates through the House. I, for one, see no reason why we should forego the opportunity of discussing the Estimates, seeing that the Government have taken nearly the whole of the time this Session for other Business. As I have suggested, one of the first duties which belong to us is to criticize, with all necessary minuteness, the items of the Votes and the general policy that the Government have embarked upon. A question has been asked as to what is the general policy of the Government in regard to the magnitude of our Navy, and the work it has to do. Well, I want an answer to that question. I think it a very crucial one. It is impossible for us to say whether the amount asked for is excessive, or not, unless we have some explanatory statement as to policy beyond that given in the Statement issued by the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty. Therefore I hope I shall receive some support in insisting that this question shall remain open in order that we may discuss general policy. It was an undertaking given by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury that we should discuss general policy upon this Vote. It must be clear to the Committee that such discussion has not taken place, and that the clôture which the right hon. Gentleman now proposes to apply, will be in the highest degree unsatisfactory.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Do I understand that hon. Members opposite desire this Naval Vote to be withdrawn?

An hon. Member: On one condition.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: What condition? If it is the wish of the Committee to discuss this Vote further on another occasion, I should be perfectly willing to withdraw it. It seems to me to be the wish of the Committee to have some further discussion. [Hon. Members: We do wish it.] Then I would ask the leave of the Committee to withdraw the Vote.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I rise to ask a question. I wish to know distinctly, before this Vote is withdrawn, at what date it is proposed that we should renew the discussion upon it? What date will be fixed for it? Shall we have a fair opportunity of resuming the debate? I also want to know whether, in the event of our taking the Vote on Account for the Civil Service to-night, we shall have an opportunity of making Motions on going into Committee; or what will be the course pursued?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Yes; there will be an opportunity for making Motions.

Mr. CONYBEARE: There are several Resolutions of different kinds to be discussed, involving an enormous amount of detail in connection with the Civil Service Vote; and I should like to know what time to-morrow morning the Government expect that we should be able to dispose of the matter? It would be impossible for us to permit the Vote to pass without discussion. I, for one, am not at all disposed to allow such a Vote to be rushed through in the manner contemplated by the Government. I do not charge the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury with any breach of understanding in having put down this Civil Service Vote on Account. Certainly not; but what I do charge him with is this—that after promising us an adequate opportunity of discussing these Navy Estimates, he practically deprives us of that opportunity by endeavouring to treat us as he is proposing to do.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I did not understand my hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Nolan) to charge the First Lord of the Treasury with a deliberate breach of understanding. What my hon. and gallant Friend complains of is this—that the right hon. Gentleman has put down an important Civil Service Vote behind another Vote, which must be discussed in order to choke off discussion upon that Civil Service Vote. That is what we object to. We, who take an interest in the Civil Service Vote, have sat here all night in order to have an opportunity of discussing it. If the noble Lord had withdrawn the Naval Vote at 7, 8, or 9 o'clock this evening, we should have been willing to go on with the discussion of the Civil Service Vote. But what is it we are asked to do? Why, here is a Vote on Account for the Civil Service of £3,624,100; and I must say that during my short experience in this House I never recollect a single instance on which a discussion of a Vote of this kind did not consume at least one whole night. We are asked now to vote this enormous sum of over £3,500,000 for the Civil Services, covering a vast number of subjects of vital interest. By doing so we shall be placing the Government in a position above criticism—we shall be removing them from criticism for a period of, perhaps, three months—that is to say, until the end of May or the beginning of June. Personally, I am altogether opposed to an important Civil Service Vote being brought on at this time of night (12 o'clock). If the First Lord of the Treasury considered it absolutely necessary to take this Vote to-night, he should have put it down on the Paper first. He could have taken to-morrow night, or any night during the week, for the discussion of the Vote. What I would suggest is this—that if the Government are not disposed to postpone the Resolutions of which they have given Notice for to-morrow, in order to take these Votes, they should postpone the Votes until the 24th March—Thursday next—when we shall all be prepared to discuss them.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): My right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) has given Notice of the course he intends to pursue, and when he did so there was no protest from any quarter of the House. [*Cries of* "When?"] On Friday last. No hon. Member will lose his right by the course now proposed. An hon. Member has said that he never remembered such a course having been taken before; but the fact is that last year the Vote on Account was taken on the same evening as the first Navy Vote; in 1885 it was taken after the first Navy Vote; and the same thing was done in 1884 and in 1883. Therefore, Her Majesty's Government are strictly following the course pursued by right hon. Gentlemen opposite when they had the occupancy of the Treasury Bench. I hope that the Committee will now consent to the withdrawal of this Vote and reserve it for future discussion.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON (Poplar): As far as my recollection serves, it was not specifically stated on behalf of the Government that it was absolutely necessary to sit on the 1st of April; and I doubt very much whether on any of the occasions referred to, the Government tried to take the Vote after half-past 12 o'clock. It does, therefore, seem hard on hon. Members who have an interest in Civil Service questions, that they should be called on to discuss them at this hour of the morning.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): It is my impression, as the result of a somewhat long experience, that no Appropriation Bill has taken more than eight days, and the Government ought, before they press the Business upon the Committee in this way, to be able to show the opposite. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury is so anxious about the Money Bills that he will not forego the slightest matter of form; but the difficulty would be got over if he would give us Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday for the discussion of the Civil Service Estimates.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I certainly think that two stages of a Money Bill ought not to be taken on the same day. What I would suggest to the Committee is that we should either allow the Government to withdraw this Vote and proceed to the Vote on Account of the Civil Service Estimates, or that they should agree to take the Civil Service Estimates Vote on Thursday next. I think it would be best to allow the Vote to be withdrawn. The question is whether we should go on and take this Navy Vote. I certainly understood that the Civil Service Vote was to be taken this evening. [*Cries of* "No!"] Hon. Members say "No;" but I am stating facts. An arrangement was made that this course should be adopted; and I myself certainly understood that the whole of this evening would be given up to the Vote on Account of the Civil Service Estimates.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): I am in the recollection of those who were present at the time when I state that after 2 o'clock last Friday morning the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) wanted to take the Vote on Account of the Civil Service Estimates; but he stated that he would postpone it if we would give him the two Navy Votes he then wanted without further discussion. The result was that he got those Votes; and now the Government are asking us to give them the Civil Service Vote practically without discussion. I think that the best thing we could do would be to go on with the present Vote, and ask the Government to take another night for the Vote on Account of the Civil Service Estimates, because there are some questions connected with the Civil Service Estimates which the Scotch Members are very anxious to discuss, but which they are unable to go into, because the Lords of the Treasury are blocking their Bills; and as they cannot have the questions to which those measures relate brought fairly before the House, they are obliged to take the best means they can of raising their grievances.

MR. R. W. DUFF (Banffshire): I understood it to be said by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) that private Members would not suffer inconvenience by the course proposed with regard to the taking of the Civil Service Estimates; but I do not quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman. If we do not take up the Civil Service Estimates before Easter, it is quite certain they will be put down immediately after the Easter holidays, probably on the first day, and the Government having taken up the whole of the time of the House up to the present moment—such a course would be very hard on hon. Members who have important questions to raise on the Estimates, and have had no other opportunity of bringing them forward. I think that the least the House can ask is some assurance from the Government that we shall not have the Civil Service Estimates taken the first day after Easter.

DR. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): Nothing but absolute necessity could justify the Government taking such a scandalous step as asking the House to take up a Vote of £3,500,000 at a quarter past 12 o'clock. But I would point out that there is another course open to the Government, which would be fraught with very little inconvenience, and that is to give us a Saturday Sitting. The meeting would be a merely formal one, and the only inconvenience it would involve would be to a mere quorum of the Houses. Under these circumstances, when the Government is in a position to take this course in order to obtain the object it has in view, without any irregularity, there can be no possible excuse for their going on with the Vote they propose to take at this hour in the morning.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire): I must say that I object to a Vote on Account of the Civil Service Estimates being taken without discussion, because there will not be another opportunity for discussing the Education Code before it will have lain on the Table during the 40 days necessary to give it validity.

Mr. GOSCHEN: The Government are able to give the assurance that the Civil Service Estimates shall not be put down for the first night after Easter. Supposing there were an open day for discussing the Vote on Account, nothing could be more unsatisfactory than to use it for discussing different Votes, the debating of which is properly taken in Committee upon the ordinary Estimates. Already more subjects have been named than could be discussed on the Vote on Account; and it is evident that if a debate were to be opened on one of them the others would have little chance of being reached the same night. I trust that after this explanation the Vote on Account may be allowed to be taken without discussion.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): The Government speak of the necessity of passing this Vote to-night, although I confess I do not see the necessity myself. They put down a Vote for the Navy which is not necessary, and they allow a most irregular discussion to take place which they must be aware cannot be brought to any practical issue. And this is precisely what the Government has been doing all along the line. They are particularly tenacious about points of precedent when that suits their purpose; but when it suits them to go the other way they are equally ready to dispense with anything like regularity. It is all very well to talk about the Appropriation Bill requiring eight days; but we know how the Bill may be expedited in "another place," where they have not the same regard for rule that we have. For all that is necessary, it would be just as well if the Vote they are asking for were to be taken on Thursday.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): No answer has been given to the statement that the 24th of March has been held to be early enough in former years for taking the Vote on Account. Two methods have been pointed out by which the Vote on Account can be taken without being taken to-night, and it is impossible for the Irish Members to assent to the Civil Service Votes being taken at this hour. We are not responsible for the prolongation of the debate; and although the Government may think the time to which they wish to limit us sufficient for the discussion of the Vote on Account, we should very much prefer to begin the discussion at half-past 5 in the evening rather than it should be brought forward in the way proposed and not discussed at all. We must judge every occasion by itself and every Government by itself, and I may say that I have never known any Government like the present. True, our Governments are not easy to understand and are impossible to define; but I have never known the relations between the Government of this country and the people of Ireland to be such as they are at this moment. We are told that we are not prevented from raising questions on the regular Services of the year; but when will they come on? There are questions of great magnitude in connection with the administration of Ireland which we desire to discuss, and in saying this I am arguing against this Vote being taken in the middle of the night. There are Irish questions of great urgency which will not brook delay, and it is impossible for us in the performance of our public duty to assent to their indefinite postponement. I, for one, should prefer to see the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury rise in order to give us his interpretation of his own remarks, rather than have the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer as his interpreter. It was at a quarter to 11 that the First Lord of the Treasury said that would be a reasonable time to bring on the Vote on Account, and he appealed to his Friends to assist him in obtaining it; and it is now nearly half-past 12. The debate on the Navy Estimates was kept up by the irrepressible Admirals on the other side of the House, and was not prolonged by us. The sailors in this House do not evidence the taciturnity they display elsewhere, and if, but for them, it was reasonable to bring on the Vote on Account at half-past 11, it is not reasonable to bring it on at half-past 12. It is, in fact, an insult to our common sense to ask us to agree to the withdrawal of the Navy Vote at half-past 12, in order that another Vote of an important character requiring much discussion may be pushed down our throats. It will certainly be my duty, if the Vote on Account is pressed forward to-night, to raise an important question relating to social order in Belfast. The Government have had the Report on the Belfast riots before them for two months, and during those two months repeated inquiries have failed to secure a scintilla of information as to the policy they mean to pursue with regard to it. I represent a division of that town in which my constituents have had their houses broken into, their property destroyed, and their lives taken; and although this has been the case the Government have so dawdled during the last two months over the questions affecting that place that disturbances have broken out four times, while the Report lay in some pigeon-hole in Dublin Castle; and I beg to inform the Committee, in the discharge of my public duty, that if we go to the Vote on Account at this hour, I shall be bound to raise the Belfast question on the Report of the Royal Commission with a fulness that will in all probability keep the Committee till daylight.

THE CHAIRMAN: Is it your pleasure the Motion be withdrawn?

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Objection being made—

THE CHAIRMAN: I put the Question, and heard no answer; but if hon. Members say so, of course I accept the statement.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Will the Government now tell us what they propose to do with the Sitting?

MR. W. H. SMITH: We are desirous of withdrawing the Vote; but if the Committee refuses to allow us to do that, we must take a Division upon it.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): I really have something to say on this Vote, and my mission is to make myself heard in the House. I did not intend to make a speech now, because I do not think I could do so with advantage to the constituency that sends me here; nor do I think the Committee would profit by it; nor do I think the Government will gain anything by an attempt to muzzle discussion. It strikes me there are many important matters in connection with this Naval Vote we have before us. You, Mr. Courtney, will have it within your recollection that I am within the circumscribed limits of Order. I do not want to make any Motion. I do not want to attempt, for a moment, to put myself into any obstructive position. I do not wish to go anything beyond my legitimate privilege. What I want to say is this. It appeared to me that, on Vote 2 of the Naval Estimates—if hon. Gentlemen opposite will permit, I would put my intention as briefly as may be——

THE CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to address himself to the Vote.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: What I intended to do on this Vote 2—which is reached, but not yet passed—what I intended I will now only indicate by saying that the question I was going to raise was the use of gunboats at evictions. Late as the hour is, we are not at all "funking" a debate on this question; we do not shirk the opportunity of raising it now. We will raise it with great deliberation; but I want to know what is to be done—whether we must go into it now, or whether the Government will allow us another opportunity of raising the question of the presence of gunboats at evictions? It is hard to put one's views before the Committee, when all around there are so many—it would be an expression un-Parliamentary to say "larking" at one—while so many Members have something to say at the same time. What I want to say is this. If I am only to have this opportunity of raising the question, I am fully prepared; if the Government think it inconvenient to proceed with it to-night, I am equally prepared to accept that decision.

MR. LANE (Cork Co., E.): For something like eight hours I have been waiting to discuss a matter of great importance to my constituents. I desisted from doing so on a former occasion in deference to the wish of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), when the first Vote was taken, on the distinct understanding that I should have an opportunity upon the second Vote. The hon. Member for South-East Cork (Mr. Hooper) and myself did not bring forward the Haulbowline Dockyard question while hon. and gallant Gentlemen connected with the Navy were engaged in a consecutive discussion, as we did not feel warranted in interrupting for the purpose of bringing on a peculiarly Irish question. This was the case on Thursday; and we thought that hon. and gallant Gentlemen, having occupied some eight hours that evening with their discussion, it would have finished to-night, in reasonable time, enabling us to bring on the subject in which we are interested. Since I agreed to postpone the subject, the face of affairs has been changed. The Government have given a Notice to take up the whole time of the House with matters they consider urgent, and so we have to regard matters in a different light to that in which they appeared in the last hour of Thursday's Sitting, and it becomes a matter of urgency with us to try to press upon the noble Lord and his Colleagues in the Admiralty the question which we formerly deferred at their request. It has become more incumbent upon me individually to bring it forward to-night than upon anyone else, because, though the Island of Haulbowline on which the Dockyard is situated, is geographically within the district represented by my hon. Friend the Member for South East Cork, it is practically within mine, though it may seem a paradox to say so, because nearly all those who work in that Dockyard live in my constituency at Queenstown. I have since Thursday had forwarded to me a Resolution of the Queenstown Town Commissioners asking me to bring this question under the notice of the House at the earliest opportunity, and I have also had a Memorial from those unfortunate men who are under notice of dismissal from the works at Haulbowline. Though the deputation which waited upon the noble Lord and his Colleagues when they visited Queenstown last November appealed for a continuation of the works on the ground that it would be an act of charity, we do not make any such appeal from our places here. It is only right that we should acknowledge the courtesy with which the noble Lord received the deputation, and I will go so far as to say he almost came up to the expectations of those who approached him from that particular point of view, that he would not carry out the sentence of dismissal upon the 400 labourers at Haulbowline Dockyard. The noble Lord very kindly gave an undertaking that they should not then be discharged, but should be kept on until the early summer. On the part of these men I thank the noble Lord for his consideration. But I wish now to place the matter before the heads of the Admiralty in a different light. On Thursday, when the noble Lord had it brought under his notice, he said these works were completed, or nearly so, therefore there was no hardship about to be inflicted on the artizans and labourers about to be discharged. It is my duty to-night to traverse that statement of the noble Lord. I am not at all surprised that he should be so mistaken, because the origin of these Docks is now so far removed into the remote antiquity of officialism that it is absolutely impossible that the noble Lord should have any conception of the original plans or ideas that prompted the Admiralty first to undertake these works. The idea at that time was not to establish relief works in Cork Harbour for the employment of superfluous labourers—that seems to be the idea which has got into the minds of members of the Admiralty Board in recent years —and it is on that assumption they have based all their replies on this question when Irish Members have had their annual opportunity of bringing it forward. They have said as the noble Lord said on Thursday, that the Government have done all they could to provide employment up to a certain point, and that point reached they could do no more. When the noble Lord states that the plans as originally contemplated in connection with the Dockyard are completed he seems altogether to ignore the fact that in the original plans—of which I have a copy here which I shall be happy to place at his service—there is specified a second dry dock of much larger dimensions than that now constructed, and until this second dock is constructed the work cannot be said to be carried out. If all the money that has been spent up to the present time, an enormous sum—£500,000or £600,000, I do not know the exact figures—if all this is not to be wasted, sunk in Haulbowline Island, it is absolutely necessary for naval purposes that the original plans should be carried out and this second dock constructed. I say this because the undertaking was commenced with a view to establishing an efficient, thoroughly serviceable Dockyard where the largest ships of Her Majesty's Fleet could not only be repaired but even constructed. The present dock is useless, not from any fault of the engineers who made the original plans, but because orders had to be given to have the dock shortened by 70 or 80 feet from the original plan. Since the original plans and specifications were drawn up, as I need not say to so many hon. and gallant Gentlemen, who have served in the Navy, the length of Her Majesty's ships has very much increased. Even had the dock been constructed upon the original plan it would now be too short for the bulk of the ships in the Navy. If we unfortunately drifted into war, and if three or four ships became disabled off the Irish Coast, not one of them could dock for repairs at Haulbowline. Even if one vessel could go into dock, all the other ships would have to lie in Queenstown Harbour for refuge, and would be practically blockaded until they could be towed to Devonport or some other Dockyard; their services being meanwhile lost to the country, which services would largely consist in the protection of our commerce. If you had your docks completed, with ample accommodation, machinery and appliances, vessels slightly damaged in their complicated machinery by accidents of warfare could be quickly repaired. In time of war, a large part of the duty of our Fleet would be the protection of our commerce on the ocean, and it is no wild supposition to indicate Haulbowline as the only possible and safe place for repairs for those ships. In that Statement upon which the noble Lord has been so much complimented it is stated that Her Majesty has 260 ships in commission. A very large proportion of these would be engaged in duty for the protection of the transatlantic commerce, and where could more convenient accommodation be found for such than in Cork Harbour? The noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) said on Thursday that naval warfare would in future be conducted on a system of electricity, an expression indicating, I presume, the celerity of the operations. All the more important then was it to have accommodation for repairs to ships ready to hand. I, as representing this particular constituency, and my colleagues representing neighbouring constituencies, stand up here to say we do not think the question of Haulbowline Dock should any longer be discussed on the very narrow basis of giving employment to a few hundred labourers. It should be approached in a broader spirit, and the Admiralty should make up their minds to carry out the original intention and establish in Cork Harbour a thoroughly efficient Dockyard for the purpose of repairing, if not of constructing, Her Majesty's ships of war. The original Estimate for the work was £550,000, and to that was subsequently added £18,000. I believe the whole amount of the original estimate has been exhausted during the 22 years the works have been going on —exhausted, to a very large extent, by a system of bungling and muddling. I do not say the present Board of Admiralty are responsible for the bungling and muddling of the past. I think the noble Lord has been deservedly complimented on the economies he purposes to effect in several Departments. The bungling, however, has taken place in connection with these Dockyard works; the money has been spent, and the plans are not half executed; and, that money being gone, we are told we ought to rest satisfied with the incomplete establishment which is the result, and that it is absolutely impossible for the Admiralty to ask for any further sum for these works. But we do not hear any statement of that kind in connection with an English Dockyard. If it is necessary to extend them, or, if the works turn out more costly than was anticipated, the Government come forward with further votes, and they are granted without hesitation. The noble Lord spoke a short time ago of a saving on the Navy Estimates of £800,000. Now, I do not think it unreasonable to ask that a small proportion of this saving might fall to our share. We have been getting something like £30,000 a-year on account of these works, and that is reduced this year to £3,000, and £7,000 for machinery. Only £10,000, out of an expenditure of £12,476,000, while Ireland, at the lowest computation, contributes £1,000,000 annually. I do not for a moment say, that because we in Ireland contribute £1,000,000 a-year as our quota of £12,000,000 for the Navy, are, therefore, entitled to ask that a considerable portion of that amount should be spent in Ireland; we simply ask that the necessary sum should be expended on this solitary site in Ireland which is specially suitable for, and actually necessary as an Imperial Dockyard. A very small sum will suffice to carry out the original plan. Of course, I do not presume to speak with professional knowledge; but, so far as I have been able to gather, £70,000 or £80,000 would make the establishment thoroughly effective, and a valuable addition to our naval strength. The noble and gallant Lord the Member for Marylebone on a previous evening told us, in connection with the Navy Department, that one of the most important considerations to be attended to was that of being well prepared beforehand; and, that, in consequence of this foresight, a very large saving in the expenditure required in the Navy Department would be accomplished. I, therefore, respectfully submit to the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty the reasonableness of the expenditure which we ask for this Navy Dockyard in Haulbowline. For many reasons, we think that an immediate alteration should be made in the programme of the First Lord of the Admiralty—on the score of economy, utility, and the fact of the proportionate contribution of Ireland to the Imperial Navy Estimates. I see by the Estimates which have been placed before us that, in the Dockyards at home—meaning by that the English Dockyards—there is a total number of 19,522 artizans and labourers employed, at a cost of £1,483,291; and in Her Majesty's Dockyards abroad—which I presume are merely a provision for the contingencies of accidents and breakings-down — there are employed 2,587 salaried officials and members of the artizan and labouring classes, who are to be paid in this year £278,737. Altogether, in the home and foreign Dockyards, the total number employed is 22,109 individuals, at a cost of £1,662,028. How many artizans or mechanics have we got in Ireland receiving anything whatsoever from Her Majesty's Government in the way of naval employment? In this Haulbowline Dockyard, in connection with the technical repairs, some 12 or 13 artizans are employed; and, in addition, about 300 or 400 ordinary labourers, working for about 12*s.* or 14*s.* a-week. It is now proposed by the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty, from the 1st of June in this year, to dismiss these 400 hands who are receiving these miserable wages as unskilled labourers at Haulbowline Yard; and this in face of the fact that the labour is paid for out of Imperial Votes, to which Ireland contributes her proportionate share. I ask, are we to be told by any Supporter of the Government, or any Minister of the Crown, this is dealing out even-handed justice to Ireland? I say that hon. Gentlemen opposite, who are so constantly twitting us that we in Ireland are unjustifiably discontented, and charging us with being disloyal, should recognize that, in this very Navy Vote, we have sufficient ground for being discontented, and I would almost say for being disloyal. At this moment we are asked to Vote this large sum of money to the Government for the employment of over 22,000 hands in connection with the Naval Service; and, side by side with this request, we are informed that from June 1st forward there is to be no other consideration shown to Ireland by the Lords of the Admiralty, except the consideration implied by the monthly dismissal of 80 of these labourers at Haulbowline. I appeal to the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty, if the policy of his Party is, that people living in different parts of this kingdom should all be treated alike and none of them receive exceptional favours, as compared with others, that in this matter of Naval Expenditure he should give the Irish people their just share. I do not think that we are seeking any preference; on the contrary, we find our £1,000,000 absorbed for the purpose of being expended in English naval Dockyards, and we get none of it, notwithstanding the fact that we have been paying our Imperial levy for 86 years. The Party to which I belong think it their duty to their constituencies to urge on the Government to take a wider view of this question of the Haulbowline Dockyard than would seem to be manifest in the policy of merely carrying on the works for a few weeks and more then dismissing the men. The Government should take the original plan upon which this work was undertaken, and inquire into the case carefully, and not in a manner which sanctions the spending of £500,000, which just might as well have been thrown into the sea. The establishment of a Dockyard in Ireland—a Dockyard which would not be too short for Her Majesty's ships—would be recognizing the proportionate share of Ireland in the expenditure for Navy Estimates, and at the same time furnishing our shipwrights and ship-carpenters, who are now literally starving, with some amount of employment. If this were done, Her Majesty's Navy, I believe, would be increased very largely in efficiency, and in time of war immense assistance and immeasurable advantage would be rendered to disabled ships of war which, in the hour of danger, could find a port of refuge and facilities for repair at the very threshold of the ocean.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I rise, Sir, to move that you report Progress and ask leave to sit again. I understand that the Government are anxious to bring forward a Vote on Account. It is perfectly preposterous that a Vote of such magnitude, involving large matter of discussion, can be brought forward at this time of night. I strongly object to this system of Vote on Account, and I think it is not fair to the House of Commons or the country that we should be called upon to pass a Vote of £3,000,000 when the discussion on it commences at half-past 1 o'clock in the morning. If the Government were not so very anxious to get this money, why did they bring the Vote on at this hour? They say—let the Navy Estimates be discussed; we will withdraw on the condition that this Vote on Account be taken. It is surely an old principle that no contentious Votes in the Estimates are taken after half-past 12 o'clock, and I certainly never heard of a Vote of this amount being brought forward so late as this and the discussion begun. Because I believe that it is impossible to do work adequately in this style—we get so impatient and sleepy—that I hope the Government will agree that progress be reported, and in case they do that, I think they will find no opposition to the Navy Vote being taken on the understanding that the Vote on Account will be taken on a future day.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*) [1.20 A.M.]

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 71; Noes 196: Majority 125.—(Div. List, No. 70.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): I am very sorry that it should be necessary to go into this Question of voting the Estimates at such an hour. The night has been spent by the speeches of experts on subjects mostly, I admit, of great importance in regard to the Dockyard system, and I strongly object to the discussion being taken at a time when the public will be unable to see by the Press what is passing. As I understand this Memorandum of explanation, it is matter to be referred to a Select Committee, and if then any economy can be scored for the figures presented by the officials of the Departments, the Report of that Committee will show whether these Estimates have been prepared with any regard to economy whatever. I should like to ask of the Government upon what principle did they go in determining what should be the strength of the Navy. In the Memorandum given by the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) we are told that it was upon the review of the last six years' expenditure, and it seemed that when there was a fit of economy on the part of the British Government there had been in all other European countries a desire to increase their naval armament, which embodied consequent expenditure. We are told, Mr. Courtney, because other Powers have increased their naval strength, it was necessary for us also to increase our expenditure on the British Navy, and the result has been that in the last two years, as compared with the preceding five years, we have spent nearly £8,250,000 above the average expenditure of the preceding five years. Now, Sir, I understand that has been done to make our fighting power equal to the combined fighting power of three States of Europe. Mr. Courtney, what I have to say is this—that in all probability we shall continue this same policy. We may, from time to time, introduce small cheeseparing economies; but, on the other hand, accordingly as the Powers in Europe see our expenditure rising, they will say to themselves, it is necessary to increase our armaments, and then again, because they have increased their armaments; we shall be told it will be necessary for us to strengthen our Navy in proportion. We have been doing all we could of late years to strengthen our ships, and to make heavy ordnance. The other nations in Europe have been compelled to follow our example, and the consequence has been a rivalry between the different States in Europe in regard both to their Naval and Military armaments, and I want to know when is this to cease? Is there no capacity in British statesmanship — is there no prospect that it will be able to put an end to this increasing rivalry between foreign Powers and ourselves? Are we prepared to go on increasing our armaments accordingly as the Continental Powers increase theirs? If we are, I can only say the result will be that it will become an intolerable burden to this nation. I for one moment should very much like to imagine that there would be such statesmanship on the part of the Conservative Administration as would enable them to put an end to this rivalry; and I say also that no Government in Europe is in so easy a position for making overtures to foreign nations having this object in view. We are able to say that we have a fighting capacity equal to any three Naval Powers on the Continent combined, and we can say that we are willing to rest upon our oars. We could make rational appeals to the other Powers in Europe to cease their rivalry before it is too late, because, I insist, that this rivalry cannot go on without doing an enormous amount of evil. Let an appeal be made to check this expenditure. We have been reminded by the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty to-night, that next year's Estimates have been prepared with such care and moderation as to show a decrease of nearly £800,000. That may prove to be so or not; but I would remind the House that there is such a thing—as we have found to our cost—as a Supplementary Vote, and it may be possible that in the spring of next year we may see something of such a Vote. I, therefore, do not regard promises of this kind as of very much value until the year's expenditure has been got through, and we find ourselves not burdened with Supplementary Votes. When an appeal was made in the year 1885-6 for a very large amount of money, it was based on the ground that the British Navy had fallen below its proper strength; and that an extraordinary expenditure would be necessary for a year or two, in order to make it efficient, and equal to the requirements of the nation. We are assured now by the First Lord of the Admiralty that we are really in a strong position, and able to grapple with any three Powers of Europe. I, therefore, appeal to the Government to know why they do not now cut down their Estimates to the normal expenditure of 1884. If we are in such a strong position, why not immediately drop back to the ordinary Estimates which satisfied both sides of the House before 1885? It appears to me that the decrease of £800,000 is totally inadequate to what we have a right to expect; and I would urge upon the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen)—from whom no doubt we shall have a flattering Budget in due course—that if he exercised the influence in his power, he could put a stop to this continually increasing expenditure on our Navy to Army; and he could compel the spending Departments of the State to use much greater economy than they have done in the past. It should be remembered that we are now at peace with all the world, with perhaps the exception of Burmah, where, however, we are told, affairs are rapidly becoming quiet. What then, I would venture to ask, is the use of keeping up the armaments of this country at their present extravagant level? I shall never cease, Sir, as long as I have the honour of sitting in this House to protest against this waste of the people's wealth. This country to my mind has not put itself in any more secure position now than it was in the past, although we have spent so much more money. We are told that there is a most necessary expenditure to be incurred in regard to our coaling stations, but that has not yet been provided for; and I have no doubt that in due course the First Lord of the Admiralty will find that he has pressure brought to bear upon him to induce him to indulge in that outlay. We also have it intimated to us by the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford), that the Government are building a number of small vessels; and in view of this I must offer my earnest protest against the expenditure which is being incurred, and which the Government are attempting to justify on the ground that in no other way can we place ourselves in a position to escape from our difficulties.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): I had hoped, Mr. Courtney, that we should have been relieved at this late hour from the necessity of discussing those Estimates. I must say that I am alarmed at the ever-increasing expenditure of this country; and I am prepared to say that I think the greatest damage to the Empire is to be found in her extravagant naval expenditure. I think, Sir, that the state of trade and of industry should prevent the Government from placing their names to the very extravagant items indicated in this Vote; and I must add my belief that if we listened to the advice of the Admirals, and of the General Officers, who happen to be Members of this House, in reference to the supposed necessary expenditure of this country upon the two Services, we should find that we had landed this country very quickly into an exceedingly serious position. I noticed, in connection with this discussion, three points which are worthy of attention; but, before I deal with them, I should like to say that I think, after the enormous amounts we have already spent upon the Navy and Army, it is insulting, on the part of the Admirals and Generals, to come here and tell us that all our money has been thrown away, and that we must go in for fresh expenditure. Why, Sir, my reply to them would be that, if the money has been thrown away in the past, it has been so expended on the advice of hon. Members of their class, and there would be every reason for the belief that again to follow their advice would result in another useless outlay. I desire to express the earnest protest of my constituents against the ever-growing expenditure, and the continual increase of the Votes; and I did hope that the lesson taught us by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) would not have been lost upon the Government. I had hoped that he had sufficient influence with the Government to induce them to listen to something in the shape of economical proposals; and if that had not acted as an inducement to them, I had hoped that their professions before the country a few months since would have led them to put before us Estimates of a very modest and economical character. But, Sir, I am afraid that official life is fatal to economy; for the moment a man is appointed a Member of the Government, he seems to lend himself to the greatest amount of expenditure possible. I venture to give just one note of warning. If this increasing expenditure is allowed to go on, you may depend upon it that in future the burden will fall, not upon labour, but upon property; and Members in this House who may be said to represent the propertied classes would do well not to lose sight of this fact. I had hoped that the professions of the Tory Party would have induced them to try and rival hon. Members on this side of the House in economy. I am afraid we are doomed to disappointment. There is only one other argument that I wanted to use; and in relation to that I may say that my own impression is that the great battle of the future will be fought between this country and America, and that the object of that battle will be to secure supremacy in the commerce of the world. Now, Sir, I would remind you that America is fast paying off her National Debt. She is paying, at least, £30,000,000 a-year; and when the day of competition comes, this country will enter upon the contest handicapped to such an extent by her National Debt that I am afraid she will be over-weighted; and I, therefore, warn the Government and this House against entering upon a line of extravagance which must have such disastrous results in the future. I am certain of one thing, and that is that the ratepayers and the taxpayers, the men who form the industrial part of this great nation, have a right to a voice in this matter. They feel the burden and the pressure of this taxation, and their voice, at any rate, is, and ought to be, lifted up in protest against the extravagant Estimates.

Mr. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): In looking through the Estimates, I notice, in regard to the item for victualling, that the amount is, at least, 25 per cent more per man than it was in 1878-9, although, since that time, provisions have fallen in price to the extent of, at least, 30 per cent. This, I think, is one of the matters which ought to be discussed in connection with these Estimates. To my mind, it is of far more importance than the proposed expenditure on our coaling stations. I would urge upon the Admiralty the desirability of sending the Fleet more often to Ireland. There we have splendid anchorage for vessels, with admirable facilities for naval manœuvres, and, at the same time, provisions can be purchased, at least, 25 to 30 per cent cheaper than in any other part of the world; and, therefore, while the ships would be in a healthy climate, the opportunities for practice and naval evolutions would be unusually good, and, at the same time, economy would be promoted in the expenditure in victualling the Fleet. At one time the Fleet was more often seen off the coast of Ireland. It only wanted some of the old Conservative Irish Members to make representations at the Admiralty to induce them to send the vessels there. Of late years, however, they have not been sent there; and I would especially call the attention of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty—who has not a little connection with a part of Ireland—to the desirability of making use of the excellent harbours to be found there for naval purposes.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): On a recent occasion my hon. Friend the Member for one of the Divisions of Cork was very anxious, with his Colleagues, to bring under the notice of this House the question of the Haulbowline Dockyard; but before he could bring it on, many hours were spent, and perhaps properly so, by hon. and gallant Gentlemen in discussing the general question of the efficiency of the Navy, and it was consequently impossible to bring the matter before the House at a period at which it could be adequately discussed. We desired to raise the question relating to this dockyard as a matter of economy, because if the intentions of the Government were carried out as announced last Thursday by the First Lord of the Admiralty, the entire sum which had been spent upon the place would be utterly lost to the country, and Haulbowline Dockyard would remain a muddy monument to the gross incompetency of Her Majesty's Naval Administration. Twenty-two years ago this subject was brought before this House. It was intended to spend a sum amounting to something over £500,000 in the erection of a suitable dockyard at Queenstown, where the largest ships of the Navy could, if necessary, be repaired; but now, when much of the work has been done, the plan has been altered, the Dockyard has been shortened by something like 70 feet, and, if completed as proposed, it will be utterly useless for the purpose for which it was originally intended. I regret, Sir, that the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty is not in his place to give us some more explicit declarations of the intentions of the Government in regard to this matter. A deputation from the district waited upon him 12 months ago, and in compliance with their urgent request he consented to retain upon the works a number of unskilled workmen who were at that time threatened with dismissal. We claim now not merely their exemption from dismissal, but we claim also for them work, on the ground that Ireland is entitled to a legitimate share of the Imperial expenditure of this country on the Navy; and I do think that the people of Ireland have a legitimate grievance, especially those residing in the immediate locality of this Dockyard, in the fact that a large amount of money has been spent up to a certain point; and that money is to be allowed to remain unproductive and useless for all purposes except as constituting a monument of gross blundering on the part of the Naval Administration. The case as it at present stands is this—that £500,000 has been spent for making a Dockyard; but, if the work be discontinued now, there will be a dock too short and quite unfitted for the purpose originally designed. On the first occasion when that matter was brought before Parliament, it was pointed out by Mr. J. F. Maguire, who was then Member for the City of Cork, that the Harbour of Queenstown was peculiarly well-suited for the establishment of a Dockyard, and that for many reasons. So strong were his arguments, and so powerfully did they appeal to the Naval Authorities of the day, that his recommendations were adopted. A Report was issued stating that, in the opinion of the Naval Authorities, Queenstown was admirably situated as a harbour of refuge for Her Majesty's Fleet, and that in this harbour it was eminently desirable that a Dockyard should be created, in which vessels of war could be properly repaired. Yet, at the present moment, if storm or any disaster overtook a vessel of the Fleet off the coast, she could not be repaired at Queenstown. We had a recent instance. The *Belleisle*, upon which it was found necessary to expend £30,000 or £40,000, instead of being towed to Queenstown, as she would have been had this Dockyard expenditure been properly directed in the past, she was taken to Chatham, or Devonport, or some other Yard. We contend that these are matters well worth the consideration of the Committee. I think my hon. Friend the Member for East Cork was a little too easy and somewhat lavish in the praise he awarded the noble Lord on this Dockyard question. I maintain we are fairly and fully entitled to a reasonable and proportionate amount of expenditure for Dockyard purposes; and it is impossible that we can have this in future, unless Her Majesty's Government reconsider the determination which apparently they have come to. Well acquainted as I am with the harbour, knowing how far the work has progressed, and what a serious disappointment it is to many who take the deepest interest in the subject, and who expected by this time that substantial progress would be made—I shall take every opportunity that is offered in the House of bringing this question forward. My Colleagues who represent neighbouring constituencies are actuated by similar motives; but I hope it will not be necessary for us to use pressure upon the Naval Authorities with regard to this most important matter, and which affords a flagrant example of that blundering which has come to be regarded as inseparably connected with the great spending Departments.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College): The Motion to report Progress was moved in order to afford the Government the opportunity of saying what they intended to do. It must be pretty evident to anyone who has listened to the debate for the last two hours, discursive though it has been, that it has ranged over a considerable number of new topics, and that it has not been altogether unconnected with the possibility of another Vote being taken subsequently. Now, I must certainly say tha my hon. Friends who have felt it necessary to object to going on with the Vote on Account of Civil Service Estimates, seem to have reasons on their side which are every moment increasing. I am informed that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury admitted that it was not absolutely necessary to go on with the Civil Service Vote on Account. Various methods were pointed out whereby all that is legally necessary may be complied with. Naturally, the Government desire to get their Vote to-night; but there has been much time lost in the attempt; and, surely, they will not, after 2 o'clock, ask us to vote away £3,500,000, and on a Vote that embraces a number of topics upon which discussion is certain to be raised. I shall now propose, Sir, that you leave the Chair. Of course, if the Civil Service Vote is to be gone on with, we must stay and attend to matters in which we are interested; but, surely, the Government will not ask us to take this enormous Vote at such an hour. Therefore, to give the Government the opportunity of making an explanation, I now move that you leave the Chair.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do now leave the Chair."—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): I should like to point out to the hon. Member that it is not the fault of the Government if we do not get on with Business. I believe, as far as I am able to judge, that it is the opinion of the Committee that the time has arrived when we should take the Vote which has been under discussion so long. I want also to point out to the hon. Member, in reference to what he appears to believe is an unreasonable hour to take the Vote, that it must be taken to-night; because, although it has been mentioned that on one occasion it was taken on the 24th March, it was then, as has been explained, inserted at a later stage of the Ways and Means Bill; and unless the Vote is taken to-night, it cannot be taken on the 24th (Thursday). We could not take it until Friday; and, therefore, it is absolutely necessary it should be taken to-night. I am sure hon. Members are not aware, or they would not have expressed so much surprise, that in 1882, this Vote on Account was commenced at 1.45; in 1883 it was commenced at 1 o'clock; in 1884 it was commenced at 2 o'clock; in 1885 the Vote on Account was commenced at 4 o'clock; and last year it was commenced at 1.30, and finished at 2 o'clock. I think, therefore, there is nothing unusual so far as precedent is concerned. There is nothing unreasonable in the Government asking that the Vote should be taken under the circumstances, and no single Member of the Committee will lose the opportunity of criticizing any single Vote in the ordinary course of Supply, nor will any Member lose the opportunity of raising a discussion on an Amendment to the Motion for the Speaker leaving the Chair.

MR. DILLON: The hon. Gentleman has used an argument of some force; but he leaves out of view altogether the fact that there are circumstances at the present time that render it absolutely essential that there must be a prolonged discussion on this Vote. Of course, the Government are masters of the arrangement of Business; and if they do not choose to afford a more reasonable opportunity, we must discuss it at this time of night. It is all very well to tell us that no Member parts with any privilege by allowing this Vote to pass. It may be perfectly true that in the past year, or the year before, it was not necessary to challenge and persist in a discussion of a Vote of this kind; but that is no argument that it is not necessary this year. Whatever the circumstances were in the years alluded to, they are now such that it is entirely out of the question that the Vote should pass without considerable discussion. English or Scotch Members may not be in a position to discuss the Civil Service Estimates. I leave them to judge of that; so far as we are concerned, we avail ourselves of a privilege with which we have not the slightest intention to part. If we allowed this Vote to go without discussion, we shall not have another opportunity until May of raising questions that are convulsing Ireland at the present moment—questions that can and will be raised on this Vote, no matter what is said by the Government, no matter how inconvenient it may be for the Committee. Measures of vast importance may be passed; while, by the patent plan brought to perfection by Members of the Tory Party within the last few weeks, every discussion on questions of importance to us can be blocked by bogus Notices on the Notice Paper never intended to be brought to discussion. I allude to this practice, so unworthy of Members of the House, as an additional reason why we shall insist on a fair discussion of this Vote on Account. I ask this question—if these Votes are to be passed; if it is considered necessary, or essential, to pass these Votes without discussion—why is it not the Rule of the House? Why are the Government and the Committee obliged to admit discussion? Is it not because, as we all know, that the principle is that circumstances may arise that will challenge discussion, perhaps a prolonged discussion, and in relation to matters that ought to have a prolonged discussion? Circumstances in the country, or circumstances connected with the Service, may arise that cause the Vote to be challenged at length. This has happened in the present case. Circumstances are going on in Ireland in connection with a Service for which we are asked to provide a large sum of money, and it would be absurd to suppose we should allow this Vote to pass. No matter, if there are half-a-dozen Votes on Account, we challenge each one so long as things are conducted in Ireland as they are now. I say this in support of the Motion for adjournment. If the Government considered this Vote was absolutely necessary to-night, they ought to have put it down before the Navy Vote, and then we could have debated it; and, early or late, the debate might have been closed. You have gained nothing by your conduct in regard to this Vote, though you may think it a gain to have choked off a certain number of gallant Gentlemen who desired to discuss naval matters. As I have said already, it is entirely out of the question that this Vote can be taken without considerable discussion; you must expect this when you ask us to provide money for the Bankruptcy Court and the Irish Constabulary, and you might have taken the discussion at a more reasonable hour.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: The Secretary for the Treasury always tells us that money must be taken by a certain day. Sir, I am curious to know what would happen if the money were not taken. My own impression is, that the world would wag on very much as it did before. What terrible circumstances would take place if this money were not taken to-day? As the hon. Member for East Mayo has pointed out, this trouble has arisen entirely from the Government arrangement of business. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] I say it has arisen entirely from the action of the Government, and if an hon. Gentleman thinks otherwise, let him put his thought into speech. Why, when there were only two Votes to take, was the Navy Vote put first? It was not necessary, because the Government offered to withdraw it. If you had commenced discussion with the Vote on Account, you could have said to the gallant Admiral, "We will have your discussion at another time." Very valuable suggestions were no doubt made by the hon. and gallant Gentleman; and then when your own followers, naval Gentlemen, have been discussing naval matters up to a late hour, you complain that we on this side are anxious to bring forward certain economical matters connected with the Navy, and you want to burke discussion on the part of Irish Members by bringing forward this Vote on Account at half-past 2. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary for the Treasury appeals to precedents of the last few years, and that only proves to me our sacred duty to hold fast to our privileges, and not to add one more to these evil precedents. No one can deny for a moment that this Vote on Account is worthy of discussion at a reasonable hour. Very frequently there are complaints of our discussions being carried to a great length; but nothing of the kind can be said of this Vote on Account, for discussion has not commenced. If the committee like to go on I am prepared. I have the Estimates here, and I judge from them that I shall have to speak some 30 times, and I estimate that I shall have to move about 20 Amendments; but I am perfectly ready to remain here.

Mr. GOSCHEN: After the speech we have just heard, everyone must see that it is the bounden duty of the Government to proceed with the Estimates. What would be the use of postponing them, in order to give an opportunity for an Irish discussion, when we hear from the hon. Member for Northampton that it is his intention to make 30 speeches, and move 20 Amendments. The hon. Member is indifferent whether the money is voted or not, and he wishes to know what would happen if the money were not voted. The effect would be that the financial arrangements of the country would be seriously embarrassed, and we have no resource but to proceed. I can quite understand the views of hon. Members, who say there are important matters in connection with Ireland to be discussed; but how do we know that any particular Irish Question will come on when we are to have 30 speeches from the hon. Member? We should probably come to the Vote on Account, if proceedings were to be conducted in the manner indicated in the course of weeks, not days. Therefore, though it must be most inconvenient to any Member of the Committee, there is nothing for it but to proceed and listen with patience to such matters of importance as may be brought before us. I only hope that hon. Members opposite will, when we come to discuss the Vote on Account, go at once to the more important matters they desire to bring forward, not wasting time upon minor details.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: The right hon. Gentleman says even if we did get a day for the discussion of our questions, what guarantee would my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo have that he would obtain time for the adequate discussion of the important subjects to which he has referred. Well, of course, it would be difficult to obtain that guarantee in favour of the matters he thinks it due to his countrymen to bring forward. But the language of the Financial Secretary to the Treasury shows that he feels the inconsistency of the position of the Government. He tells us that some years ago when a Vote on Account was taken, it was proposed at half-past 1 and passed at 2. That is perfectly true; but it only shows how differently things were situated then.

Colonel NOLAN: The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in reference to my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) speaks of the 20 Amendments as if they were 20 crimes; but my hon. Friend would only be doing what he is in the habit of doing. Let hon. Members recollect that last year my hon. Friend moved the reduction of a Vote and carried his Amendment. It was a friendly Government then in Office, and it had not to go out; but it may be expected the present Government would go out if they were defeated. However, we are in no hurry to get through the discussion; there are items we would prefer to have debated to-morrow morning when Representatives of the Press will be present. We are standing upon Constitutional grounds; you are not when you attempt to shout us down or vote us down in silence in the early hours of the morning. The Secretary to the Treasury says that for years this Vote has been passed at a late hour; but what happened? Did not the Estimates go up; did not these very Civil Service Estimates increase, because we did not discuss them? Well, we are not doing that now. What is the use of sacrificing a Chancellor of the Exchequer on the altar of economy if we are to vote the Civil Service Estimates when there is no Press to record the names of Members who are in sympathy with us? The Chancellor of the Exchequer is like the beggar in *Gil Blas* on a large scale. I do not think we ought to yield, but should proceed calmly to debate the Naval Estimates until the Press return, and we shall be well reported at 7 in the morning. If the people of this country knew that we wanted so unconstitutionally to pass the Estimates at this late hour, when Members are too tired to discuss and criticize the items efficiently, they would make themselves heard in such a way that we should soon have to do something in order to keep down this dreadful extravagance.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I desire, Sir, to support the Motion to report Progress, and I do so as one who has a few small grievances to bring forward during the discussion on the Navy Estimates. I protest against the way in which Business is being rushed through at this hour. The grievances of which I have to complain being of comparatively and apparently small importance, I have abstained from bringing them forward hitherto; but I do not see that I should lose any opportunity of making them known. Whilst hon and gallant Gentlemen below the Gangway were discussing matters of naval interest I refrained from interfering with my complaints, because I knew they wished to give the Committee the benefit of their experience and special knowledge, and to bring under notice items of technical importance; but I did not expect that facilities for discussing grievances would have been curtailed or cut off. I repeat that, though the particular grievances against which I take exception are small, I protest against being compelled at this hour of the morning to proceed with them. For it is of the highest importance to our constituencies that the grievances which specifically affect them should be adequately inquired into and made generally known. Yet, owing to the lateness of the hour, we must fail to get publicity in the Press, and accordingly the views of our constituencies cannot get ventilated. I consider that the manœuvre of the Government this evening was very unworthy of them. They have treated these Estimates in such a manner as to force and compel all reasonable Members of the Committee to accede, if possible, to their request that the Vote should be taken; and considering the public duty that hon. Members have to perform, considering the necessity that we feel exists for the adequate discussion of these Estimates, we find ourselves, in fact, reluctantly obliged to refuse the Government that which they desire. Sir, I also believe that the language and tone of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) towards my hon. Friend the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) was also a very unworthy proceeding, and I do not think that my words are at all too strong in saying that, for if we are to take our cue from the words and manner of the right hon. Gentleman, it would seem quite an unbecoming thing for an hon. Member of this House to bring forward an Amendment, or to make a Motion during the discussion of the Estimates. In the most emphatic manner possible I protest against such language, and against such a tone towards hon. Members when they find it necessary to prolong a discussion, in order to complain against the treatment of those who have substantial grievances to bring forward.

Mr. JACKSON: I want to remove, so far as I can, the impressions formed from criticisms which proceed on an incorrect assumption. Let me say that nobody is responsible for unworthy conduct in connection with the placing of that Business on the Paper except myself. I entirely accept and take the whole responsibility, and there is no attempt to do otherwise. I placed the Business of the House on the Paper in the manner in which it stands, in discharge of a promise made by the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), and made at the request of hon. Members on the other side of the House; and, so far as I am able to judge, it was on the distinct understanding that the Vote on Account, which is so necessary to be taken to-night, was to be taken subsequently; and this was made last Friday morning, and renewed again at half-past 4 o'clock. I should very much like hon. Members to remember that if there is anyone to blame I am entirely to blame in this matter.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH: I confess I am in some difficulty in understanding the observations of the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen). He rather gave the Committee to understand that there was a change of policy on the part of Her Majesty's Government as to the procedure on the Vote on Account, in consequence of the speech of my hon. Friend the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). As I understand, from about 11 o'clock to-night, the Government had the intention to force through both these Votes; and I feel perfectly convinced that the observations of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton had nothing whatever to do with the Government's determination. I admit that I am somewhat surprised that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goschen) should take such a ground. I asked the Question of the Government whether they did not intend, and whether they did not avow that intention, to take both these Votes. I did not understand in the least that any remarks of my hon. Friend had anything to do with the arrangements of the Government; and I think they ought to tell the House whether it was or was not the intention of the Government to force through, without discussion, both these Votes. There is another point to which I should like to call attention, and that is the circumstance which the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) has impressed upon us—namely, that there is some actual necessity for the Vote on Account to be taken to-night. We had the same point urged by the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith); but, though precedent completely cuts the ground from under his feet, I wish to state that, as this matter appears from this side of the House, it would seem that the Government is of opinion that there is an urgent necessity that this Vote should be pushed through to-night, discussed or unconsidered, on the score of time. Now, I submit that if this House is driven into a corner like this, it is the Government who have done the damage, and it is the duty of that Government to make such necessary changes and arrangements as will enable the Vote to conform with the law. It is not justifiable on the part of the Government to assume that in the case of the Votes being brought forward late they should be allowed to pass them through without discussion. It is surely the duty of the Government to bring in the Votes at such a time that the Committee of the House may not be deprived of a reasonable opportunity of examining and discussing them. It is a strange doctrine to promulgate that on account of the way in which the Government has arranged Public Business we are bound to forego discussion of important matters, in order to suit their convenience. Let us clearly understand that hon. Members from all parts of the United Kingdom regard this to be an altogether abnormal Session. The House has been almost entirely in the hands of the Government. Much time has been spent in discussing unnecessary changes in the Procedure of the House. This having been done, the Government have hinted to us that they intend to fully monopolize and absorb the time of the private Members, on the plea that that time is required for special Business. It seems to me that hon. Members of this House, though they may have other questions to consider, would be very remiss in their duty if they did not seize the only opportunity that is given for discussing questions of so much importance as these. I would venture to suggest to the House that a very fair and reasonable course to pursue at this time of night would be that if there is a disposition shown to let this Vote pass at a convenient time, the Vote on Account should be postponed until Thursday next, in order that hon. Members may have a chance of discussing matters of the highest importance. The main way in which the constituencies can be informed of what Business is passing in the House is through the Provincial Press; and if discussion on this matter is prolonged, a great deal which would have been interesting to the country and to the Irish constituencies will never reach them. I submit that it is utterly unreasonable that these important discussions should go on between the hours of 3 and 8 o'clock in the morning—unreasonable to Members who wish to take part in the debates, and unreasonable to the constituencies which desire to see that theirs and the country's interests have been attended to. The great security which Members have in this House is not the weight of the speaking in the House, but the weight of public opinion throughout the country. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on this side, for instance, are the Representatives of the overwhelming majority of public opinion in Ireland. I ask and appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to show to his Colleagues how desirable it is that this Vote on Account should be left until Thursday for discussion. I grant that if the matter were taken up again on Thursday the Government would be in a position to request to allow the Vote to pass without delay, and I am of opinion that such a request would be heeded. I feel satisfied that this appeal is deserving of the consideration of the Government, and I hope that right hon. Gentlemen opposite will see their way to take advantage of it. If it were necessary to my case, I could refer to the fact that, owing to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), it so happened that these Supplementary Votes were not further postponed; but I think, on the whole, the Government should give their serious consideration to the suggestion, and they will find that they could follow, in the circumstances, no better course.

Dr. CLARK: Might I point out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) that it was on Friday morning, between the hours of 2 and 3 o'clock, that the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) mentioned about having these Votes discussed? A long discussion has taken place on a Vote which was not required, and after that the Government asks the House to begin a discussion at this time of the morning on most important subjects, and tells hon. Members that unless they do so it will be necessary to resort to an All-night Sitting. Now, that is a course which I think will meet with very little approval, and it seems to me that very little regard is being devoted to the interests of the constituencies, and more especially of the more remote portions of the United Kingdom. I might be allowed to tell the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that there has been a strong growth of national life in Scotland and Ireland, and also in Wales. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite may laugh; but I am only telling what is a very patent fact, and one which they would do well to recognize, for, in consequence of that expanse of nationality, the feelings of the people have been affected regarding the ancient Celtic.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman might remember that the Motion before the House is that I "do now leave the Chair."

Dr. CLARK: I wished, Sir, to point out that the reason why we desire that you should leave the Chair is that other matters should be discussed—matters brought forward by Scotch and Welsh Members, and of the greatest importance to the Scotch and Welsh people. My hon. Friend the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), I feel sure, will, if we appeal to him, in order that very important matters may come before the House, withdraw his Motion regarding the Royal Palaces, Parks, and the like, for the purpose of giving Scotland and Wales half a chance of making known their public opinion on subjects chiefly concerning themselves.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I consider, Sir, that no class of Members in this House have more reason to complain of the conduct of the Government, when matters concerning and interesting to that class are for discussion, than the Scotch Members. There are a number of Votes of a contentious character which we consider that it is our duty to call attention to and discuss. Thus there is the Vote for the Secretary for Scotland. The Government recently have made arrangements in regard to that Office of the most unsatisfactory character, and of such a character as demands a full discussion in this House. There are, again, matters concerning the Fishery Board of Scotland which also require careful consideration; and I could go on pointing out one Vote after another upon which it is the duty of the Scotch Members to express the inconvenience to which the people of Scotland have been subjected by the action and conduct of the Government. My experience of the present Government is this—that when there is an opportunity seriously to discuss questions affecting Scotland we ought not to forego that opportunity, because we may expect no consideration, no mercy, from the Government; for if it is possible for the Government to adopt and pursue arrangements which leave no facilities for the consideration of Scotch affairs, no other means will be provided in order to enable Scotch Members to express their opinions on matters most immediately affecting their constituencies. I wish to say that if, when we come to questions of the greatest importance to the people of Scotland, we are asked to discuss these questions at 3 o'clock in the morning, that is a proceeding so unsatisfactory to the people of Scotland that it will open their eyes to the utter hopelessness of carrying on the Business of Scotland in this House.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I must say that I feel distressed when I see the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) rising in his place, with his face denoting the words of the old song, "Home, Sweet Home!"—and this indicates what is exactly in the right hon. Gentleman's heart; but, unfortunately, owing to the representations and remonstrances made by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on his own side of the House, he seems to be yielding to the policy which is implied in the words of the comic song, "We won't go Home till Morning."

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG (Middlesex, Hornsey): I should like to ask you, Sir, what comic songs have to do with the Business of the House?

The CHAIRMAN: I trust the hon. Gentleman will be more respectful to the Committee.

Dr. TANNER: I will refer, Sir, to no more comic songs. But really, I think, when we take into consideration all the various remonstrances which have been addressed to the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) and to the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goschen), that certainly some reasonableness should be shown, and the request made for opportunity of discussing important matters should be granted. The Vote under consideration this evening is one which I hope to say a few words about in connection mainly with the Medical Service in the Navy. In that Department there is a highly unsatisfactory condition of things; and I desire to bring attention to bear in debate upon matters of great grievance in regard to the various schools where medicine is a subject of instruction. I suppose the Government is acquainted with the fact that remonstrance is being made by the Royal College of Surgeons in Dublin; and I hope to be able to give them some information on this matter. Another point to which I want to call attention is about Haulbowline Dockyard. Now, these are two very important points; and I think, when the Government considers them carefully, they will find that it is not very right to ask the House to go on at this hour of the morning, instead of giving an opportunity for deliberate discussions of matters of grievance. And I maintain that we have a right to expect fair treatment, because I presume that hon. Members are sent to this House to represent constituencies which expect that they will see how the money which the taxpayers contribute is spent. That being so, I should certainly have thought that there would have been a tone of moderation, at any rate, assumed by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goschen), in accordance with the usual method of behaviour which has been the usage and custom with right hon. Gentlemen who are at the head of affairs; and that the right hon. Gentleman would have respected the assurances which he received from this side of the House—that if the Supplementary Vote were taken upon Thursday the debate on it would be curtailed, so far as hon. Members on this side of the House were concerned, within due and proper limits.

MR. LABOUCHERE: When the House has to decide whether it should proceed to discuss reductions of the Estimates or Coercion Bills, I think that it does better in choosing to discuss reductions in the Estimates. Therefore I do not see why, when a series of reductions of the Estimates are proposed, hon. Gentlemen ought to give way simply in order to give the Government greater time for their coming Coercion Act. As a matter of fact, the Government should recognize that the Irish Members are anxious to bring forward matters in reference to Ireland, and that they are bound to give fair hearing to the due Representatives of that country. In order to lighten the difficulties of the Government, I would make the proposition to the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), that if the Government will really not try to force this Vote through to-night, and offer to the Irish Members an opportunity to discuss their most devoted grievances, I will safely promise that, during the whole of the discussion, I will hold my tongue. I will further point out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that there is a way to get out of the difficulty that would arise, if the Government did not get the money. The amount of the Vote on Account is calculated at two months. I do not see why the House should not be asked to give the Government sufficient money for four or five days, and then we would be simply in the same position with regard to the discussion as before, and the items could be carefully considered. I am very anxious about the question whether, when the Government has put off the Estimates to the last moment, they have a right to keep forcing them simply for the purpose of getting more time for the Coercion Bill. We actually meet the Government more than half-way when we offer them sufficient money to carry on their Business, and ask in return only that, at a later day, an opportunity for criticism and consideration will be afforded to the House, and that the Government should not force this Vote down the throats of the Committee in order to gain more time for coercive legislation.

MR. CONYBEARE: I am in this difficulty—that I want to call minute attention to many matters in this Vote; and if we go on now I shall not have any opportunity of doing so with proper efficiency. Thus, there are the Votes for the Royal Palaces and Marlborough House. Now, I object to both of these *in toto*, and I desire to take a Division on the Vote; for I think that we ought not to pay £6,000 for the one and £500 for the other. I believe it is impossible for me to do my duty by my constituents, who are reasonable men, and object to these Votes, if the Government prevents me from taking an opportunity of doing it, for I cannot possibly place the views of my constituency before the Committee under present circumstances and conditions. There are a number of other items in this Vote which I am exceedingly desirous of having debated, for I have a very strong objection to have public money spent in many ways that it is spent. It would be utterly impossible, even if we proceeded at this time of the morning, to adequately discuss and consider matters of such large importance to the people of this country.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.): The Government have told us that it is absolutely necessary that they should get this Vote to-night, and that they should get a grant of more than enough money to carry them over the next fortnight. But, Sir, it is a monstrous thing that for the next two months we should, practically speaking, be precluded raising questions regarding Ireland. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Akers-Douglas) has drawn attention to what he says took place in the early hours of Friday morning; but my distinct recollection of the compact is that the Vote on Account of the Civil Service Estimates was postponed in order to afford us an opportunity of discussing the whole Irish policy of the Government. It will be in the recollection of this House that my hon. Friend the Member for South-East Cork (Mr. Hooper) sat on these Benches eight or 10 hours a few nights ago in order to secure an opportunity of raising a debate on a subject of great interest to his constituents, and of vital consequence to the people of Queenstown. Not wishing to interrupt the debate which was proceeding that evening, it was 1 o'clock before an opportunity was afforded him to speak on the question of the Haulbowline Docks. He then put a series of questions to the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty; and although he did not then press for specific explanations, he surely has a right to demand an answer to his many queries. He was placed in a disadvantageous position, because he did not like to interrupt the gallant Admirals who were addressing the House on naval questions. To-night we are placed in a like position, and for very similar reasons. Again the Admirals have occupied eight or 10 hours; and I do contend now that it is not fair and reasonable that we should now be called upon to discuss important questions. There are a number of topics which we might have discussed on the Navy Estimates, but we refrained from doing so. For instance, gunboats have been used in Ireland for the purpose of carrying troops, policemen, and bailiffs to the West and South Coasts. In regard to the Civil Service Estimates, there are a lot of questions on which we desire to have the verdict of the House of Commons. The hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) has given Notice of a discussion he intends to initiate; and it is preposterous to say that at this hour a reasonable or useful debate could take place on it. In connection with these Civil Service Estimates, we shall be able to point out that illegal grants of money have been made by Government after Government, year after year; and one of these topics alone would be sufficient to occupy the time of the House for several hours. Again, we desire to have a debate on the riots at Belfast; and I repeat it is not fair at this time of the morning to ask us to commence it. If it is a question of sitting all night, I tell hon. Members opposite that we are as much accustomed to that as they are, and perhaps at the close of an All-night Sitting they would find that we did not come off second best. So far as I can learn, there is no reason in the world why the Government should not postpone this Vote until Thursday; and I would suggest that, if necessary, there might be a Saturday Sitting to take the Report stage. If they will adopt our suggestion, they will find that we are not unreasonable.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W): Mr. Courtney, I am very anxious that we should divide. I believe, after the remarks that have been made, we shall do so. And it will mean also nothing more than that right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite will out-vote us by a very large majority. But my point is this. We are here to represent the people who have elected us. I do not intend to keep the House very long; but I must say this— that it is physically impossible for people to apply themselves as they could wish to the performance of their duties if important debates are to be taken at such an unreasonable hour. I am putting my opposition to the Vote on the lowest ground possible—that of physical capability; but, as hon. Members are forcing me to do so, I will add a few words further as to my reasons for my present conduct. I consider that I have a serious and solemn duty to perform towards my constituents, and towards the country generally. I can only say that if this Vote is pressed we shall certainly persevere in discussing it; and I must add, Mr. Courtney, that up to the present it certainly cannot be stated that the obstructive talk in this House has come from these Benches. The time of the House has been occupied by hon. and gallant Admirals and hon. and gallant Generals and Captains. Does the Committee understand what it is doing? Does it understand what the right hon. Gentlemen the Leaders of the House want it to do? They have taken up the Vote, and they carry it on until they have practically exhausted the whole time of the House for discussion, and then they run a red herring across the Vote, and want to pass the Civil Service Estimates in the scent of that red herring, and under the cover of the Naval Votes.

Mr. LANE (Cork Co., E.): The hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson), when he last addressed the House, stated that at the request of the Irish Members the Naval Vote was put before the Civil Service Estimates for discussion. Now, Mr. Courtney, I submit that that is not so. The hon. Gentleman, I freely admit, is a most straightforward man; and I do not think he would wilfully make a misstatement. But, Sir, I myself was deeply interested in the final scene of the night to which the hon. Gentleman referred; and my recollection is that no request was made from the Irish Benches for the Naval Estimates to be put before the Civil Service Estimates.

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): I did not say that the request was made by the Irish Members. What I said was that they were put on in that order in discharge of a promise, made by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House, that an opportunity should be afforded for further discussion of the Navy Votes on the item for clothing.

MR. LANE: I readily accept the explanation of the hon. Gentleman. What I wish the House to understand is that we are not responsible for the Civil Service Estimates being reached at so late an hour. The Government, with the best intentions possible, no doubt, have made a serious mistake; but I do not see why we should be asked to place ourselves in a ridiculously false position simply because the Government have done so. The truth is that when we are supposed by the Government and their supporters to be fagged out, they commence the discussion of an important Vote, in the hope that it will be quickly passed. I say it is simply ridiculous to ask the Irish Members to discuss the Civil Service Votes at this hour in the morning. We are not responsible for their coming on so late as half-past 3, and therefore I think we are quite justified in asking that they be adjourned.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 61; Noes 199: Majority 138.—(Div. List, No. 71.) [3.25 A.M.]

Original Question again proposed.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): This question of the Naval Vote is not altogether exhausted, and is one on which there ought to be some further discussion. For my own part, I strongly object to sitting up until this totally unreasonable hour, and to discussing the Navy Estimates at such a time. Still, if we are to have a discussion, I suppose I may as well put some questions to the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton). I had intended to put them earlier in the evening, and they are certainly important questions. It may be some relief to the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone the Junior Lord of the Admiralty (Lord Charles Beresford), if he has to sit up, to be able to turn to the subject of the Navy Estimates. The first question I wish to ask is one which I put to the Government last year. There are a great many ways of attacking in naval warfare. We all are acquainted with the gun and the torpedo; but there is another system of warfare which, it seems to me, the Government are very much neglecting, and that is the system of submarine warfare. I allude, not to submarine mines, but to submarine boats. I think I saw in the papers some time ago that the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone went down in one of those boats. Whether this be so or not, I am of a very strong opinion that this is a very dangerous system of warfare, and one which we are totally neglecting. I would ask the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he has done anything in the direction of trying the Nordenfeldt boats? I have not seen any of those boats, but I have carefully read a lecture respecting them, and I think that Mr. Nordenfeldt's system is a perfectly feasible one. I am quite aware that it is not a system of warfare which is yet entirely developed, and that it is one which is disliked by naval men. I know of one gallant officer, a Member of this House, who says that he would give no quarter to people who attacked under the water. The hon. and gallant Gentleman thinks it is quite fair to fight on the surface of the water, but that it is very wicked to do so under the surface. There is, therefore, a certain amount of prejudice against this method of warfare. I think, however, that, by the expenditure of a small amount of money—say £10,000 or £15,000—the Government might obtain some very important experiments regarding it. The last time I drew attention to this subject in the House, I was asked by a naval officer—the hon. and gallant Member for Devonport (Captain Price)—whether I was aware that one of the Nordenfeldt boats had gone to the bottom? The hon. and gallant Gentleman, however, afterwards admitted to me that he did not know himself that the fact was as he suggested, but that he put the question because he thought it might be so. I have recently read of some experiments at Constantinople with Nordenfeldt boats, and I think they were tolerably successful. I may say, Sir, that I would much rather have drawn attention to this subject at a reasonable hour; but I think that if we are to continue sitting here we may as well talk sense. The second question I have to put to the Government is as to what the Admiralty are going to do with respect to the manufacture of artillery. Last year the question of naval guns came before the House, and it was stated that the Naval Authorities had arrived at the conclusion that for the future they would be responsible for their own guns. Now, I should like to obtain some information on that point. What are the Naval Authorities going to do? Are they going to set up a large arsenal of their own, or are they entering into large contracts with Elswick, and with other large firms? I may be told that I was one of those who objected to the Admiralty manufacturing their own guns. Well, what I objected to was a system under which we should have two sets of people making guns, as I thought it would lead to double expense in the matter of superintendence, as well as to divergences in the types adopted, which might be very awkward in time of war. At the same time, I should like to know whether the proposal I have referred to is to be carried into effect, or whether matters are to go on much as they did before? My own idea on the subject is that if the Admiralty do not think that they are sufficiently considered by the Ordnance Board they ought to have one Committee, and not two, to deal with the subject. You will see, Sir, that I have only spoken on scientific questions, and I have done so because there are present a good many scientific men from whom we may get information.

Mr. MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr): Mr. Courtney, I wish to draw the attention of the Committee to the action of the Admiralty in the Corea.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Member will not be in Order in doing that.

Mr. MOLLOY: What I intend to do, Sir, is to go through the Correspondence which has been issued by the Admiralty, and placed in the hands of Members within the last few days, in regard to the action of our Fleet at Port Hamilton, in the Corea.

The CHAIRMAN: That course would not be in Order.

Mr. MOLLOY: I will not dispute your ruling, Sir; but I may point out that the cost of victualling these ships is in the Vote. The action I refer to was taken by the Admiralty, and we are discussing the Admiralty Vote.

Captain PRICE: Mr. Courtney, I rise to Order. I beg to ask you, Sir, whether what occurred at Port Hamilton would come under this Vote?

Mr. MOLLOY: I may say that Port Hamilton is referred to as a coaling station.

The CHAIRMAN: The items in the Vote refer to the coming year, and transactions which have taken place at Port Hamilton last year cannot be discussed under them.

Mr. MOLLOY: The Estimates include a sum of money which was spent there.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Forwood) (Lancashire, Ormskirk): The hon. Member is referring to the Supplementary Estimates, which have already been passed.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): There is a considerable increase in one item of this Vote—namely, that relating to the victuals and clothing of seamen and Marines; but, before drawing attention to the manner in which the contracts for these victuals are issued, I desire to say a few words on the matters introduced by my hon. Friend the Member for East Cork (Mr. Lane). I do so because I see the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) in his place, and I desire to draw his attention particularly to the situation of Haulbowline Docks. I protest against those Docks being left in their present disgraceful state. It is a crying shame and a scandal that the Haulbowline Docks, after so much money has been spent on them, should be allowed to remain in such a condition. I do not regret that the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) has left his place, because I think that when he visits Cork Harbour he seems to have an eye only for the beauties of the view. The view is a very beautiful one; but, when he looks at it, he keeps carefully closed that particular eye which would embrace Haulbowline Docks. The bare and naked state of those Docks really spoils the beauty of the scene. I would appeal to the noble and gallant Lord the Member for Marylebone to say whether it would not be well that the Docks should be put into such a condition as would enable himself or any other naval commander to go there for repairs if unhappily his vessel should be disabled at any time. I may say that Cork Harbour is one of the strongest harbours in the world. Naturally, it is a strong harbour. Long before the forts which protect the entrance were built, a great Commander, of whose courage there could be no doubt, was obliged to take refuge in Cork Harbour, and we still point with pride to a small river which falls into the harbour, and which is called Drake's Pool. It was there that Admiral Drake took refuge, and when the Spaniards came in after him they failed to find him.

The CHAIRMAN: I must warn the hon. Member that he is excessively irrelevant.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: I should indeed be sorry, Mr. Courtney, if you should find it necessary to accuse me of irrelevancy. What I want to point out to the noble and gallant Lord the Member for Marylebone is that Cork Harbour has been fortified in such a way as to make it impossible for any enemy to reach the Haulbowline Docks whilst the forts are armed with their present big guns. The erection of the forts has had such an effect upon the Docks as to make them perfectly safe for the building or repairing of vessels. It would, therefore, be for the interest of the Public Service if the Department to which the noble and gallant Lord belongs would ask for such additional supplies as would enable it to put the Docks in such a condition that they would be available in time of war for the repair of disabled vessels. I think it is perfectly disgraceful to the Public Service that these Docks should have been in course of erection for as many as 22 years. Only a small sum of money is asked for this year in respect of the Docks. Last year money was granted for the purpose of building an engine-shed and obtaining machinery; but the shed has not yet been built and the machinery has not yet arrived at the Docks. Indeed, nothing has been done by the Department which proves the least desire on the part of the Naval Authorities to make the Docks what they should be—a credit to the Department and an advantage to the State. I believe that there is some difficulty in the way. The noble and gallant Lord thinks, perhaps, that Haulbowline can scarcely be available as a naval station. It seems contrary to common sense, however, that any man of experience can think so. Surely a harbour that has in the past played such an important part in the protection of the Navy of these countries can still be used for that purpose. It seems only reasonable to suppose that the further use of that harbour would be for the advantage of the Public Service. I should be glad if the noble and gallant Lord is able to give me such an answer as will relieve my mind from the distress I always feel when I look at these unfinished Docks. It has been pointed out already that my country contributes largely to the Imperial Exchequer for the construction and maintenance of the Navy, and that only a very small portion of the funds so provided are devoted to naval construction and to naval matters in Ireland. I leave it to the noble and gallant Lord to justify the lamentable negligence of the Admiralty Department in regard to the Haulbowline Docks. I am particularly anxious that the Docks should be completed at an early date, for I believe that we Irishmen shall soon have a greater interest in the construction and maintenance of the Navy than we have cared to evince in the past, and nothing would give us greater pleasure than to have these Docks completed and contributing to the defence of the common Empire in which we all hope to take such an increased interest after certain events have transpired. And now I wish to draw the attention of the Committee to a matter of comparatively minor importance. I find in the Estimates that there is an increase of £27,600, caused principally, I understand, by the additional prices for victualling, for stores, and so forth. Now, I believe it is a wrong principle to go outside the country for the food supplies of the Navy. If in time of war your foreign food supplies are cut off, you will find that you have allowed those sources of supply to perish that would have afforded you an ample supply. It should be the policy of the Naval Authorities to encourage the home trade as much as possible. The experience of the Crimean Campaign would illustrate my meaning when I seek to impress on the Government the necessity of having in a flourishing, capable condition those institutions and firms in the country capable of supplying the needs of the

Navy. It is the custom of the Navy to send to Denmark for their mess pork. We do not know what political combinations may be brought about; but we may imagine a war between this country and a State with which Denmark is allied, and then we should be deprived of this source of supply, and we should be compelled to rely on home supply, which would be found as unsatisfactory as it was in the Crimean War. The manner in which the meat was made up and its quality was a source of reproach then, and has continued so since. It was found, too, that the trades not having been encouraged by Government orders, they had not the necessary machinery and appliances, and broke down under the unaccustomed strain; they could not execute the orders they received from the Army and Navy. Only a short time since a large quantity of pork in casks was found among the stores at Haulbowline, and it had evidently lain there ever since the time of the Crimean War—a disgraceful thing reflecting anything but credit on the management of a great Department, which at the same time neglected institutions that could serve them well in time of war, sending money out of the country, while the trade at home languished. Because of a small advance in price I hold that such a policy is a false economy. There are tradesmen anxious to contract for this class of supplies. Only recently I was speaking to the manager of a large firm in the South of Ireland, and he told me that he could not think of tendering for Navy contracts, because of the vexatious conditions in the form of contract that contractors were obliged to sign—conditions that restrict the meat supply to one class of animal. But foreign contractors were free from those conditions, and made up their meat supply in such a manner as to deceive the experts. Now, regulations of this kind should be swept away or stringently enforced. If the examination of supplies were strictly performed, it would be found that a considerable quantity of contraband meat is imported, made up by foreign tradesmen whose deftness almost equalled their dishonesty. For mess pork there is no need to go beyond Ireland; Irish pork having a world-wide fame. Ireland might be said to be the home of the pig; it is indigenous to the soil. The animal is the friend of the family; he pays the rent, the taxes too, and I have no doubt his resources, if called upon, would be equal to supplying the British Fleet. There is no need to go beyond Ireland for these contracts, and I cannot believe that when the matter comes before the Admiralty Board this grievance will be disregarded. There is a peculiar knack among Admiralty officials of clinging tenaciously to old practices, bad though they may be, and this though, year after year, attention might be drawn in the House to these malpractices. I hope the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty will take some notice of these matters, which I have brought forward without any desire to waste the time of the Committee. Honestly, I have never spoken a word in Committee, and I have always manifested a desire to fortify myself with the Votes. There is no reason why Queenstown should not become an important naval station, after works have proceeded for the past 22 years. The day may arrive when the Admiralty will regret this neglect, and the noble Lord should take the matter into his serious consideration and signalize his entry into Office by a work of which he might well be proud.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): When I see stretched before me the recumbent forms of so many sleeping Ministers, I doubt the advisability of bringing any more matters before the attention of the Committee; but we are bound not to waste the time of the Committee, and as I have not been permitted at an earlier hour of mentioning one or two questions I will take the opportunity of making the reference now. The hon. Member for Devonport (Mr. Puleston) alluded to the cheapness of Dockyard as distinguished from contract building; and if I refer to that for a moment, it is with a view of calling the attention of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty—who has everything connected with the Admiralty at his finger ends—to another matter in which it might be advantageous to give to the Dockyards work now undertaken by contractors. I allude to the breaking up of old vessels. The noble and gallant Lord the Member for Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) prides himself on being the most destructive Lord of the Admiralty the country has ever seen; for he asks for the destruction of I do not know how many different vessels of the Fleet at present scattered over the face of the seas. Now, I should like to know whether the noble Lord judges it would be cheaper that these vessels should be sold to contractors to be broken up, or whether it would be cheaper to break them up in the Dockyards? I refer to specific instances to illustrate what I mean. Recently, in the Hamoaze I saw a number of old unarmoured vessels which I was given to understand had been sold to contractors to be broken up. Now, at the same time when these vessels were being thus disposed of, men were being discharged from the Dockyard by the present Government because there was not work for them to do. I put it, therefore, to the noble Lord—if the contractors find they can make a profit by buying and breaking up old vessels, could not the Government make the same or more profit by having such vessels broken up in the Dockyards, selling or using the old materials? It seems to me that the profit in the business might as well be in the pockets of the nation as in those of contractors, and especially when the want of employment has led to the discharge of Dockyard workmen, and a consequent addition to the distress for want of employment. There is, too, another point in connection with the matter I have referred to. We are very much exercised now as to what is to be done to relieve the excessively congested districts in some parts of Ireland; and though it may seem an extraordinary *non sequitur* to connect this with the old ships of the Navy, I venture to suggest would it not be possible to send some of these old vessels, no longer fit for sea service, to the fiords and estuaries of Great Britain and Ireland, to afford some means of exciting the interest of the unfortunate youth in congested agricultural districts, and perhaps encouraging some of them to seek a sphere of employment beyond the land that will not support them, taking them from the small holdings for which by farming industry they cannot pay rent? It seems to me here is some assistance towards the solution of a difficulty which Her Majesty's Government—when they have got coercion out of their mind—might well take into consideration. These vessels would be useful to the people, as teaching them something about the Naval Service, and you might form small naval establishments thereon with results beneficial to the nation and the unfortunate inhabitants of congested districts. Another question I should like to ask has reference to a couple of small vessels which, during last autumn, I saw building in a private yard at Falmouth. I should like to know what has become of them? When I saw them I had some conversation with the superintendent of the yard, and I learned that the lines upon which the vessels were laid down had been altered several times, and it was considered probable that more orders and countermands would be received. The vessels were ordered by the penultimate Board of Admiralty in the previous year—I do not know whether it was necessary to produce a favourable impression in Falmouth in view of a General Election—and I understand these vessels are not yet completed, after having gone through such a variety of changes that the builders scarcely know what to make of them. I have nothing to say for or against the necessity of building these vessels, or of the propriety of ordering them at this particular yard; but it is very desirable that when a vessel is ordered we should endeavour to make a good job of the business, which appears to me an impossibility when the plans are changed almost every other week. Having put these observations before the Committee on matters I should have liked to have touched upon earlier, I should now like to bring before the Committee another matter. We are well aware that a Commission is at present inquiring into the question of those scandals that have arisen in connection with the supply of stores—it is called, I believe, the Ordnance Inquiry Commission. At the head of that Commission is a distinguished Judge—Sir James Fitzjames Stephen—and what has happened in this inquiry should, I think, have the notice of the Committee and the Government. There is a gallant officer—Major Arnott—who has been chiefly instrumental in procuring inquiry into various allegations. He has been treated with anything but fairness by the Head of that Commission, Sir James Stephen—almost with a want of courtesy. I do not dwell on that; I only want the Committee to understand how this inquiry, which is of vital importance to officials at the head of Departments and all who desire that the Service should be supplied with cartridges that do not jam, and bayonets that do not buckle up, and to keep contractors from preying on the innocence of Government Inspectors, is conducted. It is most essential that an inquiry of this kind should be conducted with every desire and every effort to reach the guilty parties, and where there are such to put a stop to abuses. Major Arnott says, in a letter he has published, that Sir James Stephen——

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Member it is rather an abuse of the proceedings of the Committee to question the conduct of a Commission still sitting.

MR. CONYBEARE: I do not wish to do anything that is unfair; my real object is to draw attention to the published letter of this gentleman. I thought I should not have been out of Order, because Sir James Stephen is acting not as a Judge, but as Head of a Commission. I will only ask the noble Lord, and those who take an interest in the subject, to see for themselves what are the allegations made by Major Arnott, and to consider whether, from the point of view I have taken, and having in view the stress laid upon this matter by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, if anything has been going wrong every effort should be made to track out the offenders, and no endeavour should be permitted by anyone, however elevated, to prevent that being done. These are the more important matters among those I wished to bring forward at the earliest opportunity that presented itself. Some other questions I may touch upon later, but they concern a humbler class of individuals—the unfortunate hard-working men in the lower ranks of the Navy who have no opportunity of speaking for themselves, and have few friends to speak for them; but it would be better to follow the example of others, and wait for the return of representatives of the Press to the Gallery.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I should certainly have spoken in detail before if I thought that the Business would be going on. But now, as Business appears to be proceeding, I should be wanting in my duty as a Member of this House if I did not—and I should very much like to do so—call attention to at least three different sets of facts which are all important in connection with the Vote at present before us. The first point which I shall bring under the notice of hon. Members is in regard to the Naval Medical Service clustering around which there are a number of abuses which give such strong ground of grievances that they merit the careful consideration of the House. In going into the history of that Service——

THE CHAIRMAN: The Naval Medical Service is not in this Vote at all.

DR. TANNER: I was not, Sir, going to specifically apply my remarks to the Naval Medical Service; but I was merely going to explain in a general way the causes of the discontent of the medical officers in that Service, and—["Order!" "Question!"] Then, Sir, I shall simply proceed now to the Haulbowline affair, about which I shall adduce some important facts or series of facts. I cannot help wondering, Sir, at the immense amount of ignorance which is displayed by officials who are placed in important positions; and in particular relation to this subject I think that no one can fail to be struck in regard to these docks or prospective docks at Haulbowline with the large amount of ignorance on necessary matters on the part of the Admiralty officials of the present Government. I took the trouble when I was last in Cork to visit these docks, and I found very great difficulty indeed in getting round to see them, because the officials there appear to be conserving the secrets of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton). You have in this Dockyard a large floating dock, an outer dock, and one dry dock, which is simply but the last monument of naval incapacity in dealing with practical matters. This naval dock has been dug out at the right-hand side of the floating dock. It was originally intended that a second dock should have been constructed; but this was the manner in which that was done. Practically, the workmen were directed to excavate the wrong dock first. One of the sites at their disposal could easily be excavated, because it was muddy; but the other site was a portion of an island known as "Rat Island," and they actually went and blasted out the rock, and left the interspaces on these rocks, which made the leaks of which so much was heard about in the course of the last Session of Parliament. But, in order to show further the lamentable ignorance and incapacity of the authorities in choosing this right-hand site for a dock, I may mention that they ran it close to the deep water, and, of course, the running water in the deep channel filtered through into the dock, and caused most of the trouble complained of. Now, the authorities are trying to mend their hand with the same damaging incompetency. As yet they have not finished the stone fastening of the floating dock, which is left very incomplete, and the reason given for this neglect was because that it was intended to go on with the construction of a second dock. And, again, now we hear that there is a new development, and that this is not their purpose at all; but that they are going to discharge from employment all the hands whom they have hitherto utilized in connection with the construction of these Docks. The authorities, I insist, are acting in ignorance, and in a wilful way which I do not think they will find the country able to endorse. They are discharging their hands without having completed the channel, and they have directed that a great deal of the work——

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I rise to Order, Sir. I beg to move "That the Question be now put."

Question put accordingly, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 207; Noes 54: Majority 153. [5.40. A.M.]

AYES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ainslie, W. G.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, Colonel R. H. L.
Anstruther, H. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, G. S.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, G. W.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Beadel, W. J.
Beckett, W.
Bective, Earl of
Bentinck, Lord H. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Boord, T. W.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, Col. A. M.
Brooks, Sir W. C.
Bruce, Lord H.
Burghley, Lord
Caldwell, J.
Campbell, Sir A.
Chamberlain, R.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Charrington, S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Cochrane-Baillie, hon. C. W. A. N.
Coddington, W.
Coghill, D. H.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Corbett, A. C.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cranborne, Viscount
Curzon, Viscount
Curzon, hon. G. N.
Dalrymple, C.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Duncombe, A.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Edwards-Moss, T. C.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elcho, Lord
Ellis, Sir J. W.
Elton, C. I.
Evelyn, W. J.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Fellowes, W. H.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitz-Wygram, General Sir F. W.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Gardner, R. Richardson-
Gedge, S.
Gent-Davis, R.
Gibson, J. G.
Giles, A.
Gilliat, J. S.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Gray, C. W.
Green, Sir E.
Grotrian, F. B.
Gunter, Colonel R.
Hall, C.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord E.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hankey, F. A.
Hardcastle, F.
Heath, A. R.
Heaton, J. H.
Hermon-Hodge, R. T.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hoare, S.
Holland, rt. hon. Sir H. T.
Holloway, G.
Holmes, rt. hon. H.
Howorth, H. H.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Hubbard, E.
Hughes, Colonel E.
Hughes - Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hunt, F. S.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
Jarvis, A. W.
Johnston, W.
Kelly, J. R.
Kerans, F. H.
Kimber, H.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Laurie, Colonel R. P.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Lowther, J. W.
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, rt. hon. J. H. A.
Maclean, J. M.
Maclure, J. W.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
M'Garel-Hogg, Sir J. M.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Marriott, rt. hn. W. T.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Matthews, rt. hon. H.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Adml. R. C.
Mills, hon. C. W.
Morrison, W.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Mulholland, H. L.
Muncaster, Lord
Muntz, P. A.
Noble, W.
Northcote, hon. H. S.
Norton, R.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Paget, Sir R. H.
Parker, hon. F.
Pelly, Sir L.
Penton, Captain F. T.
Plowden, Sir W. C.
Plunket, right hon. D. R.
Plunkett, hon. J. W.
Pomfret, W. P.
Powell, F. S.
Price, Captain G. E.
Puleston, J. H.

Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Reed, H. B.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Ross, A. H.
Round, J.
Royden, T. B.
Russell, Sir G.
Russell, T. W.
Saunderson, Col. E. J.
Seton-Karr, H.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Sidebottom, W.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stewart, M. J.
Sykes, C.
Talbot, J. G.
Tapling, T. K.
Temple, Sir R.
Thorburn, W.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Tottenham, A. L.
Townsend, F.
Trotter, H. J.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Waring, Colonel T.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Webster, R. G.
Weymouth, Viscount
Wharton, J. L.
White, J. B.
Whitley, E.
Whitmore, C. A.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

NOES.

Acland, A. H. D.
Blane, A.
Cameron, C.
Campbell, H.
Carew, J. L.
Chance, P. A.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Connolly, L.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Cossham, H.
Craig, J.
Dillon, J.
Ellis, T. E.
Fenwick, C.
Flynn, J. C.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Gill, T. P.
Harrington, E.
Hayden, L. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Hooper, J.
Hunter, W. A.
Kenny, M. J.
Labouchere, H.
Lane, W. J.
Mac Neill, J. G. S.
M'Cartan, M.
M'Donald, P.
Molloy, B. C.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J. (Tippry.)
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Doherty, J. E.
O'Kelly, J.
Pinkerton, J.
Provand, A. D.
Quinn, T.
Russell, E. R.
Sexton, T.
Stack, J.
Stanhope, hon. P. J.
Stuart, J.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Tanner, C. K.
Tuite, J.
Wallace, R.
Wilson, H. J.

TELLERS.
Deasy, J.
Sheil, E.

Original Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 210; Noes 52: Majority 158.—(Div. List, No. 73.)

## CIVIL SERVICES.

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £3,624,100, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charge for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, viz.:—

### CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

| | £ |
|---|---|
| Great Britain: | |
| Royal Palaces | 6,000 |
| Marlborough House | 500 |
| Royal Parks and Pleasure Grounds | 17,000 |
| Houses of Parliament | 9,000 |
| Gordon Monument | - - |
| Public Buildings | 30,000 |
| Furniture of Public Offices | 3,000 |
| Revenue Department Buildings | 36,000 |
| County Court Buildings | 6,000 |
| Metropolitan Police Courts | 1,500 |
| Sheriff Court Houses, Scotland | 2,000 |
| Surveys of the United Kingdom | 45,000 |
| Science and Art Department Buildings | 3,000 |
| British Museum Buildings | 2,000 |
| Harbours, &c. under Board of Trade | 3,500 |
| Peterhead Harbour | 5,000 |
| Rates on Government Property (Great Britain and Ireland) | 80,000 |
| Metropolitan Fire Brigade | 2,500 |
| Disturnpiked and Main Roads (England and Wales) | 10,000 |
| Disturnpiked Roads (Scotland) | 5,000 |
| Ireland:— | |
| Public Buildings | 35,000 |
| Science and Art Buildings, Dublin | 5,000 |
| Abroad:— | |
| Lighthouses Abroad | 1,000 |
| Diplomatic and Consular Buildings | 6,000 |

### CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

| | |
|---|---|
| England:— | |
| House of Lords, Offices | 6,000 |
| House of Commons, Offices | 6,000 |
| Treasury, including Parliamentary Counsel | 10,000 |
| Home Office and Subordinate Departments | 15,000 |
| Foreign Office | 10,000 |
| Colonial Office | 6,000 |
| Privy Council Office and Subordinate Departments | 7,000 |
| Board of Trade and Subordinate Departments | 20,000 |
| Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade | 100 |
| Charity Commission (including Endowed Schools Department) | 6,000 |
| Civil Service Commission | 8,000 |
| Exchequer and Audit Department | 9,000 |
| Friendly Societies, Registry | 1,500 |
| Land Commission for England | 4,000 |
| Local Government Board | 40,000 |
| Lunacy Commission | 2,000 |
| Mint (including Coinage) | 20,000 |
| National Debt Office | 2,500 |
| Patent Office | 9,000 |
| Paymaster General's Office | 4,500 |
| Public Works Loan Commission | 1,500 |
| Record Office | 4,000 |
| Registrar General's Office | 8,000 |
| Stationery Office and Printing | 90,000 |
| Woods, Forests, &c. Office of | 4,000 |
| Works and Public Buildings, Office of | 8,000 |
| Mercantile Marine Fund, Grant in Aid | 15,000 |
| Secret Service | 10,000 |

Scotland :—

| | £ |
|---|---|
| Secretary for Scotland | 2,000 |
| Exchequer and other Offices | 500 |
| Fishery Board | 3,000 |
| Lunacy Commission | 1,000 |
| Registrar General's Office | 1,000 |
| Board of Supervision | 3,000 |

Ireland :—

| | |
|---|---|
| Lord Lieutenant's Household | 1,000 |
| Chief Secretary's Office | 6,500 |
| Charitable Donations and Bequests Office | 300 |
| Local Government Board | 20,000 |
| Public Works Office | 10,000 |
| Record Office | 1,000 |
| Registrar General's Office | 3,000 |
| Valuation and Boundary Survey | 4,500 |

### CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

England :—

| | |
|---|---|
| Law Charges | 14,000 |
| Criminal Prosecutions | 30,000 |
| Supreme Court of Judicature | 70,000 |
| Wreck Commission | 2,000 |
| County Courts | 20,000 |
| Land Registry | 1,000 |
| Revising Barristers, England | - - |
| Police Courts (London and Sheerness) | 2,500 |
| Metropolitan Police | 150,000 |
| Special Police | 6,000 |
| County and Borough Police, Great Britain | 1,000 |
| Prisons, England and the Colonies | 110,000 |
| Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain | 70,000 |
| Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum | 6,000 |

Scotland :—

| | |
|---|---|
| Lord Advocate and Criminal Proceedings | 10,000 |
| Courts of Law and Justice | 5,000 |
| Register House Departments | 6,000 |
| Crofters Commission | 1,000 |
| Police, Counties and Burghs (Scotland) | 1,000 |
| Prisons, Scotland | 15,000 |

Ireland :—

| | |
|---|---|
| Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions | 15,000 |
| Supreme Court of Judicature | 15,000 |
| Court of Bankruptcy | 1,500 |
| Admiralty Court Registry | 200 |
| Registry of Deeds | 3,000 |
| Registry of Judgments | 500 |
| Land Commission | 10,000 |
| County Court Officers, &c. | 15,000 |
| Dublin Metropolitan Police (including Police Courts) | 30,000 |
| Constabulary | 250,000 |
| Prisons, Ireland | 20,000 |
| Reformatory and Industrial Schools | 25,000 |
| Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum | 1,500 |

### CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

England :—

| | £ |
|---|---|
| Public Education | 600,000 |
| Science and Art Department | 50,000 |
| British Museum | 25,000 |
| National Gallery | 1,500 |
| National Portrait Gallery | 400 |
| Learned Societies, &c. | 6,000 |
| London University | 2,000 |
| University Colleges, Wales | 1,000 |
| Deep Sea Exploring Expedition (Report) | 1,000 |

Scotland :—

| | |
|---|---|
| Public Education | 140,000 |
| Universities, &c. | 2,000 |
| National Gallery | 400 |

Ireland :—

| | |
|---|---|
| Public Education | 200,000 |
| Teachers' Pension Office | 500 |
| Endowed Schools Commissioners | 200 |
| National Gallery | 300 |
| Queen's Colleges | 500 |
| Royal Irish Academy | 100 |

### CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES.

| | |
|---|---|
| Diplomatic Services | 50,000 |
| Consular Services | 40,000 |
| Slave Trade Services | 5,000 |
| Suez Canal (British Directors) | 400 |
| Colonies, Grants in Aid | 4,000 |
| South Africa and St. Helena | 8,000 |
| Subsidies to Telegraph Companies | 10,000 |
| Cyprus, Grant in Aid | - - |

### CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES.

| | |
|---|---|
| Superannuation and Retired Allowances | 120,000 |
| Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions, &c. | 1,000 |
| Pauper Lunatics, England | - - |
| Pauper Lunatics, Scotland | - - |
| Pauper Lunatics, Ireland | 60,000 |
| Hospitals and Infirmaries, Ireland | 4,000 |
| Savings Banks and Friendly Societies Deficiency | - - |
| Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Great Britain | 500 |
| Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Ireland | 600 |

### CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

| | |
|---|---|
| Temporary Commissions | 8,000 |
| Miscellaneous Expenses | 4,000 |
| Adelaide Exhibition, 1887 | 2,600 |
| Total for Civil Services | £2,954,100 |

### REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

| | |
|---|---|
| Customs | 100,000 |
| Inland Revenue | 100,000 |
| Post Office | 100,000 |
| Post Office Packet Service | 20,000 |
| Post Office Telegraphs | 350,000 |
| Total for Revenue Departments | £670,000 |
| Grand Total | £3,624,100 |

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): The time has now come to make a serious appeal to Her Majesty's Government, and hon. Gentlemen opposite will not be surprised to hear that my argument will be in the form of the Motion that you, Sir, report Progress. We have had a very interesting discussion on the Navy Estimates; we have prolonged that discussion until the early hours in the morning; yet we are now asked to vote a sum of £3,624,100 on account of the Civil Service Estimates. It must occur even to hon. Gentlemen opposite that this is not an hour at which such a Vote should be moved, and such a discussion as must follow upon it should take place. Under these circumstances, I do hope that the Government themselves will see that in common fairness to the House—not only to Members on this side, but also to those sitting behind Ministers—they should not press it. I am always anxious to pour oil on troubled waters, and I would therefore make a practical suggestion to Her Majesty's Government. They tell us that they must have some money to-night in any case. I would suggest that, instead of asking for a Supply sufficient for two months, they should take a sum to carry them over 10 days or a fortnight. During the fortnight surely the Government will be able to find some day to bring on the Estimates, and give an opportunity for their adequate discussion. Hon. Gentlemen from Ireland have so far been unable to discuss questions of moment to their countrymen, because some hon. Gentlemen opposite have pursued the somewhat remarkable course of putting on the Paper Motions which probably they never had the slightest intention to make. Therefore, this is the only opportunity left to my hon. Friends behind me to discuss these matters—at any rate for some months to come; and I think that, under these circumstances, the Government will accede to the request I have to make.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I am surprised at the proposition of the hon. Gentleman opposite, who says it is his occupation to pour oil on troubled waters. He can hardly have made his request, that we should take enough money for a fortnight only, seriously. Why, that period would arrive in the middle of what I hope will prove to us a period of some holiday and some rest, and it would only defer for a short time the inconvenience we now wish to avoid. I am sorry to say that we must ask the Committee at this Sitting to give us the Vote which we ask.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I think there is another course open to the right hon. Gentleman, and though I cannot pledge English, Scotch, and Welsh Members definitely, I am in a position to speak for my Colleagues. There are in these Votes certain sums of money for services rendered in Ireland which are of great interest to my countrymen. The Irish Members are being unfairly and unjustly treated. An effort is being made, by means of a trick, to get through the House — to smuggle through the House—Votes which the Government must know we regard as highly contentious. I was silenced here one night while endeavouring to direct attention to the action of the Bankruptcy Court in Ireland, and I undoubtedly looked forward to this opportunity to bring under the notice of this House practices on the part of that Court the like of which has not existed for the last 25 years. Do the Government for one moment suppose that 60 or 70 Irish Members are going to be silent while money is voted away for the purposes of that Court? If they do, they have made a mistake. I am laying before this Committee reasons which compel us to criticize and oppose to the best of our ability some of these Votes. Certain questions are convulsing Ireland at this moment, and if money is to be voted to enable operations against which we wish to protest to be carried on we shall do our best to oppose the Vote. I can mention other Votes which are contentious if necessary. I think it is hardly decent on the part of the Government to endeavour to smuggle this Vote through at such an hour. They were ready enough to withdraw the Navy Vote, but that offer was made at an hour which did not appear to me to me fair, and therefore with my Colleagues I opposed it. The Government told us they would withdraw it in order to bring on the Civil Service Votes, but how could we hope to discuss them adequately at that time of night? One of the items is for the Irish Chief Secretary's Office. A man has recently gone to that country to govern it without knowing anything about it. His action threatens us day by day with bloodshed. Can the Government be serious in asking that this Committee, without discussing what he did in Dublin, should vote money to enable him to carry on his Office without criticism for several months? As long as we have power in this Committee, and so long as the Government denies us the right to discuss at such length as is reasonable and fair, Votes which are of the most vital, and it may be of the most deadly import to our constituencies—Votes which, if allowed to pass to-night, will deprive us of the power of criticizing the action of the Department for months to come—we will oppose them by every means in our power. Why, in these months events may occur which none of us can forecast, and we should be false to our duty if we, by our action, justified the action of the Government in imagining that they could get these Votes through without adequate discussion otherwise than by brute force. For myself, I am perfectly prepared now to enter on the discussion, and if, by exercising the Rule they passed only yesterday, they thrust down our throats Votes the discussion of which should occupy eight or ten hours, I am convinced that the public of this country will not approve of their action.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I desire to point out in very few words that this is a matter which concerns not merely Ireland, but the people of England and their Representatives in this House. It must be understood that this money comes from the pockets of the British taxpayer, who therefore has a right to carefully criticize how it is to be spent. I, for one, am not in the least disposed to forego my right and my privilege in this respect as the Representative of the people to criticize any detail which may suggest itself to me. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House expressed surprise that my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) should have proposed this Motion, and he seemed to treat the whole thing as a joke. I can assure him that if he chooses to play practical jokes we do not, and we are perfectly serious in making this Motion. Indeed, we shall be equally serious in making as many more as we consider necessary. He seems also to consider it an outrageous proposal, and he rests his objection to it on the ground that they must have money for the next two months. We have told them we are willing to give enough for a fortnight or three weeks. What I want to point out to the Government is this—if they are content to accept our compromise and take a Vote on Account—say, for a fortnight—it only requires that they should give up one day to us. They have every day at their disposal between this and the holidays. It is but a small thing to ask them to set apart one day for us to discuss the Vote, as all they have as an alternative is the introduction of a fresh Coercion Bill. For all I know we may sit here all day. I know hon. Members opposite have been burning for this for weeks; but we are bound to consider, if not our own, at least the health of other people—of the servants of this House. There are the attendants, the Clerks at the Table, and the policemen on duty outside; they cannot, like many hon. Members, make up for this long Sitting by taking extra sleep later on. Supposing this Sitting is to continue all day, will these men be relieved from their posts? If hon. Members are callous to their own suffering, I say it is monstrous and scandalous that we should tax the energies and sacrifice the health of our servants.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I am not surprised, Mr. Courtney, at the prospect held out in the brief speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House. He has, I think, made an unprecedented proposal. I am old at this kind of thing, and I call it unprecedented to ask the Committee at half-past 5 in the morning to vote £3,500,000 for the purpose of carrying on the Public Service. We are surprised; but we are not disheartened at the action of the Government. I speak with some confidence, and after an experience of seven years, and I say the Irish Members here, and some English Members too, both below and above the Gangway, are as ready, as willing, and as able as any hon. Members opposite to proceed to continue this Sitting until the time arrives for Mr. Speaker to take the Chair on the Sitting of Tuesday, the 22nd March. Now, Sir, the First Lord of the Treasury, in the exercise of what I suppose I am obliged to call his discretion, has thought fit to refuse his assent to the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton. Well, I very respectfully and humbly, as befits my position, venture to express a doubt that the right hon. Gentleman has acted wisely. I think he must have already perceived that the grossness of the mismanagement of the Business of this House in the present Sitting has not been equalled for many years. There were three courses open to the Government at the present Sitting for the furtherance of Public Business, and they took the least convenient. If they had placed the Vote on Account first on the Paper they might have obtained a Division upon it at the usual time for the closing of ordinary Sittings of this House. If, on the other hand, they had been content to take a Division on the Navy Vote at half-past 12 they could have had £1,250,000. But nothing satisfied them except to cram both Votes into one Sitting of the House, and I venture to hope they will find it impossible to do so.

Mr. NOBLE (Hastings): Mr. Courtney, I rise to Order. I wish to ask you whether the hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) is in Order in saying that hon. Members on this side of the House are drunk?

The CHAIRMAN: I did not hear the words used, even as repeated by the hon. Gentleman.

Captain COTTON (Cheshire, Wirral): I beg to say, Sir, that I heard the hon. Member for Mid Cork use those words.

The CHAIRMAN: The words have not reached this end of the House in any form.

Captain COTTON: I heard the hon. Member for Mid Cork say, Sir, that one Member on this side of the House was drunk.

The CHAIRMAN: Such an observation, if made by the hon. Member for Mid Cork, is most offensive and improper.

Dr. TANNER: (Cork Co., Mid): But, Mr. Courtney, I must ask you—[*Ministerial cries of* "Withdraw!"] I am not going to withdraw, Sir. [*Renewed cries of* "Withdraw!"] If the hon. Member opposite will point out any person to whom I said it, I will withdraw.

The CHAIRMAN: It is most offensive and disorderly to say it of any Member of the House. I must now call on the hon. Member to withdraw the observation as he does not disavow it.

Dr. TANNER: Mr. Courtney, I shall certainly, out of respect for you, withdraw anything you tell me to withdraw.

Mr. SEXTON: I was saying, Mr. Courtney, when I was interrupted, that the Government ought to have granted us an opportunity for properly discussing the Vote on Account. They have pursued a course which is unfair and inconsiderate to the Members of this House, and which will be regarded as unfair by men of all political Parties. They put first on the Paper a Vote for the Navy, and they place second the Vote of over £3,000,000—a Vote involving the whole Public Service of Ireland. This course has been pursued by the Government in the hope that when we reached the Vote on Account at a late hour at night they might gag the Irish Members with regard to questions of vital importance and of manifest urgency. I turn now for a moment to the question of physical endurance. [*Ministerial cries of* "Question!"] Well, if there is anything more relevant to the present situation of the Committee than the question of physical endurance I should be glad to hear what it is. We have been here for 13 or 14 hours. Eleven hours hence, that is to say at about 5 o'clock to-day, we shall be called upon to discuss a question which the Government themselves regard as of such unequalled urgency that they intend to ask for the whole of the time of the House for the purpose of discussing it. Now, Sir, I ask is it fair, is it seemly, under such circumstances, to proceed with this Vote now? [An hon. Member: Yes.] The hon. Gentleman opposite showed such extremely bad judgment, as well as bad taste, in a recent episode, that I do not think it necessary to reply to his interruption. I ask whether it is reasonable to go on, when Members have been here so many hours, and when we know that there is only time enough left for us to get to our homes, obtain the necessary natural rest, and come back to the House before the Speaker takes the Chair for this evening's Sitting? Is it fair to ask us to approach the consideration of the question of precedence for the Irish Coercion Bill, which, I am told, contains novel and startling provisions—to approach the consideration of that question with our minds worn out, and with our bodies jaded? The Government want to go on with the Vote on Account. The Vote on Account includes a sum of money for the Office of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Where is the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour)? Where is the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes)? I believe that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland is wandering gloomily somewhere about the premises; but I think the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary is at a distance from the House. The Attorney General for Ireland may be competent to deal with some legal questions, although some doubt has arisen on that point since the right hon. and learned Gentleman formulated his opinion respecting the Plan of Campaign; but, assuming that he is, is he to be allowed to be the mouthpiece of the Irish Executive on any large question of policy which may be raised? We intend to raise the question of the death, or, as some consider it, the murder, of the boy O'Hanlon, of Youghal, the question of Proclamations by the Lord Lieutenant, and the question of social order in Belfast. Will the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) contend that it is seemly or tolerable that we should be asked at this hour of the morning to bring forward questions of such urgency and gravity when the Minister of the Crown responsible for the affairs of Ireland is not here to answer us? I think I am perfectly justified in pleading that we should not be called upon to do so. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant is elsewhere taking his natural rest, or is preparing his mind for that masterly and memorable statement of policy which is expected from him this evening. Is it fair to allow the right hon. Gentleman that rest, and to reduce us, by continued attendance in the House, to such a condition of mind and body that when the evening comes we shall be unable to answer him? I wish to ask another question, Sir. Have the Government considered what will be the probable length of this Sitting? I think we ought to have some information on the subject before we proceed any further. Do the Government contemplate sitting all day? Do they mean to allow the Sitting of the 21st of March to merge in the Sitting of the 22nd? Hon. Gentlemen may find that the result may be confusing, because, if the two Sittings are merged, what will become of the Order of Business set down for the 22nd? The plan of the Government was that this evening the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, or the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, should move for precedence for the stages of the Bill it is intended to bring in to apply coercion to Ireland. If we continue sitting, I apprehend that the Business on the Paper for this evening will lapse, and that the only Business to be done to-day will be the Business of the Vote on Account. I ask Gentleman opposite who have a taste for mathematics to tot up the balance of advantages, and to see whether they are really gaining any time by the course they are now taking. I heard somewhere recently that Irishmen, compared with Englishmen, are taller men, stronger men, and men of greater endurance. The majority opposite are anxious for a compromise, and are crying out for conciliation. [Mr. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Mid): Oh, oh!] I am too well acquainted with the heroic nature of the hon. Member to think that he would ever do so. At all events, Gentlemen opposite may be anxious for a compromise at 4 o'clock this afternoon, when, perhaps, we shall be no longer in a melting mood. It may interest the House to know that a large batch of eloquent, and some of them, perhaps, prolix Members, are arriving from Ireland by a train which reaches Euston at half-past 6, having occupied Pullman cars on the journey. We have taken the precaution, Sir, to despatch a messenger to Euston to bring them to the House of Commons. On the whole, Sir, I think that, considering the amount of this Vote and the questions involved in it, there is no prospect of an early termination of this Sitting, and that the Sittings of the 21st and 22nd of March will be merged in one another, to the no small confusion of the Public Business. I can confidently say to the Committee that not only will the numerous questions in this Vote relating to Ireland be raised as long, Sir, as you consider that the rights of the minority entitle them to raise them; but they will none of them be discussed with any less fulness than if we were conducting a debate at half-past 5 in the evening. Now, I desire that fair progress should be made with the Public Business, and I would suggest to Members of the Government that the most sensible thing they can do, seeing that the Procedure Rules have been given Notice of for Thursday, and that the only urgent Rule of Procedure has been passed, is to alter the arrangements so far as to put down Procedure for another day, and to take this Vote on Account on Thursday. I think my Colleagues will bear me out when I say that we would undertake, notwithstanding the urgent and important character of the questions involved in this Vote, that the Division upon it should be taken at a reasonable time. Now, Sir, I think I have made the largest and most reasonable offer that could be made, and, if it is refused by the Government, there is nothing for it but to fight the question out. Of one thing I am sure, and that is, that when this battle is over, it is not the Irishmen in this House who will feel discomfited and defeated.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): Mr. Courtney, I did not vote against the majority in the last Division because I thought that there was some ground on which the Government might urge that full debate had taken place on the Navy Estimates. But I think the situation is altogether changed now. In my opinion, we are entitled to say that the Government are turning the Business of this House topsy-turvy. They are turning our days into nights, and they are driving us into a situation which I do not hesitate to say, Mr. Courtney, is becoming intolerable. No one, not even the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), if he were here, or even the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith), could deny that hon. Members are within their rights, upon the Motion which, you, Sir, have put from the Chair, in discussing any item in the Civil Service Estimates. I will go further, and say that not only are Gentlemen within their rights in taking that course, but that it is their bounden duty, under the special circumstances into which we are thrown by the action of the Government, to raise any question in which they are interested, and to discuss it at length. The prospect before us is altogether uncertain. The Government are at this moment seeking to get Votes on Account, whereby they will be able to postpone any Vote in the Estimates for the period of a couple of months. The Government have been taking all the time of private Members, and if even there was an occasion when such Members were entitled to take the first opportunity of discussing matters in which they are interested, I think that time has arrived. No answer has been given from the Front Bench opposite to the appeal which has just been made that this Vote on Account might be taken up on Thursday, and discussed at a reasonable hour and in a fair way. On the Vote which we have just passed there was an absolute silence on the part of the Government, and I would, therefore, ask this question. Suppose we enter upon the discussion of this Vote on Account, is it the intention of the Government to deal with it in the same spirit as they dealt with the Vote for the Navy, and to observe an obstinate silence upon the important questions which are to be raised? The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland is not in his place, and I say that there is no one else who is able to speak for the Government on the points which will be discussed. I cannot imagine that it is intended by the Government to make it a sham discussion, because, if it be, I venture to say that there will be a complete breach of faith on the part of the Government. We have had an assurance that if that discussion is started, the infinite variety of subjects over which it will range will receive the consideration they deserve at the hands of the Government. I have not one particle of misgiving as to the duty that rests on me, and upon hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House, to offer the strongest opposition to the course taken by the Government in seeking to dragoon the Committee into passing so large a Vote.

[MR. RAIKES (Postmaster General) took the Chair.] [5.45.]

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): Mr. Raikes, your appearance in the Chair reminds me of several All-night Sittings which were held a great many years ago, and I would just ask the "old Parliamentary hands" on the other side of the House to point out to their Friends and Colleagues that it was very seldom that any good came of them. We all got tired and weary and excited, and the excitement spread to people out-of-doors, and a great deal of harm was done by the attempts made by the Government of the day to force Business on in those All-night Sittings. I think, Sir, that in regard to some of those Sittings, over which you, Mr. Raikes, presided—and as far as your presidency went, Sir, no complaint could be made —things would have been much better if they had never taken place. I would now suggest to the Government that they should assent to the Motion for reporting Progress, and I would urge on them several reasons for doing so. I do not agree with my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) that we ought not to plead for a little rest. I always feel fatigued at these Sittings. I have been present during all the All-night Sittings in this House, except for four or five hours of one of them. But I have always felt fatigued. I do so now, and I know that other Members cannot bear the fatigue any more than I can. I must, perhaps, make an exception in the case of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), who came down, I think, as late as about 5 o'clock in the morning, and who looks very fresh. Well, we are now supposed to enter upon serious Business, expecting a Vote on Account amounting to £3,600,000. I should like to ask you, Mr. Raikes, whether you would like, in the conduct of the Business of the Post Office, to have to consider a question involving an expenditure of £3,600,000 after having been sitting in this House all night? I do not think, Sir, that you would be in a proper condition to do so. At all events, I would rather have your opinion upon any subject when you have not been sitting up all night than when you have. I should like to put it to you, Sir, whether it is prudent for a Committee of the House of Commons to take a course which would not be considered wise in an individual. I quite acknowledge that if it was absolutely necessary that this Business should be done at once, we should have to do it. But no such necessity exists. It is a mere question of obstinacy on the part of the Government. The Government may, of course, say that they are merely firm, and that it is we who are obstinate, but I contend that the reverse is the case. Would it not be better that we should adjourn and consider this question at a reasonable hour? This sum of £3,624,100 is really not wanted by the Government. I would put this question to Ministers. Does an Appropriation Bill take more than eight days to pass? If it does not, it is not necessary to force this Vote through the Committee now, and I would ask the Government whether they really intend to cause such a scandal as would be involved in making us vote this large sum, when they know that the immense majority of Members must be so tired and fagged that, not only are they unfit to deal with the money of the country, but they are unfit to take part in an ordinary game at whist. The taxpayers, I have always found, are very jealous about the action of their Representatives in regard to voting money, and rightly so. But can we, at this time, give reasonable attention to voting Supply? What is the Government programme? Do they want us to surrender all right of discussion and simply pass this Vote? We want to come here after a few hours' interval to discuss this matter properly. Will they give us a fair opportunity of doing so? We are not in a position to do it now, and soon we shall have excited London pouring into the House, not much helping towards a calm dispassionate discussion of some of those Irish subjects that are called burning questions. There is another reason for not plunging into this discussion at once, and why the Government might make some temporary arrangement, even if they allow an adjournment for a couple of hours only. Besides the personal advantages of a rest for that time, we should, on resuming, have representatives of the Press here in proper force, if not in numbers above the usual average. It is a matter of consequence that the pith of the remarks in reference to this large sum, one of the most important Votes of the year, should be made public. The Civil Service Estimates open up the whole field of Civil administration. The late Mr. Isaac Butt, a great authority on matters of Parliamentary Procedure, declared it most un-Constitutional to habitually take these large sums on account. You take a Vote for two months, then for another two months, and then, at the end of the Session, when we are all heated, tired, and jaded, and want to get away, these Votes are brought on with a rush. First and last, these Estimates do not get properly considered, and evil consequences result. The Departments will not pare off abuses in expenditure if this expenditure is voted without protest; it is only pressure from this House that will induce them to do so. Then the constituents, too, seeing that the Estimates are not properly discussed, are apt to think the expenditure is more extravagant than it really is; and thus we are susceptible to sudden bursts of frugality that may be detrimental to the true interests of the Public Service. Passing a Vote on Account like this without proper discussion leads to these evils, and it is mere idleness to say there can be a proper discussion at the end of the year; there will be no more than a discussion of a few foremost items. I am unwilling to take up time in elaborating my argument; but I urge the Government to take into account our anxiety to discuss the Vote, not item by item, but by five or six Irish questions and eight or nine English subjects; and my hon. Friend (Mr. Sexton) has given a pledge that, so far as Irish Members are concerned, these discussions shall terminate on Thursday. This extraordinary attitude of the Government was quite unexpected, or a large number of Members would have been here to increase our minority; and, even as it is, we have English Liberal Members here to aid us in our protest against the action of the Government—Members whom you do not often find taking part in an All-night Sitting. They have done so on this occasion, for they feel that in this contest on this question of Supply they have their constituents with them.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): The proceedings of to-night will have an effect in the country. I am quite sure that nothing will more endanger the position of the Government, bringing it into collision with the feelings of the taxpayers, than the attempt to force on a large Vote at this hour. I may urge this view on Members of the Government—that the effect, when these things become known outside, will be disastrous to them, leading the people to believe, what I am afraid they will have considerable ground for believing, that we vote away money without due consideration. For their own interest, I would advise the Government to take the Vote at a time more opportune for discussion.

Mr. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.): Throughout this discussion it appears to me to have been forgotten that there is another part of the United Kingdom besides Ireland having grievances felt acutely, which desires to have those grievances discussed, and has sent 72 Members for that purpose. May I call attention to the fact that, of those 72 Representatives, only three are present —or, say four, though we do not usually count the Lord Advocate as a Scotch Member. Sixty-eight Scotch Members are certainly absent. I have waited here all night for the purpose of performing my duty as a Scotch Member, knowing that there are different grievances which our constituents expect us to discuss at the very earliest moment. I have waited for the simple reason that, of all the Nationalities represented here, the Scotch nation has the most difficulty in obtaining a hearing. We are constantly on the watch to get in a word upon Scotch affairs, because our difficulty is that, while the Irish are hated, we are despised, and contempt is far more difficult to overcome. Hatred stimulates resistance from the hated, contempt crushes and paralyzes the organ of combativeness. We are, on this very account, the more eager to discuss our grievances at those moments permitted by the spirit of the Constitution. It is a new doctrine to me—and, though not an old Member, I have been a student of the subject—that grievances are to be postponed for Supply; I always thought they preceded it. It is astonishing to me that a professed Conservative Government should resist by physical force one of the oldest traditions of the Constitution of the country. I might remind the Government of some of the

Scotch questions that naturally arise in consideration of the Vote. There are items that have connection with the proceedings that have taken place in Skye——

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. RAIKES): I must remind the hon. Member it would not be in Order to discuss the items of the Vote on a Motion to report Progress.

MR. WALLACE: I had no intention of doing so. I was merely about to point out, as reasons for having Progress reported now, that there were items of a certain character that would require to be discussed, when discussion of these particulars became orderly. These, I was about to say, were so complicated, so numerous, and so important, that they must needs give rise to considerable debate; and, therefore, in view of the amount of work before the Committee, it would be well to report Progress, and resume under more favourable circumstances. One of the items we, as Scotch Members, would be called upon to discuss would be the Crofter Question, never sufficiently ventilated in this House. When occasion seemed to offer itself, I had myself prepared an elaborate speech on the subject; but, if I might use a colloquialism, that speech was burked by hon. Gentlemen opposite. It would be a serious undertaking to bring out all the arguments, facts, and illustrations I had prepared—a serious undertaking for me, and possibly for the House too. There would be many questions, abstract and particular, arising in connection with the Vote for Law and Justice in Scotland, the Crofter prosecutions in particular. Again, there is the Education item to be considered. Members not now present have an engrossing interest in educational matters, and have various grievances to ventilate. Not only so; but there is the Fisheries Question, which presents many points of absorbing interest. If I were to mention the herring brand, for instance, it would, if it did not exactly produce excitement, excite most diversified interest in the minds of Scotch Members——

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. RAIKES): Order, order! I have already pointed out it would be entirely out of Order to attempt to discuss items of the proposed Vote on a Motion to report Progress. I must request the hon. Member to confine his observations to that Motion.

MR. WALLACE: I shall avoid that subject, Sir. Not that I was intending to disregard your ruling in any way, or to depart from Order by discussing the item; I was about to point out the difficulties of attempting discussion at this unusual hour. There will be Scotch Members desirous of considering the question of the appointment of the Secretary of State for Scotland; but, passing away from the special aspect of the Vote as affecting the grievances of Scotland, I think, as an individual, I have a right to appeal to Her Majesty's Government on the question of the physical resources of hon. Members present. I think they are mistaken if they enter into this contest regarding it as a question that must be settled by plurality of numbers; it is rather a case of Thermopylæ than a battle on Salisbury Plain—a few only are necessary to stop a pass against a host incalculably more numerous than the defenders. We shall be able to keep up a sufficient supply of strong, fresh Members, able to do what is necessary to oppose the arguments, or the mere official presence of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. I feel myself, I will not say brighter, that would be arrogating too much to myself, but not more dull than I was 12 hours ago, and I do not think it is possible for me to be more dull 12 hours hence. Still, I would appeal to Her Majesty's Government to accept the reasonable compromise that has been held out to them more than once. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) offered a reasonable compromise when he suggested the Government should take a Vote on Account sufficient for a fortnight; but I think the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) offered a still more reasonable compromise, when he consented, on behalf of those for whom he was entitled to speak, if the Vote were set down for Thursday that it should be considered fairly, with no attempt to resist it beyond that day. But it is a very difficult thing to restore peace when war is raised by challenge and attack from the other side. There is much that might be said in regard to the mind of the country not being sufficiently informed in regard to the Vote owing to the absence of the Press.

Naturally, the country takes an interest in the expenditure of the money raised by its taxation: and if we discuss an important Vote like this behind the backs of those who are to pay it, I am perfectly sure a feeling of resentment will be provoked. I might add many other reasons; but I desire only to participate in the debate to a reasonable extent, and I think I have said enough to make good the position I occupy in support of the Motion before us.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The speech of the hon. Member makes us recognize the cleverness of the nation to which he belongs. He tells us the Scotch Representatives have all gone to bed; and I am quite sure he will be glad to follow their example. There is nothing in what we are asking the Committee to do to prevent him. We ask, in order that the law may be complied with, for a Vote on Account of the Civil Service. We are asking a thing that has been asked every Session for years past, and such a Vote has been passed Session after Session with little or no discussion. When the hon. Member talks about the necessity for discussing item after item, he will forgive me for saying he hardly understands the nature of a Vote on Account. It is not possible for the affairs of the country to be carried on if there is to be such a discussion of items. The Committee will have ample opportunity of considering every item, and of attacking any to which objection is taken when in ordinary course the Votes come on. We are told it is an easy matter to adjourn the Committee to Thursday and finish the Vote then, but we should not be able to comply with the law if we did anything of the kind. Hon. Members must credit us with having paid some attention to the Rules of Order, and this matter, in which we are specially interested, we have carefully considered. Hence the statement that we cannot comply with the law unless we obtain the Vote we now ask for, and which has been granted in several Sessions. The sooner we get it, the sooner shall we get to bed.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid.): The right hon. Gentleman speaks the usual clap-trap of officialism. We have heard that speech from the Treasury Bench times out of mind. The right hon. Gentleman says it is absolutely necessary to carry on the work of the nation, that the Vote should be taken, but we have equally good authority that it is not absolutely necessary. If the Government want money to comply with the requirements of the law, they should come here in time and propose their Votes—at such a time as will enable us to discuss grievances without being met with this stale Tory cry, the exigencies of time, the usual plea from that Bench. We have a right to claim that at the beginning of the Session—at the earliest possible moment, to insure the passing of the Appropriation Bill within the required period—the Government should submit their Estimates for consideration. Otherwise we stand in the position that we are entitled to refuse the money, seeing that we have not the opportunity of bringing forward our grievances in accordance with the time-honoured Constitutional doctrine that grievances precede Supply. So far as I can see, Sir, the practice in Parliament diverges altogether from the procedure laid down in books. The practice of Parliament seems to be that the Ministers of the Crown come down to the House at the end of every six weeks with a Vote of Supply, and expect to get the money, and the discussion on the details comes on after the Ministers have got the money. Then the hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) comes here and says that the money has already been voted, uttering the usual clap-trap of officialism. It is a very strange sort of procedure which allows the money to be voted, and then when Motions for reducing the Votes are made, hon. Members find that they are of no use, because they are barred by the very effective argument that the money is already voted. I always thought that the Constitutional doctrine was that grievances came before Supply; but the practice of this House is very different. There is another fact which illustrates the odd character of the practice of Parliament. To-night we have had a precedent created of the application of the closure, which no doubt will be in time fully felt in practice by hon. Gentlemen opposite. Members on this side of the House had no indication that the Government were going to pursue the policy which they have entered upon, or that they intended to persevere or apply the closure on a question of Supply. This is a precedent which before long will be used with great effect upon hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House, and very reasonably because, when their Leaders set an example they should be prepared to understand that such bad examples are likely to be followed, which one would think ought to make them very chary in setting them. The Government may carry forward these Votes to-night by the repeated application of the closure with a mechanical majority at their back. But if they should do that they will be countenancing an un-Constitutional thing, for since it is in their power to apply the closure on the discussion of each Vote which comes up for consideration, they will, if they do this, be making attempts at silencing Members in a legitimate debate on a question of a Vote on Account. It certainly does appear to me that the Government are proceeding very unwisely. Votes in Supply have been free from the operations of the closure in the past, but now that there is a precedent it is hard to say how far the power will extend in the future. There is no guarantee that the power will not be used in Committee of Supply, and consequently the whole principle of Representative Government is reduced to an absurdity.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I just want, Sir, to point out a contrast between the statement on a certain point of the hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson), and a statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope). The Financial Secretary admitted earlier in the evening that the law could be complied with if this Vote were taken on Thursday. On the other hand, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State has declared that the reason why the Government requested that the Vote should be taken was, that the law demanded that it should be passed to-night, at the present Sitting. Now, I am anxious to know if the Government are willing that their case should stand or fall by the assertion of their Secretary of State for War. The case of the Government is that one of its Members makes a statement absolutely contradictory to the assertion of another of its Members in a previous part of the same evening. I am glad the Secretary of State for War has put his contention that the law positively requires that this Vote should be passed to-night; but I have to say that the law does not require this, and that the Financial Secretary to the Treasury was quite correct when he stated that the Votes could be taken on Thursday and yet the law would be completely complied with. [“No!”] Well, in other words, he did not deny that the law would be complied with if the Vote were taken on Thursday, and I suppose he can if he chooses. And this diametrical opposition is the cause of the trouble and a scandal of this All-night Sitting. It was agreed that if the Vote was put down for Thursday the debate would be extended to Friday, and the law could not in that way be complied with; but hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House have answered that by saying that the Vote would be allowed to pass on Thursday; and thus the whole objection falls to the ground at once, and no danger of a breach of law is incurred. I only hope that the observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War will reach the Press, that the public may be able to judge of the intelligence and ability of some Members of the Government. Sir, I am informed on high authority that if this Vote was carried on Thursday, the 24th of March, it could be reported on Friday, the 25th of March, and this would be three days before the time upon which it was reported in a previous year. It is simply monstrous to consent to the passing of over £3,000,000 of the public money without any discussion. We are desired to pass the Estimates referring to the Home Department in the absence of the Home Secretary; those of the Public Works Department in the absence of the Chief Commissioner of Public Works; those for the Law Department in the absence of the Attorney General and the Solicitor General; and, finally, the most important, solemn, and contentious Votes of all those of the Irish Department in the absence of the Chief Secretary. We are quite willing that the way in which the taxes are spent should go forth for the judgment of the country, and I again repeat that it is mainly owing to the gross, palpable, and immense contradiction between two Members of the Government that we have the scandal and trouble of this All-night Sitting. I say again, Sir, that if the Votes are put down for Thursday, hon. Members on this side of the House will undertake that the discussion will close on that day, and probably hon. Members above the Gangway would assent to this arrangement or accept the suggestion as a reasonable promise.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The hon. Gentleman (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) asks whether, if this Vote were put down for Thursday, it would be in accordance with the law? I pointed out, I think, that it required eight days for the Appriation Bill, and Thursday is the 24th of March. Hence the hon. Member will see that Thursday would be too late a day for passing the Vote if the law was to be fully complied with. The Supplementary Votes are to meet expenditure for the current year, and they require to go through exactly the same processes as the Vote on Account to make them available for the Services of the country. Hon. Members must see that in order to make the money serviceable within the current financial year—that is to say, shortly before the 31st of March—it is absolutely necessary that we should have this Vote now passed. I am quite sure that the hon. Members of this House do not want to put the Government into the unpleasant position of being driven, at the last moment, to the inability of carrying out the Services of the country. The Government are quite willing to meet the suggestions of hon. Members; but I have to say distinctly that Thursday would be too late, and that it is necessary to get this Vote in order to make matters regular.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I wish to ask, Sir, whether, seeing that Thursday is too late, it would be possible to regularize—if I may use the word—the situation by holding a Sitting on Saturday. Mr. Raikes, I have sat in the House, and often heard that grievance comes before Supply; but I find in practice that there is far too much of a feeling in the House now that the principal and first object of the House is to legislate, whilst high authorities on the House impress on us that the ventilation of grievances is a most important point to observe and follow. We, on this side of the House, have no desire indefinitely to prolong the debate on these Estimates; but we certainly do feel that it was a very mistaken proceeding to so arrange matters that the Civil Service Estimates should be discussed at the late hour which the Government thought proper to provide. It will be remembered that at an early period of this Session I suggested myself that we should require to discuss the Estimates on a side Vote, because I foresaw and feared this awkward situation. I may venture to say that the cause of many of us remaining in this House during the discussion of these Estimates was in order to secure to hon. Members below the Gangway an opportunity of ventilating certain grievances connected with the Government of Ireland — grievances which there were no other means or facilities of making known. I would point out to the Committee that the position of affairs in this matter in the present year are peculiar, and therefore it is not right to compare past years with the present year, because during the present year hon. Members have been deprived—and prospectively are to be deprived—of almost every opportunity which private Members are supposed to possess, in order to bring forward the grievances which naturally would have been brought forward had there been a chance of doing so. Besides, not only is the time of private Members taken and to be taken by the Government for a lengthened period, but that new method of procedure whereby we find subjects really pass out of discussion because of bogus Motions several days or weeks in advance, has come into existence; and private Members have to seize every available opportunity in order to endeavour to secure a chance of discussing matters of grievance. Therefore, on these Estimates hon. Members on this side of the House have really got the desire to get such an opportunity of informing the House and calling the attention of the country to abuses which require reform. I hope that right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench will take into consideration whether they can see their way by some less violent tactics and method than passing a Vote without discrimination or discussion of its important contents—especially the Irish items—to regularize the situation. Hon. Members have been in attendance for about 15 hours; and I would again suggest, in the absence of other alternative, to the Government that Saturday could be introduced for a Sitting for the purpose of accomplishing the passing and consideration of this Vote, and especially that the House may discuss questions of great interest and importance concerning the safety and security of Ireland. No better course could be followed; and it is surely preferable to this Sitting in excitement, and under circumstances which prevent the utterances of hon. Gentlemen being properly recorded in the public Press.

Mr. MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr): I think the whole fault, Sir, of this scandalous Sitting is to be blamed upon the Government. We have heard from the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) and the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) that it was absolutely necessary that these Estimates should be passed to-night. And the Government knew that fact before to-night—that they wanted over £3,000,000, and with that knowledge in their minds they come down to the House and bring on the Estimates just before midnight. I ask the Government, are they not ashamed to acknowledge that they knew it was necessary to pass this enormous sum of money to-night, and yet they did not introduce the Estimate for consideration until midnight? It was not the custom to discuss the items upon this Vote, it was said. I took the trouble to look what happened last year, and what do I find? That a Member of the present Government itself discussed these Votes. If hon. Members will look at the Estimates, they will find that we are now called upon to discuss, as a part of this Vote, the grant of some £100,000 for the Post Office; and I would call attention to the fact that the Government have put the Chief of the Department the Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) in the Chair while the matter is under discussion. I venture to say that never in the history of this Parliament has there been a single precedent of the discussion of an Estimate in Committee with the Minister who is responsible for that Estimate occupying the Chair. I can hardly realize myself that what I have stated is the case. Now, what would be the procedure when we come to the Post Office Vote? It would be that you, Mr. Chairman, would leave the Chair, and the Government would select another Chairman from the Treasury Bench, or that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Raikes), in charge of a Department, would find himself in the Chair whilst the Estimates of his Colleagues were being passed, and not knowing what Vote may come next—it might be the Estimates of his own Department—he would stand up and ask the acceptance of his own Vote with the Committee discussing Estimates of a right hon. Gentleman in the Chair. I desire to repeat that this is what the Government has reduced us to this evening. I am able to speak deliberately and with some knowledge. The position we are in is this. The Government declare in this House that they are bound to get the money represented by this Vote to-night. They knew that, and that by law they must get the money. And yet they bring in a Vote for this money at midnight. Then, when the proper Chairman leaves the Chair, the Government put the Chief of one of their own Departments whose Estimates are under discussion, in the Chair. I challenge the Chairman (Mr. Raikes) and the Clerks at the Table to show the Committee a solitary instance of a similar character, and I call attention to the fact that the permission of this is prejudicial to our Parliamentary usage.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): When hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench are as still as statues, we cannot expect them to accept the invitation of my hon. Friend (Mr. Molloy); and, besides, not even the ingenuous mind of the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) can find an answer. I respectfully submit to you, Mr. Raikes, that the point which my hon. Friend (Mr. Molloy) has made is one so cogent, that either you, Sir, as Postmaster General, should be out of the Chair, or the Sitting should come to a termination. The challenge of my hon. Friend has not been answered; and I say, for my part, that during my seven years in Parliament I have never known such a case to arise as that to which our attention has been called. In regard to the observation made by my hon. Friend, that it would be necessary for you, Mr. Raikes, to leave the Chair when the Vote for your Department comes on, it seems to me that from the moment that you put the Question of the Vote on Account from your Chair—from that moment you will be in the position of presiding over the deliberations of the Committee upon the Estimates of your own Department. I think the House will agree with me that it is impossible, under these circumstances, for the debate to proceed. We are told that it is necessary for the public interests that this Vote should be taken at the present Sitting; but the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton has told us it is not necessary. When doctors disagree, how shall we decide?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): Since the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton made the statement that once the Vote was taken on March 24, I have discovered that it was interposed in Committee, but that it was actually taken on March 19.

MR. SEXTON: I have not had the advantage of looking at *Hansard.* Are we to understand that the proposal for a Saturday Sitting is rejected?

MR. JACKSON: A Saturday Sitting will not help us. It is a question of beginning. We must take the early stage.

MR. SEXTON: Will Thursday do? I have another suggestion to make. The Government have proposed this day to ask for precedence for the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill. It is obviously inconvenient, to say the least, that we should proceed to the discussion of that. Will the Government consider the expediency of winding up this Sitting, and putting down this Vote for the first Order this evening? If they are disposed to do that, I think my hon. Friends will agree with me that, having taken a substantial and full discussion of two or three questions of gravity, the debate on the question of precedence for the Criminal Law Amendment Bill might be taken after the dinner hour. What more can you expect than that? Suppose we go on sitting till noon to-day, and the Vote is got by the application of the closure, so as to secure precedence being taken at half-past 5 this evening——

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. RAIKES): The hon. Member is now travelling beyond the Motion to report Progress.

MR. SEXTON: Am I not at liberty to make suggestions on a Motion to report Progress? Instead of proceeding with this Sitting now, let the Government adjourn this debate, on our undertaking to close it to-night in time to give the Leader of the House an opportunity to move the Resolution of which he has given Notice, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) an opportunity to reply. I see the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer is here. I do not doubt his ability at any time to appreciate promptly and accurately the importance of any point that may be suggested. Let this Vote precede the precedence Resolution to-night; the latter will go on all night under any circumstances. I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer will see that this suggestion is prompted by a serious desire for the harmony of the House, and to avoid ill-temper arising from extreme courses.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I regret exceedingly the Government do not avail themselves of these chances. I, for my part, cannot help feeling that the Government have an object in view. [*Laughter.*] I, too, have an object in view, and I should recommend hon. Members opposite not to laugh at it, if humanity form any portion of their composition. I firmly believe—and whether I am right or wrong will be for my countrymen to judge—that Her Majesty's Government are trying this on at the present moment in order to excite the people of Ireland to bloodshed. Mr. Raikes, they simply want to promote murder and assassination in Ireland.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. RAIKES): The hon. Gentleman must be aware that it is entirely contrary to the Rules of this House to impute motives to hon. Members, and especially motives such as murder and assassination. He must withdraw the statement.

DR. TANNER: I dare say, Sir. But what I said, Sir, was I feared the policy of the Government—the policy which the Government were promoting at this Sitting—was one which would lead to assassination and murder.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. RAIKES): The hon. Member stated, in the hearing of the Committee, that he believed the Government had an object in view, and that was to promote assassination and murder. I call upon the hon. Member explicitly to withdraw that statement.

Dr. TANNER: I will certainly withdraw that, Sir; but I say again I believe that this policy will lead to assassination and murder. [*Cries of* "Withdraw!"] Of course I withdraw what the right hon. Gentleman told me. He is a Member of the Government, and I withdraw. It is all very fine; but I maintain that my hon. Friend is justified in calling attention to these very important matters. Why, Sir, at the present time we are called upon to discuss the Post Office system, when we know that the papers are teeming with accounts of the extraordinary dealings with the Post Office by officials, of whom the right hon. Gentleman the Chairman is at the head. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is in his place; he is practically the prop and the crutch of the Government, and I should hope that he would deal with this matter properly and decently. And, accordingly, I charge the Government with doing what I believe will lead to murder and assassination in Ireland. Let them answer that if they can.

Mr. LANE (Cork Co., E.): I have only to say that even if we agreed, the Committee now in passing these Votes would be doing an illegal act.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I am only going to say one or two words to the right hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson). We have received no answer to the appeal made by my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton). I wish to add to that appeal that, as far as I am concerned, if the Government will accept the compromise, I shall be willing to waive my right to speak on these Estimates. If they do not, I shall certainly raise a question, and go to a Division.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): It has been asked, more than once, whether it is the intention of the Goverment that if a discussion is raised on any of these items it will receive the attention it deserves. Is it desired to vote money wholesale, without any discussion? Not long since the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War pointed out that if discussions were raised on these occasions it would be impossible for the Business of the House to go on. But that is not an answer to the question. Whenever money is demanded, every individual Member of this House is entitled to raise any grievance in his mind, or that may be felt by his constituents; and if, as a result, Votes on Account should be abandoned, it would not be a matter for regret. I ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is the intention of the Government to enter upon the Vote and fully explain all points raised on this side of the House. Are we to have a reply to any questions we may raise?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I can assure the hon. Member that even if the discussion on the Estimates had been taken hours ago, he would have found Members of the Government perfectly prepared to give such explanations as are necessary, and all questions will be answered.

Mr. SEXTON: The responsible Ministers are not here? Where is the Chief Secretary for Ireland?

Mr. GOSCHEN: I am answering the question, I trust, in good humour; but I wish to point out to the hon. Member for West Belfast, in regard to the compromise he has suggested, that I have heard the Scotch Members and others declare that they wish to discuss certain points connected with these Estimates; and, therefore, he is not in a position to make the compromise bind them. I would suggest to the hon. Member to do now what he might have done hours ago—to discuss the points which he wishes to have discussed. He may expect a courteous answer from any Members of the Government to whom he may appeal. With regard to Post Office questions, if it is wished to discuss any particular Vote affecting the Post Office, another hon. Member can relieve the Postmaster General in the duty of Chairman. I hope the Motion will be withdrawn, and that we may now begin to make some progress. Will the hon. Member state the points on which he wishes information?

Mr. SEXTON: At no time while this discussion has been going on has the Chief Secretary for Ireland been in his place; I believe he left the House before midnight.

Mr. GOSCHEN: The Attorney General and the Solicitor General for Ireland are here.

An hon. Member: What do they know?

Mr. GOSCHEN: If the hon. Member wishes it, we will send for the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Mr. SEXTON: I am thankful to know that he will be sent for. It will be necessary for him to hear our complaints. We cannot accept the replies of the Law Officers. We are not at liberty to receive from them replies on grave questions arising outside their Office. Why does not the Chancellor of the Exchequer accept my offer? Is it merely to gratify the ill-temper which seems to prevail among hon. Members below the Gangway opposite? I think you are making a great mistake in refusing it. Hon. Members on this side of the House are unanimous in support of my proposition, and I believe none of our Friends now absent will interfere with the arrangement.

Mr. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.): I think Her Majesty's Government would be well advised to accept the compromise offered by the hon. Member for West Belfast. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was pleased to say that if grievances were stated by hon. Members, the Government were perfectly prepared to answer them. He knows, however, perfectly well that hon. Members who have grievances to state, never expected to be called on to state them at such an hour. It is all very well to say that the Government are prepared to answer at a time when he knows perfectly well hon. Members are not present to make their statements. As the only Scotch Member now present, I will state that, as far as I am concerned, I am in harmony with the offer made by the hon. Member for West Belfast.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester): When the hon. Member for West Belfast made his offer, I heard hon. Members opposite cry out, "No compromise!" Sir, I understand the spirit of those words; but I scarcely understand the meaning. What do they mean? Do they mean that the minority have no rights at all that are worth consideration? The time may come—and it may not be very far hence—when they will be in a minority themselves, and they then will not like to hear "No compromise" called out under similar circumstances. We are asked to vote £3,500,000 on a Resolution brought in after midnight, and I think it is in the highest degree ungracious to reproach us with anything improper. The Government have the matter in their own hands; they can, whenever a discussion is allowed to take place, apply the clôture. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) has told us Votes on Account have been repeatedly taken before with little discussion. It is true; but then it was not at a time when a feeling of uneasiness pervaded the country. There is now a profound feeling of uneasiness as to what use is to be made of the money the Government are asking us to vote. Therefore it is only fair that the minority should be allowed to bring forward their grievances. The arguments used by the other side might have been proper in the time of Charles I., when they used to say—"Give us the money and trust us to do the best we can with it. Leave yourselves in our hands." But that is not the case to-day, and I trust that the temper of the House of Commons will not tolerate treatment of that kind. I hope the reasonable arrangement proposed will be agreed to.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): We are perfectly ready to go on with the discussion. We have no right to waive the privilege to discuss the Estimates. We will be able to show, after a discussion of a few hours between the Irish Members and the Government, from their different standpoints, that the position of Ireland is somewhat critical. Really it seems to be reasonable, therefore, that some arrangement should be made by which the Irish Members may be enabled to discuss for a few hours the points they wish to raise. It is really absurd for us to sit all night. ["Hear, hear!"] Hon. Gentlemen say "Hear, hear!" Do they mean to say that the Irish Members have not a right to discuss these Estimates? All the Irish Members ask for is that they should be given a few hours in which to do so. The Government must admit that it is a concession on the part of the Scotch and the English Members to say that, as far as they are concerned, they will waive any sort of Amendment or discussion which they might legitimately move or raise upon it. They do that in order to facilitate the action of the Government in making a concession to the Irish Members. Of course, the Government would not think of asking for the clôture on the Vote, because, if we were to begin discussing it now, no one could say we were exceeding our legitimate rights if we were to divide on every single item. Supposing we were to discuss each English and Scotch item of the Vote for half-an-hour. That would take a very long time, and then we should have to deal with the Irish portion of the Vote. It could hardly be said that the Irish Members were exceeding their rights if they discussed the points in which they are interested for three, or four, or five hours. I ask hon. Gentlemen whether a fair and reasonable proposal has not been made? Do you mean that the discussion shall go on now? [*Ministerial cries of* "Yes!"] Then for how long? [An hon. MEMBER: Days.] An hon. Gentleman says it ought to last for days. Well, we do not take such exaggerated views of these things. We speak of hours, and not of days. The Government declare that they have a heavy task before them in reference to their Coercion Bill this evening. If the Government will say that they will allow this Vote on Account to come on at half-past 4 this evening, the discussion of their demand of the time of the House for coercion can be taken later. Or, perhaps, the Government will suggest some other plan by which these Estimates can be discussed.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): In reference to the compromise which has been proposed, I wish to point out that the Government could not carry it out, because they have only obtained precedence for Procedure, and if the Procedure Rules are not taken, private Members will resume their rights. For my own part, I am quite willing to go on with the fight; but I would suggest another compromise which may meet the views of the Committee. I would propose that Government Business should be taken at 5 o'clock to-day; but that the debate should be stopped at 10, or half-past 10, and that this Vote should then be taken and discussed until the close of the sitting. I do not throw out this suggestion with any idea of urging the Government to surrender their right to have this Vote. It has struck me all through that what hon. Members below the Gangway on this side of the House are contending for is that they shall be allowed to have a discussion relevant to the items of the Estimates; but not relevant to the first Vote on Account. I think, however, that if my suggestion were carried out, we might close this discussion, which is not creditable to Parliament.

MR. SEXTON: I would point out to the Committee that the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) curiously lost sight, at the end of his speech, of the point which he raised at the beginning of it. The same argument would apply at half-past 10, as at 5 o'clock; and, if the hon. Gentleman is right on his point of Order, it would be just as impossible for us to take the discussion on the Vote on Account at half-past 10 as it would at the earlier hour. I would further point out that the point of Order is altogether wrong. What is to prevent the Government, if they put down the Order of "Supply (Vote on Account)" to-day from making and carrying a Motion after Question time, that the Orders of the Day be postponed until after that Order had been disposed of? Therefore, the hon. Member's point of Order is absurd.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 57; Noes 141: Majority 84. — (Div. List, No. 74.) [7.40 A.M.]

Sir JOHN GORST (Under Secretary of State for India) took the Chair. [7.45 A.M.]

Original Question again proposed.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): The rapid changes of Chairmen show how wrong it is, Sir John Gorst, to keep us here. But it must not be supposed that we are not perfectly fresh. We have now reached an hour (10 minutes to 8) at which reasonable persons can discuss Business. It is somewhat an early one; but I believe that in former days the House was in the habit of meeting at 8 o'clock. We shall now go through the Estimates in precisely the same way, if not more severely than as if we had not been sitting up all night. I find that the first portion of the Vote relates to the Royal Palaces, which last year cost £31,000. This year the Estimate amounts to £35,000, or about £4,000 more. We are asked, on this Vote on Account, to contribute £6,000. Now, I think the Committee will hardly assent to that, and I shall conclude with a Motion to reduce the Vote in respect of that item by the sum of £5,000. I have several reasons to urge in favour of the reduction. In the first place, Sir, I object entirely to these heavy Votes on Account. I have already several times suggested that we should give the Government enough money to tide them over a fortnight, as they seem to have got into a mess by not bringing forward the Estimates at a reasonable time. I estimate that the £1,000 I am willing to let them have in respect of the Royal Palaces would last them for rather more than two weeks, as they ask for £6,000 to carry them over two months. I may point out that if the Government persist in the course they are taking, we shall not have any time except at the end of the Session to discuss this question; and, as the Government cannot accept our terms, we must go into the various items thoroughly and exhaustively. This Vote includes an item of £1,200 for the maintenance and repair of the royal mews at Pimlico, and one of £500 for new works and alterations. These sums are excessive. The whole palace, apparently, costs £2,281 for maintenance, repairs and alterations, and the stables cost £1,865. I am not aware of the number of horses kept in these stables; but I should think that generally there are very few. Her Majesty is not often in London, and these stables are kept up for the benefit of those parasites who always exist about a Court. Then we come to palaces partly in the occupation of Her Majesty. These include St. James's Palace, of which the cost amounts to a great deal. I will allow that, however, to pass. Then we get to palaces not in the occupation of Her Majesty. There are a considerable number of houses tenanted by persons to whom Her Majesty has lent them. You will find, Sir, that these persons insist upon the houses so lent being kept up at the public expense for their benefit. Now, I say that the pensioners who are put into these houses ought to be called upon to pay for their maintenance. I find here items for Pembroke Lodge, Thatched House, and East Sheen Cottage, Richmond Park. Of course, I know who lives in Pembroke Lodge; but I do not know who occupies the other two, or where they are. I should like the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) to tell us who lives in them, and also what the occupants have done in any way beneficial to the country as a reason for their having houses rent free. Then we have "Bushey House, gardens and stables," and another house, which, I believe, has been lent to one of the Orleans Princes. Now, these Orleans Princes are rich, "beyond the dreams of avarice," and yet they come sponging upon the British taxpayer, and asking him to house them. We have, therefore, to pay money every year for the maintenance of the house of an Orleans Prince. Why, I should like to ask, are we to pay for housing a Prince who has been turned out of his own country for the misdeeds of former members of his family? There are several places in Bushey Park which are mentioned in the Vote, and I should like to know who lives in each of them and why he is allowed to do so. There is another item to which I have frequently called attention in this House. It is the Hampton Court Stud-house. I believe it is tenanted by some person; but all I know about it is that, although I have asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury again and again what becomes of our foals which are bred there, I never see any deduction made in the Vote for the price which those foals fetch. The foals must go to someone; but there is no item in respect of them. Someone gets hold of our foals, and yet we have to pay every charge in connection with them. Well, Sir, I think I have made out a case in favour of the reduction I propose. I have shown that in this Vote there are items which need explanation, and of which no legitimate explanation can be given. This is not the first time I have asked for an explanation; but I have never been able to get one. I beg to move that this Vote be reduced by the sum of £5,000 in respect of the first item.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Item of £6,000, for Royal Palaces, be reduced by the sum of £5,000."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): The criticisms from the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) are substantially the same as those he has made regularly each year for the last two or three years, and therefore the answer I have to give will be substantially that which has been given before and accepted by the House. But I may say, as regards these particular Estimates for which I am responsible, that there is a reduction on the total sum of about £90,000, or 9 per cent on the whole. What we are now asking the Committee to do to-day is to provide a small portion of the required sum, such an amount as will unable us to carry on the necessary repairs and maintenance in connection with the various items specified in the Vote. If it would be any satisfaction to hon. Members, I might say that I would undertake not to spend any of the larger sums which are included in the Vote until the Estimates are taken in their entirety, and the completion of the sums submitted. The main part of the expenditure is for the ordinary and regular keeping up of the different Palaces, parks, and public buildings enumerated. There would have been on this Vote for Royal Palaces a considerable reduction this year, were it not for the items in connection with Hampton Court, rendered necessary by the fire that unfortunately occurred there recently, and which, as the Committee will be aware, caused considerable damage. Were it not for this item which the Committee will agree it is impossible to forego, there would have been a considerable reduction under the head of Royal Palaces. As to the particular criticisms made just now, some of the buildings are kept up for the occupation of Her Majesty, some are in partial occupation, as, for instance, St. James's, others again are not in occupation, but all this forms part of the arrangements entered into with the Crown at the beginning of the reign when the Civil List was settled. The money we are asking for is to keep up these Palaces according to the bargain made at that time, and as to who inhabits these Palaces by the gracious favour of the Sovereign it is not my business to know or to inquire; my duty is confined to asking the House for the money that maintains these Palaces, fulfilling the obligation we have incurred.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I am not at all satisfied with this Vote; but I do not want to complicate matters by opening another Amendment. I only wish my hon. Friend had taken my suggestion to move the omission of the Vote altogether. The right hon. Gentleman has admitted that some of these items are unnecessary, though he commenced this long Sitting many hours ago with the statement that it was necessary to take the Vote now. It is now said that the whole are not necessary, and by a process of exhaustion—such as has been going on all night—we may arrive at the conclusion that none of the Vote is absolutely necessary to be taken now. First, I may say, in reference to the right hon. Gentleman's remarks, that most of us were not in existence 50 years ago when this absurd bargain was made, and I am inclined to think that the taxpayers will think it is quite time that a revised version of this bargain should be issued. This Jubilee year offers an admirable occasion for Her Majesty to do something for her loyal subjects, though I have not heard there is any intention of the kind. May I offer one or two suggestions? I should like to know if many of these Royal, noble, or great personages inhabiting these buildings are German paupers? [*Cries of* "Order!"] I am surprised to find hon. Gentlemen ignorant of the fundamental principle of our law, that people who live at other people's expense are paupers. Now I should like to know if these people pay any rent at all for their lodgings? We do not live rent free in our houses or chambers; and I cannot see—even if it is part of the Royal Prerogative to fill these Royal Palaces with these aristocratic paupers—why they should not be asked to pay a moderate rent, drawing, as many of them do, substantial salaries or allowances from the pockets of the taxpayers. It would be reasonable that they should pay sufficient to meet the cost of repairs, and to that extent relieve the suffering people who have to pay taxes to support these aristocratic paupers. I would suggest that Her Majesty's Advisers should put this in a plain common-sense way before Her Majesty. We all know that Her Majesty is an exceedingly kind-hearted woman, with great common sense and great respect for the Constitution, and I am sure she would be delighted to assist her suffering subjects to the extent of the value of the rent of these lodgings she not lets, but gives away, to foreigners and others who dwell in them. We are this year celebrating the Jubilee of Her Majesty's accession to the Throne, and during the past half-century we have been paying annually to Her Majesty £385,000, or something more — last year we voted £410,000. When the proper time comes we shall ask why it is we should pay so much more than we consented to pay? Some £800,000 a-year is the cost of the Royal Family. During these 50 years the Royal Family have absorbed from the taxation of the country something like £23,210,000, or probably a great deal more by this time. Have we not, then, substantial grounds for asking that some relief should be given where it is so much needed to the overburdened taxpayers at the expense of those we consider are overpaid? So I make my request that the Government will place these matters in a common-sense light before Her Majesty, that she should make her lodgers in their Royal Palaces pay rent, seeing that we have been paying the rent for these people in the long past; that we are now overtaxed, many of us starving; and that it would be a graceful act to afford her suffering people this relief. Next I would ask to whom do these places really belong—to us, or to Her Majesty? When we come to Marlborough House a similar question will arise. I have studied all the Acts of Parliament bearing upon the subject, and I can find nothing about these Royal Palaces; in fact, the Acts of Parliament relating to Her Majesty and her belongings are so wrapped up as to evade the closest scrutiny. What is the logical position? If we are the owners, we are responsible for the repairs; or do the Royal Family hold these Palaces on repairing leases? We have a right to know the position. It is all very well for the Commissioners of Works to put us off, as the House has been put off in past years. The nation is of opinion that the Royal Family costs the country a great deal too much, and when they reflect upon the comparison with the cost in the United States——

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is not confining himself to the Question.

Mr. CONYBEARE: It was merely a casual illustration. I will confine myself to the point. We have a right to demand the excision of these unnecessary items of expenditure—first, on the ground that we are sent here to do so by our constituents, who look very closely at these items; secondly, on the ground that the people are overtaxed for the purpose of maintaining pauperized aristocrats, who are living in these Palaces; and, chiefly and lastly, that this being the Jubilee year, it is reasonable to ask for some relief to the taxpayer, and this is a reasonable way of granting it.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 53; Noes 121: Majority 68.—(Div. List, No. 75.) [8.15 A.M.]

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): At this stage it might be convenient if some Member of the Government would inform us when the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland is likely to be in his place?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, a message had been sent to his right hon. Friend.

Mr. CONYBEARE: As we must not waste time while the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary is being found, the next item upon which we have to ask for a reduction of a trifling amount is £500 for Marlborough House. I find among the items £150 for the construction of a drying closet; and then I find a charge for the substitution of embossed for plain glass. These are matters of luxury for which I do not think we should be called upon to pay. I think His Royal Highness might undertake that. Then we have £300 for drains, £205 for other alterations, water rate £10, and ordinary maintenance £1,455. What I wish to remark is this—that if, as I intimated just now, we are the landlords of this Palace, we may fairly be called upon to pay for repairs and so forth; but then I have a right to ask whether His Royal Highness pays any rent, or on what terms he occupies the Palace? I would suggest that if we give him this Palace to live in, we should ask him to pay the rent of it, and also to pay the water rate. These Royal personages like us to pay for all these things; but I object to it, and do so in the interests of the Royal Family itself, whose popularity is rapidly waning—

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must speak respectfully of the Royal Family in debate. The Royal Family have nothing to do with the present Vote; it is a Vote for Marlborough House.

MR. CONYBEARE: I was saying, Sir, I advocated this curtailment of expense on behalf of the Royal Family, for whom I entertain, of course, the greatest respect. I was trying to make my meaning clear, that the taxpayers feel very strongly on the question of this expenditure. I did not wish to convey anything disrespectful to the Royal Family—far from it——

THE CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. Member to respect my ruling; he is repeating the very words I said were not in Order.

MR. CONYBEARE: I was repeating them in order to withdraw them——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not allowed to repeat observations I have ruled out of Order.

MR. CONYBEARE: I will not repeat them; I only desire to make it clear that the people of this country watch this expenditure with the closest scrutiny. It is, to my mind, strictly in the interest of Monarchical institutions that we should take every means to reduce this expenditure. At any rate, what I want to know in respect to Marlborough House is exactly what is our relation to it—does it belong to the nation, or to the Royal Family? If to the nation, under what terms is it occupied by His Royal Highness? I would not trouble the right hon. Gentleman with this question, except that I have made the most assiduous efforts to find out an answer for myself; but I cannot find, in any Act of Parliament, anything bearing on the question. It is in order that people outside may be enlightened, that I bring this before the Committee on a Motion to reduce the item on account of Marlborough House by £500.

Motion made and Question put, "That the Item of £500, for Marlborough House, be omitted from the proposed Vote."—(*Mr. Conybeare.*)

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 49; Noes 115: Majority 66.—(Div. List, No. 76.) [8.30. A.M.]

Original Question again proposed.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): The next item I find is the Royal Parks and their grounds, and we are asked to contribute £17,000 for the purpose. I must do the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) the justice to congratulate him for the lower Estimate this year than last. There are some very serious things, I believe, in these Votes which require explanation, and I protest strongly against anything of the sort being concealed from the public view. I shall, therefore, move that this £17,000 be reduced by £14,000. Before I examine the detailed items, I would like to learn why the London Parks appear in this list, while the other Parks, like Victoria, Hyde Park, and Battersea, are not to be found? I think that the right hon. Gentleman is bound by the promise on this subject made by the right hon. Gentleman the then Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Childers). Last year we obtained a majority, and it was agreed that the Vote should be taken upon Report without discussion, on condition that a Bill should at once be brought in, transferring and vesting in the Metropolitan Board of Works the possession of and the duty of looking after these London Parks. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) since then has announced the Bill, and it is to be hoped that it will be speedily passed in this House. I will give an instance, Sir, of some of the absurdities in this Vote. Many Gentlemen, especially country Gentlemen opposite, are fond of field sports, and have gamekeepers. Well, this is how some gamekeepers are paid out of this Vote—and I wonder is there any country Gentleman opposite who pays in the same generous way. The head gamekeeper of Bushey Park gets £100 per annum and £10 in addition; the keeper at Greenwich Park gets £100 per annum, and I do not know what game he keeps in that Park. The Hampton Court gamekeeper receives £150; but the man who gets the most is the fortunate gamekeeper of Richmond Park, who receives £358, and the under-keeper £150. I ask any hon. Gentleman who is acquainted with these matters, whether they can find any people to give these sums to their gamekeepers, or more than £60, £70, or £80 at the most a-year? There is, besides, a very great complaint in the neighbourhood of Richmond Park, which is kept up for the benefit of the Ranger, the Duke of Cambridge. The complaint is that the property of neighbouring persons gets destroyed, and really, apart altogether from this damage, I see no reason, if a man wants partridges and pheasants and such like in a park so near London, he should not pay for that himself. Then, there is no game in Greenwich Park, and the gamekeeper has no game to keep. It is preposterous, Sir, that these charges should be year after year in the Estimates, and that there should be protests every year from Radicals, who are the sound political economists, and yet all the Chief Commissioner of Works will do is to produce a book, an official book—and he is nowhere without it—which comes to him from his Predecessors, whose excuses he repeats without imagination, but slavishly reads his lesson from the book. I cannot understand how it is these men, who have nothing to do—who are gamekeepers without game—are paid these large salaries every year. We want to make it clear to every Government that if they hope to get through the Estimates easily they will do well not to bring in Votes on Account. It is on account of my objection to these, among other things, that I move these reductions, and in this case from £17,000 to £14,000, which will still leave a margin to enable the Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench to get on for a fortnight.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Item of £17,000, for Royal Parks and Pleasure Grounds, be reduced by the sum of £14,000."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I wish, Sir, to draw attention to one fact. We are asked to pay salaries for Rangers and Deputy Rangers to Richmond, Hyde, and other Parks. The Ranger, I think, is somebody called George. I do not know him. However, Rangers and Superintendents are, it appears, military officers in the receipt of high pay from Army funds. We have to complain against these persons being put into these sinecures. If they are paid as Rangers they should not be paid as officers. The two offices are totally inconsistent with each other. It is supposed that their military duties, for which they are paid, take up their time; but if they choose to become Rangers they should get nothing in addition to their salaries as officers. Apparently these positions are simply a sort of jobbing, often established by the wisdom of our ancestors, or in fulfilment of musty contracts. And there is no need for them. In the face of the depression of trade and condition of the people, a re-arrangement of these matters should be introduced, and these sinecures done away with. It is quite clear that if military officers are appointed as Rangers they should give up their highly paid offices in the Army. Besides, I cannot see why these people of substantial wealth should receive so many thousands from the pockets of the taxpayer, and they should be made to pay for their own lodgings when they are installed in these berths. Questions like these greatly affect the welfare of the people, and the Government should recognize the necessity there is for them to make some determined effort to get rid of these anomalies.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): If, Sir, the hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) insists on going through all the items in this Vote I cannot hope quite to follow; but those of his questions which were distinctly asked I shall endeavour to answer. In the first place, the hon. Gentleman has asked me about the fact that last year an arrangement was arrived at for the purpose of transferring certain Parks to the Representatives of the ratepayers of the Metropolis, whilst certain of the Royal Parks were still to be retained on the Estimates. As a matter of fact, a Bill for this purpose has already been introduced and read a first time, and is on the Paper for second reading; but, unfortunately, owing to the circumstance that it has been blocked by an hon. Member opposite, I have not yet been able to bring it on any further. However, I am prepared to say, if the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton will undertake to get that block removed, I, for my part, will promise to proceed with the Bill on the first possible occasion; and if the Bill be passed this Session it will be in operation in six months. In regard to the objection that the neighbourhood of the Parks where the game is preserved is dangerous, so far as my memory serves me, I do not know of any incident which has occurred that has manifested those dangers. There was a point in the hon. Gentleman's remarks about the expense of maintaining the Royal Parks and the gamekeepers. But there were no gamekeepers to preserve the game for the use of any person in these Parks. The keepers there are paid for by the Rangers; but the keepers who appear in this Vote are those who look after the Parks and the ornamental deer only.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch. Hoxton): The circumstances under which this Vote is now brought forward are very disadvantageous for a proper discussion, especially considering that it is 9 o'clock in the morning, when the body is wearied and the mind jaded. On the last occasion that this Vote was discussed the House was fairly full, and we obtained the publication of the proceedings and some reduction of the items. But now, as the condition of the House is, the likelihood of getting any reduction of the items is not much, and anything we do can only be of the nature of protest. It is very necessary for those who object to this Vote to keep hammering away from year to year at these abuses. It is only by keeping these matters prominently before the notice of the public that attention is attracted to the multiplicity of small items upon which public money is wasted or badly spent for the benefit, to a large extent, of a certain number of select individuals. It is better to move the reduction of a Vote by some definite sum, pointing out that that sum is definitely applicable to some definite purpose; and I am sorry that we are obliged to postpone the moving of the reduction of this Vote by a definite sum; but I hope, when the time comes to discuss the Estimates as a whole, we shall be able to move some definite reduction. When we call the attention of Parliament to these salaries the absurdity of the expenditure of many of these Votes appears. They furnish a great many pickings to persons who are well enough off without them. A great many people are better contented when the items of these Votes are better looked into, and for these reasons I support the reduction.

MR. MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr): I wish to call attention to the fact in regard to Richmond Park that the carriage way of a certain private road is always closed, although the passenger gate is open. Will the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) undertake to see if it is possible to get the drive open?

MR. PLUNKET: I will do my best.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): It was my intention some time ago to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works, when this Vote came before the Committee, to a point in connection with Kew Gardens. There is a portion of the grounds at the further end not properly laid down as horticultural ground, and from time to time many requests have appeared in the public Press, that citizens who go there should be allowed to partake of any light refreshment they had with them. Hitherto there has been an express prohibition placed on anybody entering the grounds against their doing so, and they have been obliged to leave their sandwiches and oranges at the gate. Kew is a source of pleasure and delight to anyone who goes there, and not merely to those who are interested in botanical studies. It is placed there for public instruction and observation; there can be had exercise and pleasure combined with pure air and instruction. I frequently go there, and there is one thing I have noticed; there is an obvious tendency in connection with the higher class plants to have too many of the same class; and nothing seems to be done to multiply varieties, as I think ought to be attempted. Further, I wish to say our public Parks and Gardens are not so open to the public on Sundays as one would imagine or wish, and, indeed, as on other days, there are too many rules and restrictions, interfering with the enjoyment of the public. But, returning to Kew, I wish to point out how convenient it would be to allow the public to take with them, into the portion I have referred to, something in the shape of light refreshment. I intend to stand up for the poor people of England as well as of Ireland; and I believe it would be a gracious act on the part of the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works to do away with these restrictions.

MR. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.): As a Scotch Member who has taken some part in what I will venture to call this carnival of obstinacy and folly on the part of the Government, I intend to support what is put to the First Commissioner of Works in this matter. It may be said that Kew Gardens are of little interest to Scotland. My reply is that there is a very large Scotch population in London—probably more Scotchmen are to be found here than either in

Edinburgh or Glasgow; and they have a deep interest in the freedom of the people to enjoy these Gardens. Many of the restrictions imposed are not necessary for the exigencies of science, while they are inconvenient to the people. I admit that great credit is due to the Government in many respects for the arrangements they have made for the convenience of the public. But the official mind is naturally and constitutionally opposed to public freedom; and I think the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works might do a great deal more for the public if he were to resist the tendency to officialdom in these Gardens. I do trust that, as a result of the representations made, something will be done in this matter.

Mr. PLUNKET: As to what the hon. Member has said relative to the proceedings of the past night, I must state that as far as my experience goes, and as far as the information given me by competent authorities goes, this examination in detail of a Vote on Account is unparalleled in the House of Commons; and it would be quite impossible to find any precedent for it. But so long as the House chooses to tolerate these proceedings, it is my duty to answer any questions put; and, therefore, I will reply to the hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner). I can only say that since I have been First Commissioner I have tried to make the public Parks and Gardens as free as is possible, consistently with their proper care and treatment. I have not seen the newspaper criticisms to which he has referred; but if he will send them to me I will consider the matter raised.

Dr. TANNER: My request is that more freedom should be allowed in the portion of the Gardens not devoted to horticultural specimens.

Mr. PLUNKET: I will go into it as soon as I have the matter before me. As regards the other matter, I will do my best; but I see great difficulty before me.

Mr. JAMES STUART: The right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works has said it is unprecedented that these matters should be discussed now in detail. I will remind him that the conditions under which the discussion is taking place are remarkable and peculiar.

The CHAIRMAN (Sir John Gorst): Order, order! I do not think the hon. Gentleman is in Order in discussing the question as to whether items may or may not be discussed now.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): We are obliged to the First Commissioner of Works for the answer he is always willing to give with so much courtesy. But I must tell him the responsibility for what he calls an unparalleled discussion rests with the Government for deliberately attempting to carry a Vote of £3,500,000 after midnight on the last day on which it can be legally taken.

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): When I come to look at the items comprised in this Vote I find a sum of £57 for munitions. Anyone versed in these matters knows that represents an expenditure of at least 4,000 cartridges, or 6,000 shots. Are all these shots used to kill a few deer? If they are, I do not envy the recipients of the carcasses of the animals. We are told there is little firing done, but I have known Richmond Park literally obscured by smoke caused by the butchery which is carried on four or five times every season. This is evidence that there is a considerable head of game, and I suppose we have to pay money for men to tend this game. A considerable portion of Richmond Park is railed off for the purpose of preserving game. I note, too, that a part of Kew Gardens is railed off. Is it for the same purpose? I did not know there was any game there. It is a bad policy to restrict the enjoyment of the people, especially as we are paying large sums yearly for the maintenance of the Gardens. I see one gentleman has £300 a-year as Ranger in one Park. I would suggest to the Committee that it would be reasonable to dispense with his services, and instead to employ five or six men, at a salary of £1 a-week, to pick up any litter visitors may leave behind.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): Complaint is made of our discussing the items in the Estimates. I can only hope that future Parliaments will emulate our example in this matter.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 54; Noes 144: Majority 90.—(Div. List, No. 77.) [9.20 A.M.]

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): As it is important that we should be enabled to decide whether we should now proceed with the discussion of the Irish items in the Vote, it would be convenient if the Government would inform us whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) has yet arrived at the House, and, if not, how soon we may expect him?

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Mr. Chairman, I think I must ask for leave to report Progress, in order to get an answer to the question just put by my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton). An hon. Member below the Gangway opposite says that no engagement was made. That hon. Gentleman, however, was not in the House at the time, and an engagement was made.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor.*)

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Sir John Gorst, as I was present when my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) made the statement to which the hon. Member has referred, I may state that what my right hon. Friend said was simply this—that if there seemed to be a prospect of an important Irish debate coming on, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) would be sent for. After the statement which the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) has made, I will send for my right hon. Friend.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I am surprised at what the right hon. Gentleman says. My voice is worn out with continually stating that I am anxious to bring forward the Irish Question. At about 6 o'clock the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer said he would send for the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. We intimated that we were anxious to see the right hon. Gentleman, and we have been waiting for him ever since. If there is a prospect of the right hon. Gentleman turning up soon, we will ask the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) not to proceed further with his Amendments.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: I may say that the reason why the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not send for the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary at 6 o'clock was, that there was continual obstruction, and no attempt was being made to get on with Business.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I strongly protest against the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, that there has been anything like obstruction in this matter. I hold, Sir, that there has been no speech made, no act done, no question addressed to the Government which could be styled obstructive.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think it is in Order for the hon. Member to discuss whether there has been obstruction or not.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: Well, Sir, who initiated that discussion? I did not. I only wished to repudiate the charge. On the Motion to report Progress, I have to say that I fully understood that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was to be sent for in order that he might be in his place when the Irish debate came on, and an hon. Member left the House apparently with the object of fetching him.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: As I have obtained an answer, I beg to ask leave to withdraw the Motion to report Progress.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Nobody can say we are obstructing now, Sir John Gorst, any more than it can truly be said that we have been obstructing hitherto. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) has been good enough to tell us that somebody has sent for the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant for Ireland, and we must now go on, whether we wish it or not, until the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary turns up. I am, therefore, obliged to proceed with the discussion of these items. With regard to Vote 6, which relates to public buildings, I find that the number of houses taken by the various Members of the Government is perpetually on the increase. I find here an item relating to the "residence of the First Naval Lord," 34, Queen Anne's Gate, Westminster. I assume that the "First Naval Lord" means the noble Lord (Lord George

Hamilton) on the Treasury Bench. [*Cries of* "No!"] No! Then it is all the worse. You have a First Naval Lord, who receives a salary of £1,200 per annum, which is regarded as the value of his services. I suppose there were one or two rooms at some time in the Admiralty in which he managed to establish himself. The Admiralty is to be altered, and so a Gentleman whose salary is £1,200 a-year has a house taken for him at a rent of £700 per annum. I ask whether anything can be more monstrous than that? As the house happens to be near where I live, I have had my eye on it, and have observed plate-glass windows being put in and ornamentation going on there. No doubt I shall find the cost of it all in the Estimates. Now, I ask whether we ought not to put a stop to a system under which we give to Gentlemen houses which cost the country more than half of their salary? At any rate, we ought to have some explanation on the subject.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): The First Naval Lord is not the same person as my noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), and it is necessary that the First Naval Lord should be provided with a house.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Well, I will pass to Vote No. 10, which relates to Metropolitan Police Courts. We are now asked to Vote £1,500 in respect of the maintenance of these Courts. There is no town in the country, besides London, which has the cost of its Police Courts thrown on the general taxpayer. In all other instances the expense is borne by the ratepayers, and I really do not see why the taxpayers should be called upon to meet it in regard to London. Why in the world the inhabitants of Northampton, for instance, should be asked to pay not only for their own Police Court, but also for the Police Courts of the richest town on the face of the earth, I really cannot conceive. I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by £1,500.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Item of £1,500, for the Metropolitan Police Courts, be omitted from the proposed Vote."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I wish to know, Sir, how we are to understand the silence of the Government? There is no Member present who is responsible for this expenditure.

MR. COURTNEY here resumed the Chair. [9.35 A.M.]

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Mr. Courtney, we are in this extraordinary position, that, as far as I understand, there is no one present to speak for the Government in reference to this Vote. I am told that the Vote comes within the Department of the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket). Of course, if that be so, I withdraw the observation.

MR. PLUNKET: I must repeat, Mr. Courtney, what I said a short time ago—namely, that this process of discussing at length the items in the Estimates on a Vote on Account is most unusual and extremely inconvenient, and I believe that, with one single exception, there is no precedent for dealing with a Vote on Account in such a way. The Vote is only asked for to enable the Government to carry on the Business of the country until the Estimates can be brought forward in the ordinary way. Having made that protest, I must say again that, as long as the Committee chooses to allow that proceeding to continue, it is my duty to answer hon. Gentlemen. In reply to the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) I can assure the Committee that the question he has referred to has been raised over and over again. The Metropolitan Police Courts continue to be provided by the taxpayers on the same principle as the County Courts are paid for by the taxpayers. My hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) reminds me that all the fees and fines gathered in the Police Courts are paid into the Treasury, and I have no doubt, therefore, that if an account were taken it would be found that, on the whole, the taxpayers lose nothing by the present system.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The right hon. Gentleman's argument hardly holds good, because there are County Courts as well as Police Courts in the Metropolis. I have often wondered where the receipts from the Police Court fines and fees go to. The right hon. Gentleman says they are paid into the Treasury, and that they exceed the cost of the Courts. If so, why do we not have it stated in the Votes that the Police Courts support themselves? The right hon. Gentleman complains that we are going through the Accounts item by item. I can only say that if the right hon. Gentleman and the Government did not wish us to do this, they have greatly wasted the public money in having the Estimates printed and circulated amongst Members. We have had these printed Estimates given to us for our guidance, and we are told that we are doing a monstrous thing if we venture to discuss any of the items. We protest against the action of the Government, and still more against the action of the Ministers who preceded them, in getting the House into the habit of voting large sums of money on Account. I think that the couse we have followed to-day will tend to induce Governments not to take away henceforward all the time of private Members up to the 21st of March, then to bring forward a Vote on Account, and to complain because the items in that Vote are discussed. The Government will find that we are now establishing a precedent, and I trust that on all future occasions when Votes on Account are asked for, Parliament will follow the excellent example we are setting.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 51; Noes 186: Majority 135.—(Div. List, No. 78.) [9.40 A.M.]

Original Question again proposed.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I am sure we are all anxious to bring these proceedings to a close as speedily as we can, consistently with the proper discharge of our duty. I, therefore, propose to pass over a large number of items in Class II., and come to Class III., in order to come to the Vote for the salaries of the officials of the House of Lords and the salaries of Cabinet Ministers. Indeed, so anxious am I to simplify matters, that I will ask the Committee to consent to an Amendment for the reduction of two separate items by putting the two items together. So far as the officials of the House of Lords are concerned, I was anxious to do away with the whole expenditure; but I propose to confine the Motion to a simple reduction. It is well known that the clerks of the House of Lords and other *employés* there are paid on a higher scale than similar officers in this House. The second item I move to reduce is that which provides the salaries of Ministers I have already placed on the Paper, an Amendment upon the main Estimate, to reduce the salaries of the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Those two Gentlemen are both very rich Gentlemen, so that they can scarcely conceive I have any personal intentions in the matter. But I do not think that, considering the number of Ministers we have who do their work well and efficiently for the sum of £2,000 a-year, we ought not to give more than £2,000 to any other Minister sitting on that Bench. It would be most regrettable that there should be a desire for Office for the mere sake of the emoluments of Office. I am afraid that there is a greater desire than there used to be to obtain Office on that account; but I doubt whether, if the salaries were considerably reduced, we should have Gentlemen so very anxious for the mere honour of the thing to sit on that Bench night after night and perform Administrative duties. It may be said that they work hard; but we work hard too, and right hon. Gentlemen are not paid for the work they do in this House, but for being Members of the Administration. I do not believe in the appointment of Ministers because they are men of genius. On the contrary, I believe that men who know something about business would make the best Ministers. Of course, there must be some head to direct the whole machine; but, as a rule, a few partners selected from flourishing concerns would make just as good Ministers as the ordinary article which we get, and I am perfectly convinced that there are very few clerks in any bank in the City who would not make as good officials as the small fry who sit on that Bench. I may add that in every other country in the civilized world, the salaries of Ministers are considerably less than they are here, and certainly they are not more than you would pay if you reduce the present salaries to £2,000 per annum. I am strongly of opinion that it is most desirable to reduce these enormous salaries from £5,000 per annum to £2,000. It may be said that there are heavy expenses connected with the position of a Minister. Now, I have looked into that matter, and I have very grave doubts about it. Perhaps the Foreign Minister may have large expenses; but, certainly, not the First Lord of the Treasury, nor the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I take it that all they have to do is to give a few dinners to their private friends. If they were not in the Ministry, perhaps they might not give the official soirées and routs which are now-a-days given by a Cabinet Minister to "the classes," but what I object to is that "the classes" should be entertained at the expense of the taxpayers. If a Minister desires to entertain "the classes" and the aristocracy, let him entertain them out of his own pocket. I beg to move the reduction of £4,000 in the item for the salaries of officers of the House of Lords, and of £6,000 in that for salaries of the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer—the total amounting to a sum of £10,000 in classes one and two.

THE CHAIRMAN: It would be necessary in that case to move the reduction of £10,000 in the whole Vote.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Would that prevent any subsequent reduction being moved?

THE CHAIRMAN: Not subsequent to the Treasury Vote.

Motion made, and Question put,

"That a sum, not exceeding £3,614,100, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charge for the Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888."—(*Mr. Labouchere*).

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 49; Noes 204: Majority 155.—(Div. List, No. 79.) [10.10 A.M.]

Original Question again proposed.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): If necessary I shall conclude with a Motion; but I think it is desirable, at this stage, that the Committee and also the country should understand the manner in which hon. Members, and especially the Irish Members, are being dealt with by Her Majesty's Government, and by the right hon. Gentleman who now holds the Office of Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. This Vote was first put from the Chair at 5 o'clock this morning. For several hours before that time—I think as early as 2 o'clock—upon several occasions the Irish Members intimated that they were prepared to raise upon the Vote certain questions of the very gravest importance to their country. Now, this Vote includes, among its numerous items, the salary of the Chief Secretary who has recently accepted that Office; but during the course of this prolonged Sitting the right hon. Gentleman has not honoured us with his presence. Four hours ago the Chancellor of the Exchequer, having been strongly informed of our desire to proceed with Irish Questions, said that a message would be sent requesting the attendance of the right hon. Gentleman. We hoped that that message would be speedily followed by his bodily presence. However, whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer repented of his courtesy, or the messenger proved incompetent to discharge the duty entrusted to him, I am unable to say; but the promise has not yet had any substantial result. A second time we applied for the presence of the Chief Secretary, and a second time a Cabinet Minister, in this case the Secretary of State for War, informed us that a messenger would be sent to procure his attendance. Now, I am stating a fact which can be tested by the visual power of every hon. Member, when I say that the Chief Secretary for Ireland has not yet appeared in his place. Many questions of great magnitude require to be discussed on these Votes. There have already been mentioned the murder of the man Hanlon at Youghal, the repeated suppression of public meetings in Ireland without cause, and the protracted delay in dealing with the favourable recommendations of the Royal Commissioners in regard to the Catholic minority in the town of Belfast. What can be the meaning of asking us to go through the form of a debate in the absence of the Minister who, by the position he holds, is responsible, and who is required to give an answer to our complaints? We have remained here all night in the discharge of our duty to our constituents. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, who enjoys a high dignity and great emolument, has all the time been quietly and comfortably in bed. If he should now arrive here, after a good night's sleep and a hearty breakfast, it would certainly be a very unequal debate between him and myself. I have been 19 hours in continuous attendance upon the Business of this House, and for 14 hours I have been without food. [*A laugh.*] Hon. Members may well laugh; they have taught us how to do without food in Ireland. The question I wish to ask is this—Is the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland coming down to this House at all? Have these repeated messengers who have gone forth from the ark brought back any answer? If he is coming down, how soon may we expect him? If he is not coming down, do the Government intend to press to a Division the Irish items of this Vote? If he is not coming down, I ask, in the name of common sense and in the name of humanity, that we, who have been 19 hours in constant attendance in the House engaged in the fatiguing exercise of debating these Votes, should be released?

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Mr. Courtney, I wish to know from you, Sir, whether it is in Order for an hon. Member opposite to say that if he catches me outside he will black my eyes?

THE CHAIRMAN: Such an observation is clearly out of Order.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I rise to make a personal explanation. I did not use those words.

THE CHAIRMAN: No name was mentioned. It is not, therefore, necessary to explain. Mr. Sexton.

MR. SEXTON: I am in the unfortunate position of having been repeatedly interrupted by calls to Order for riot and imaginary offences. The question I have risen to call the attention of the Committee to is the inability of the Irish Members to discuss certain items of expenditure in the absence of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. I want to know whether the right hon. Gentleman is coming down at all this morning to perform his public duties? If he is coming, when will he be here, and are we expected to engage in debate with him after the exhausting Sitting we have already had?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. Member appeals, I presume, to me. I must remind the Committee that at 11 o'clock last night we offered to withdraw the Navy Vote, in order that progress might be made with the debate which is now going on. That offer, however, was refused, and until 5 o'clock in the morning the debate on the Navy Vote was kept up, against the wish of the Government, who desired to withdraw the Vote in order to allow the present debate to be brought on. In the view of the Government, it is necessary, in the public interests, that this Vote should be taken at this Sitting. It is most unusual—in fact, I believe it is contrary to the practice of Parliament—to debate items in a Vote on Account. [*Cries of* "No!"] Hon. Gentlemen who say "No!" may have their own views on the matter, but I am entitled to state mine with the full sense of the responsibility which belongs to any statement I may make. I repeat that it is contrary to the practice of Parliament to debate items in a Vote on Account; and it has been so held by the highest authorities, and especially by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). Let me remind hon. Gentlemen that if they are to claim on every item in a Vote on Account, the right and privilege of debate in Supply in the House of Commons must break down altogether. It is utterly impossible for this Committee to debate item after item in a Vote on Account, and to maintain the privileges of the House, and discharge their duty as guardians of the public purse. The right to debate an item arises only when that special item is put from the Chair. Each item must be put from the Chair before it is finally passed. The charge for a particular Service cannot be voted by Parliament in any other way; and, therefore, I appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite to permit the usual practice of Parliament to be observed on the present occasion—to allow Parliament to discharge its proper duties, and to allow this Vote to be taken according to the usage and practice of Parliament, and the best interests of the country we are here to serve. The hon. Member has made an appeal to me with regard to the Chief Secretary for Ireland. I am informed that both my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War and my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave an intimation that he would be sent for.

[An hon. MEMBER: Then produce him.] Without further detaining the Committee, I must enter a protest against debating the items of a Vote on Account as opposed to the best interests of Parliament.

MR. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman permit me respectfully to ask him one question? We do not desire to discuss items, but to raise upon this Vote on Account certain questions of policy. I trust the right hon. Gentleman will not deny that we are entitled to raise questions of policy, and that it has been the uniform practice of Parliament to raise questions of policy on Votes on Account. Although the right hon. Gentleman asserts that we have no Constitutional right to debate items; does he deny our right to raise questions of public policy, or does he say that we are not entitled to decline to proceed with the discussion of questions of policy relating to Ireland in the absence of the Chief Secretary?

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I will not dispute with the First Lord of the Treasury the exact hour at which he made the offer to withdraw the Navy Vote. He may have been within an hour of the actual time. But assuming the statement to be perfectly correct, I and other Irish Members were desirous of debating the Naval Vote. After he offered to withdraw it, at 11 o'clock, two hours of solid debate occurred on English Votes; and when 1 o'clock is reached, everybody knows that the Reporters' Gallery is clear, or very nearly so, and it would have been of very little use for us to debate very important Irish questions when the speeches of the Irish Members could not have been reported. If we had accepted the offer of the First Lord of the Treasury, we should have been launched into a very important debate at an altogether unusual hour, and a debate would have taken place which could not, by any possibility, have been reported at any length. Therefore, I think the Irish Members were perfectly justified in declining the offer of the First Lord of the Treasury. That was one point in the speech of the First Lord; and as he has given the view of the Treasury Bench, I think it is just as well that the country should know what the views of the Irish Members are in regard to what occurred last night. It was after half-past 11 when this offer on the part of the Government was made, and I have described what subsequently occurred. There is another point in the statement of the First Lord to which I must refer. He has declared, categorically and emphatically, that it is wrong—I do not think he went so far as to say that it was wicked—to debate the items of a Vote on Account. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman is a Minister, and he looks at the question exclusively from an official stand-point; but I think there are high authorities who may be set against him. I recollect the late Mr. Butt declaring, in emphatic terms, that it was wrong to give Votes on Account at all. I must say that, high as the authority of the First Lord of the Treasury is on Parliamentary practice, Mr. Butt's authority as to Constitutional usage and practice was at least as high. I think he will find that the old practice was not to introduce Votes on Account at all, and that it is quite a novel practice. [Mr. W. H. SMITH dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman shakes his head; but that was the opinion expressed by Mr. Butt; and Mr. Butt, who was always received as a high authority, was in this House before many hon. Members opposite were born. I consider that our conduct has not only been justified, but that we should have fallen far short of our duty if we had adopted any other course. By holding on during the night, we have reached an hour when we can expect to be reported, and we can show the country that we have been here to defend the public purse, and to discuss these items properly. Where the Government were wrong was this—they should have agreed to take the Naval Vote at 1 o'clock in the morning, and then have postponed the consideration of the Vote on Account. Is it reasonable to suppose that a sum of £3,600,000 should be voted without any discussion at all? We offered to take Wednesday or Thursday for the debate; indeed, we made every offer we could to conciliate the Government. We were most anxious to avoid the scandal of this All-night Sitting, and the excitement which it has produced; but we were not prepared to give the Government a sum of £3,600,000 without debate. I think the country will be of opinion that we were right.

MR. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.): As one who has been present throughout the whole of the Sitting, I desire to speak upon a question of fact; because there has been an unconscious divergence of statement between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the First Lord of the Treasury. At 7 o'clock this morning the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that he was prepared to hear a statement of grievances upon every item contained in the Vote on Account. We offered him a compromise on the matter; but he would not accept it. But now, after four and a-half hours' further debate, a number of hon. Gentlemen have come in who have not heard a word of what passed, and they cheer and support the First Lord of the Treasury when he goes entirely against the statement that was made by the Representative of the Government at the time the right hon. Gentleman himself was probably asleep. Now, how is it possible to carry on a proper discussion on terms of that description? I claim, as one who was attending to my duty, while others were absent, the fulfilment of the promise which was made by the Representative of the Government between 6 and 7 this morning. I have always understood that a first contract should stand until a second contract has been accepted by both parties to the first. I therefore must distinctly claim that the discussion should be allowed to go on on the lines laid down to us, and definitely laid down to us, by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in opposition to our offers of compromise. I desire to add my humble voice to what has been stated by the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton), that we are now entitled by the offer made to us by the Government to debate the items contained in this Vote, and we are further entitled to ask that those Members of the Government who are responsible for the items should be present to answer any questions that may be raised. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer told us that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant would be sent for. That promise was made four hours ago. How long does it take to send for the right hon. Gentleman, and how long does it take to awake him? I am not prepared to say that there may not be reasons why he should not always be wide awake; but I think he might be made tolerably wide awake in the course of four hours. I think he ought to be here on the simple ground of the contract made between the Government and the Irish Members.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I have not ventured to offer a single word upon this Vote on Account, and therefore I cannot be accused of any improper motive in rising to take part in the present discussion. No doubt I did take part in the previous debate. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) has imputed to us, as a matter of blame, that when the Government wished to withdraw the Navy Vote, the proposition to withdraw it was opposed from these Benches. I maintain that it was rightfully resisted, and the resistance had this result that, instead of having the whole evening wasted, the Navy Vote was finally disposed of, and the Sitting was not, so far, lost. For the fact that it was not lost the House is not indebted to the Government, but to those who refused their consent to the withdrawal of the Vote. The Navy Vote involved a sum of nearly £1,000,000, and already on this Vote on Account we have agreed to items that make up a considerable amount—probably amounting to another £333,000. If we had passed the whole of the Vote on Account we should have been voting away the money of the country for several hours at the rate of £10,000 a-minute. I think that is scarcely the way in which the money of the country should be dealt with. We have passed Class I., and in the remaining items I contend there are matters which ought to receive the attention of the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury says—and he told us he made the statement with all the responsibility which attaches to a statement from him in his place on the Treasury Bench—that it is altogether against the practice of Parliament to discuss the items of a Vote on Account. Now we have no desire to discuss all the items in this Vote on Account; but if we did want to discuss them, we are entitled to do so, and the statement of the right hon. Gentleman is altogether wrong. We have had these Votes on Account brought before us during the last five or six years, and the right hon. Gentleman will find that in each of those years the items contained in the Votes were discussed. Among those who have been most energetic in their opposition to Votes on Account have been the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) and several of his associates of the Fourth Party who are now on the Government Bench. Now with regard to Class II.—that Class contains the Vote for the Board of Trade; and in reference to the Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade there is a question connected with a certain surplus, which, in my opinion, ought to secure the attention of a Committee of this House at the earliest possible moment; because while we are voting money for the Board of Trade, the Board is practically plundering the creditors of bankrupt estates by exacting fees altogether disproportionate and unreasonable. The Board is making up a fund from those fees and placing it practically under the control of the Treasury. The Treasury itself is proposing to draw on the fund in a way which was not contemplated when the Bankruptcy Act of 1883 was passed; and in order to make up for the depreciation of that fund, all the creditors and others who have bankruptcy business to transact are being charged rates of fees that were never anticipated, and a great deal higher than were contemplated in connection with bankruptcy proceedings. Then, again, with regard to the Mint coinage, it is within my own knowledge that an hon. Gentleman sitting above the Gangway has sat here night after night, for many hours, for the purpose of bringing forward at the first opportunity a debate in connection with the depreciation of the coinage of this country. Then, again, year after year money has been voted on account, and there has been no regular Estimate presented for the Patent Office. Not only has the money not been wanted for the purpose for which it has ostensibly been drawn, but year after year, systematically and deliberately, the money has been diverted from that purpose, and appropriated to a different purpose. One of the items in the present Estimates includes a sum of £900 for the salary of an individual who is actually an imaginary officer of the Patent Office. The last officer died, and his place has not been filled up for a period of nearly three years, and yet this Vote is presented without any statement to the effect that the sum drawn for the Superintendent of Indexing is not required for that purpose. I think it ought to be recognized that the primary duty of those who are in charge of the Patent Office is to see that the arrears of work in connection with patents should be at once taken in hand, and pressed forward with the utmost possible despatch. The work, as a matter of fact, has been systematically neglected, and yet money has been obtained from the Committee of Supply under a deliberate false pretence. I contend that these are matters which ought to be discussed, even at this stage, upon Votes on Account. Will any reasonable man say that it is not a proper thing for a Member who is acquainted with the facts to bring them forward? I say that it is the clear duty of every Member, on every occasion when these items are open to discussion, to lay such facts before the Committee. Therefore, I protest altogether against the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. If the time of the Committee has been wasted, it is not our fault, but his; and there would have been a greater waste of time if we had consented to the preposterous proposition that, after the Navy Vote had been discussed for six or seven hours, it should then be withdrawn, and the whole of the discussion which had taken place upon it be rendered useless, and have to be renewed again.

Mr. SEXTON: As the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland has now, at 11 o'clock in the morning, returned to his place, I shall proceed at once to raise the question which I desired to raise when this Vote was first put from the Chair at 5 o'clock this morning, and which I was anxious to raise the moment the right hon. Gentleman was in his place. I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman if it is possible to ascertain from him what provision the Government have made or intend to make for the better security of social order in the City of Belfast? This is a question upon which I am personally charged with a heavy responsibility, and a question which I could not delay bringing before the Committee without transgressing my public duty. It may be my good or ill fortune, but at present I have the honour to represent in this House the Division of Belfast which is described in the Report of the Royal Commission as the main theatre of the recent riots. My Catholic constituents — the poor artizans and labourers of that Division of Belfast—are those who, as often as rioting occurs in that unfortunate town, have their district invaded, their houses broken into, their property plundered, and their lives put in danger and sometimes taken. That being the state of affairs, I think I am entitled and that I am bound to protest against any delay on the part of the Government in applying such measures as may be found necessary for the preventing any new disorder arising in Belfast. The Catholic Committee of Belfast—a body of gentlemen who are highly representative of the Catholic community of the town—have felt themselves obliged, by the scandalous inactivity of the Government, to hold a meeting, and to pass resolutions, in which they strongly and solemnly protest against the neglect of the Government to give effect to the recommendations contained in the Report of the Belfast Commissioners. Everywhere in Ireland except in Belfast the policy of the Government is thorough. It is expressed in brief apophthegms, such as "Deal summarily," "Do not hesitate;" but in Belfast they refuse to deal summarily; and although they do not hesitate elsewhere, but even kill, in regard to Belfast they agree to kill nothing but time. The Catholic Committee complain of the delay that has occurred. Let me show the scandalous character of that delay. The riots occurred in the months of June, July, and August last year. They involved the taking of 30 lives at least, the wrecking of 60 houses, the looting of 30 others, and the destruction of property to the value of £90,000. A force of police and military, amounting to 6,000, was sent to Belfast in consequence of the riots which were carried on intermittently for three months, and the whole of the town was placed in a state of the utmost confusion. What did the Government do? They appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into the origin and circumstances of the riots; they nominated three of the Commissioners in August, and completed the nomination in September. The Commissioners were—Mr. Justice Day—an English Judge—Major General E. J. Bulwer, Mr. R. Adams, and Mr. Frederick Le Poer Trench, barristers, and Commander Wallace M. Hardy, R.N. They opened their inquiry at Belfast, in the Court House of the County of Antrim, on the 4th of October, and continued it uninterruptedly until the 25th of the same month. Nevertheless, it was not until January that they presented their Report, and even then it was only signed by four out of the five Commissioners. But although the Report was presented two months ago to the Government, up to this moment, although the Constitutional Representative and protector of these unfortunate people, my repeated applications to Her Majesty's Government have been utterly fruitless in obtaining from them what the conclusion is which they have drawn from the Report of the Commissioners, and what proposals they are prepared to make. And let the Committee consider what has happened in those two months which have elapsed since the Report was laid before the Government. Other desperate riots have broken out in Belfast. There is one sentence in the Report which ought to receive the serious attention of the Government unless they are altogether callous and careless of the consequences. It is that in which the Commissioners describe Belfast as a place where, as its history shows, riots of the most formidable kind may at any time break out. Yet the Government have remained criminally supine, although disorder has four times broken out in Belfast. What was the conduct of the Government on the 31st of January, when there was a dangerous riot, which, fortunately, however, proved to be of a transitory character, although the Government are not to be thanked for the fact, seeing that they had applied no remedial or suppressive measure. On the 31st of January a number of men were arrested for a violent attack upon the police. What happened when the men were brought up in Court? The District Inspector, who acted as prosecutor on the occasion, said that he had been directed, by desire of the Government, to ask for an adjournment, in order to await the presence of the Crown Solicitor. An adjournment accordingly took place. Now, nobody is entitled to instruct the Crown Solicitor except the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland; and here was a statement made by an officer of the police with regard to a body of desperate rioters, that the case should be adjourned in order to procure the attendance of the Crown Solicitor. Two adjournments were procured on that plea, and in the end, when the case was adjudicated upon, what happened? There was no Crown Solicitor in attendance at all; but a minor agent of the Crown came forward and said that the Crown Solicitor had received no instructions from the Attorney General. The trials therefore proceeded, and the rioters were set free on fines of 10*s.* and 20*s.* a-piece—fines which, so far from exercising any repressive effect on the elements of blackguard faction and brutal disorder in Belfast, distinctly held out a premium to the continuance of disorder. For the fourth time, only on Saturday last, disorder again broke out in Belfast since the presentation of the Commissioners' Report. It appears that a private of Dragoons was wandering through the streets and used language of a most offensive character to Catholics. He was cheered by a Protestant mob, and when the police arrested him the Protestant mob endeavoured to effect a rescue. The baton was resorted to. The baton is held to be a sufficiently effective weapon, in Belfast, for quelling disorder, although elsewhere than in the sacred region of Belfast a weapon somewhat more deadly than the baton is to be employed. I do not make an exaggerated statement when I complain that the Government have four times, in the course of two months, allowed rioting to take place in Belfast, which might at any moment in that magazine of gunpowder have produced an explosion that would have been fatal to life. They have allowed this length of time to elapse without having taken a single step to carry out the recommendations of the Commissioners. I have already pointed out who the Commissioners were. They were gentlemen the solitary opinion of each of whom is entitled to respect, while the united opinion of the whole of them is entitled to every attention on the part of the Government. Only four of the Commissioners have signed the Report—Mr. Justice Day, an English Judge, General Bulwer, an English Major-General, and two Irish barristers, one of whom is certainly an Irish Conservative, while the other is not particularly attached to any Party except himself. These four gentlemen have signed the Report. The fifth Commissioner has not done so, nor has he sent in a separate Report of his own. Why has he not done so? The inquiry was closed five months ago, but Commander Wallace M'Hardy is still persistently silent. Why have not the Government either induced or compelled him to speak? At the time of the nomination of the Commission, I was strongly opposed to the appointment of this gentleman, because I knew him to be a bigot, and as having used his position as a Scotch police officer to prosecute Irish Catholics. But I did not think that even Mr. Wallace M'Hardy would be guilty of the indecency of accepting an appointment upon the Commission on such a question as this, and then declining to perform the functions which the duties of his office imposed upon him. Why has he refused to sign the Report? I am inclined to think that a letter from the Home Secretary to Mr. Wallace M'Hardy, as Police Commissioner of the County of Lanark, would have a great effect in inducing him to sign it. If he was satisfied with the inquiry which took place in Belfast, and with the evidence taken before the Court, why has he, on two occasions, gone back to Belfast, like a thief in the night, and held secret and stealthy interviews with the people who are accused of having incited the people of Belfast to riot? I await an explanation of that act of indecency. I will now pass from the absence of Mr. Wallace M'Hardy's signature from the Report in order to consider the recommendations contained in the Report which bears the signatures of the other four Commissioners. The Commissioners were directed to—

"Inquire into the origin and circumstances of the riots and disturbances, the cause of their continuance, the existing local arrangements for the preservation of the peace of the town of Belfast, the magisterial jurisdiction exercised within it, the amount and constitution and efficiency of the police force usually available there, the proceedings undertaken by the magistrates, stipendary and local, and other authorities, and the police force, on the occasion of the said riots and disturbances; whether these authorities and the existing police force are adequate to the future maintenance of order and tranquillity within the town; whether any and what steps ought to be taken; and whether any and what changes ought to be made in the local, magisterial, and police jurisdiction arrangements and establishment, with a view to the better preservation of the public peace, and the prevention or prompt suppression of riot and disorder."

I beg the Committee to attend to one brief extract from the Report of the Commissioners which in a graphic picture lays bare, in a piercing light, the real nature of the provocative cause of these disturbances in Belfast. What do the Commissioners say? They say—

> "The evidence leads us to believe that the riots, at a very early period, and certainly from and after the 8th June assumed, to a great extent, the aspect of a determined attack by the Protestant mobs upon the police, and upon the places of business of Catholics residing in Protestant quarters of the town. Of the cause of this we shall come to speak when we have to deal with other matters into which your Excellency's Warrant directs us to inquire. But in this instance of Hassan's public-house, and in several others to which we have drawn attention, the attack was undoubtedly made by Protestant mobs against the property of Catholic traders. Of course there were retaliation and faults on both sides, but so far as we can judge from the evidence twenty-eight public-houses owned by Catholics were assailed and looted during the course of the riots, and only one or two public-houses owned by Protestants."

They might have added that 29 private houses were also wrecked. The Report proceeds—

> "This state of affairs may to a considerable extent be accounted for by the fact that the vast majority of the public-houses in Belfast are owned by Catholics, and that when once rioting begins those engaged in the pursuit are but too prone to attack any house in which intoxicating drinks can be procured. But at the same time these incidents seemed to show, and we have arrived at the opinion, that for a considerable period, at all events, from the 8th of June to the 19th of September, the principal actors in the rioting were what is known as the Protestant mob. Mr. Cullen informed us that up to this date, the 19th September, the Catholic Party behaved remarkably well, and Mr. M'Clelland, a Protestant magistrate, stated to us that the endurance and patience of the Catholics during the riots was simply wonderful. We are of opinion that the comparative good conduct of the Catholics must be largely attributed to the zealous exertions of the Catholic Bishop and clergy, who, during the riots, laboured persistently in the cause of peace, and who exercised over their people a great and most beneficial influence."

It is on behalf of that Catholic minority in Belfast, so certified to be patient and enduring, that I now appeal to the Chair and the Committee to support me in obtaining from the Government an immediate declaration of the policy they intend to pursue in order to secure the future preservation of order. The Commissioners say—

> "We attribute the extraordinary persistence of the riots largely to the intensity of feeling in Belfast during the period covered by them, a fact admitted upon all sides. The weakness of parleying with, and yielding to the mob did much harm. Had the police not been withdrawn on the 9th of June the tumult of the night would, in our opinion, have been suppressed with comparative ease, and the heavy loss of life which caused so much exasperation, would have been avoided. Unquestionably, however, a main cause of the prolonged continuance of the disturbances was the wild and unreasoning hostility exhibited by a large section of the Protestants of Belfast against the police."

The Commissioners state further—

> "We are sorry to add that certain persons having great influence in Belfast, thought proper, at various periods during the riots to indulge in language, written and spoken, well calculated to maintain excitement at a time when all men of influence should have tried to assuage it." "Another cause," say the Commissioners—"of the continuance of the riots was the unhappy sympathy with which, at certain stages, the well-to-do classes of Protestants regarded the proceedings of the rioters."

Further on they say—

> "A most important cause of the continuance of the disturbances were certain serious defects in the magisterial and police arrangements of the town."

They define this as follows—

> "The magistrates do not possess any special powers of any kind, and are therefore unable to deal summarily with such offences as riot, persons charged with which can only be sent for trial before a jury. During the riots the ordinary magistracy of Belfast was largely reinforced by resident magistrates drafted in from various parts of the country, and at one time at least twenty of these gentleman were in the town. Again, while on the one hand there was no evidence before us to prove that the borough magistrates acted with partiality, unquestionably, in the atmosphere of Belfast, they are regarded by the rival parties with suspicion, which enormously militates against the weight of any decisions they may give. Further, public inconvenience is caused by their fluctuating attendances on the bench; and during the riots this was most unfortunate, as the varying character of the tribunal rendered punishments unequal, at a time when it was most desirable that they should be, at once, equal and severe. Passing from the administration of justice in the courts to the action of the magistrates in the streets, we wish, in the first place, to say a word as to the resident magistrates. These gentlemen were brought up to Belfast in great numbers during the outbreak. They behaved, undoubtedly, very well, but here also we notice the absence of headship which helped so much to prolong the riots. Each resident magistrate appears to enjoy an equal amount of authority with his fellows, and this tends to produce that absence of an intelligible, consistent, and determined plan of action which is to be observed in the course taken to suppress the disturbances,

> When to the fifteen or twenty resident magistrates we add the borough magistrates, all with equal authority, it will be seen that the police of Belfast had, during the riots, some hundred masters, and it is not strange that such an arrangement did not work well. At a time when action was all important it is to be feared that too much time was lost in discussion."

I may say that one of the local magistrates, in the midst of the riot, released a prisoner at the dictation of the mob, and it was proved that another caused a disastrous withdrawal of the police from the barracks at Bowers' Hill, which had the result of producing in the mob a feeling that they were in the ascendancy. These having been the cause of the riots and the continuance of them, what do the Commissioners recommend? I ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Ireland to tell us before this Vote is taken, what action the Government are prepared to take upon the recommendation of the Commissioners. They recommend, in the first place, that the Chief Officer of Police for the town of Belfast should be entirely independent of all Police Authority, save and except that of the Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary. They say—

> "We recommend that such officer should have absolute control of the police force of the town, and the sole responsibility of maintaining the peace, free from any magisterial or other control, save that of the Executive Government and the Inspector General."

They desire, in other words, that the Chief Officer of Police in Belfast should be set free from the control of that Local Authority which in the past has been proved to be paralyzing in its effect, so far as the preservation of order is concerned. Now, I consider that the appointment of this future Chief Officer of Police is a matter of great and vital importance, and upon the fitness of the individual selected for the office will very much, in my opinion, depend the prospect of preserving peace. I have heard it asserted that a certain Inspector—Mr. Cameron—a gentleman of some notoriety, is to be appointed; and I am prepared to tell the Government in advance, that if they select that gentleman to be the Chief Officer of the Belfast Police they will have struck a vital blow against the maintenance of the public peace. Why was this Commission appointed at all? Why are we debating the question now, except that the Catholic minority in Belfast requires protection? Do you not conceive that the opinion of the Member who represents that Catholic minority and of the Catholic priests of Belfast should have any value? Do you think that in selecting the Chief Officer of the Belfast Police you ought not to select some officer who by the way in which he has discharged his duties hitherto would not be influenced by any partizan feeling? That is all I ask, and I agree with the Commissioners that—

> "Power should be vested in the Chief Officer of Police of Belfast to forbid processions, bands, and the erection of arches, when, in his opinion, they are calculated to lead to a breach of the peace. That the Chief Police Officer of Belfast shall have full power, from time to time, to transfer to the Head Quarters of the Royal Irish Constabulary all such officers and constables as may, in his judgment, prove unfitted for the discharge of urban duties as required in Belfast; that no officers or men should be otherwise removable, except with their consent; that the Chief Police Officer shall have sole control of promotion among the constables under his command; and that the promotion of the officers shall, as far as may be, be dependent upon his recommendation."

The Commissioners further recommend that the number of the normal police force of the town shall be increased to such extent as the Executive Government shall determine—

> "So as to render the force as far as possible complete in itself, and competent to deal with rioting, without any assistance from outside police forces; and that the military garrison of Belfast should be maintained at such strength as will render recourse to police aid from outside Belfast unnecessary at any time."

I ask the Government to accept that principle, and whether they intend to adopt it? I want to know if it is true, as it has been reported to me, that an alteration has already been made in the balance of creeds in the police force of Belfast since the month of October last? At that time Protestant constables were in a slight majority—280 to 250. It is far from me to suggest that a Protestant constable would not discharge his duty equally with a Catholic constable; but it must be remembered that the conflicts in Belfast have continually arose upon questions founded upon creed, and upon stringent proceedings arising out of imperfect understanding of the nature of some particular question. When disorder arises in such a case it is not only desirable but necessary that the minority, as well as the majority, should have confidence in the force that has to preserve the public peace, and the object should be to give confidence to the Catholic minority. The proportion of the Catholic members of the police has certainly not been increased since October; but I am told that a steady process of intrigue has been going on, by which the number of Protestant constables has been steadily increased, while that of the Catholic Constabulary has been decreased. The fact that the Catholic Constabulary is being withdrawn from these districts, and the preservation of the peace left to the Protestant police, is certainly open to the suspicion that in a time of disorder they might be found fraternizing with citizens of the Protestant faith. I am told that in some of the barracks in Belfast the number of Catholic Constabulary are now so few that they are exposed, at the hands of their comrades, to disagreeable experiences. I do not propose to go into details now; but it may be my duty to expose this matter to the notice of the Committee and of the country hereafter. In the Report of the Commissioners some important recommendations are made with respect to the administration of justice. The four members of the Commission who have signed the Report —Mr. Justice Day, General Bulwer, Mr. F. Le Poer Trench, and Mr. Adams —have arrived at the conclusion that the borough magistrates should be withdrawn from all connection with the administration of justice in Belfast. The Catholic Committee have confided to me a resolution, in which they say that no step will be of any avail in placing the peace of Belfast on a satisfactory footing unless the Government, without delay, deprive the borough magistrates of all criminal jurisdiction; that this is the only remedy for the evils under which Belfast is suffering; the only step that will engender a fear of the majesty of the law, and secure confidence and respect in its due administration. Have, then, the Government arrived at the conclusion to support the recommendation of the Royal Commissioners? I am afraid that not only have they not done so, but that they have removed two of the most experienced and able magistrates from the Bench. When I asked the question, I was told that this had been done in pursuance of the recommendation of the Commissioners. It has been done in pursuance of nothing of the kind. What the Commissioners recommended was that—

> "The Borough Magistrates should be relieved of the duty of attending the Petty Sessions Court of Belfast. The sole jurisdiction at the Petty Sessions should be conferred upon two paid Magistrates, who should either be Barristers of a certain standing, or selected for this duty from the general body of Resident Magistrates. If Resident Magistrates are appointed, their sole duties should be judicial, and they should not interfere actively against rioters in the streets. Special jurisdiction should be given to the Belfast Petty Sessions to deal summarily with cases of riot, unlawful assembly, and affray; and in our opinion that jurisdiction should provide for the punishment of offenders convicted of such crimes, or any crime against order in the town, by substantial and serious punishment."

The object of the Commissioners is evidently to withdraw the Resident Magistrates from any duty in the streets, so that magistrates engaged in arresting rioters to-day should not be engaged in trying them to-morrow. But the Government have inverted the recommendations of the Commissioners. While the Commissioners have enlarged on the importance of local knowledge to deal with the rioters of Belfast, the Government, after a visit from the Mayor or Town Clerk of Belfast at Dublin Castle —the two chief mouthpieces of the faction of disorder in that town—have taken the first step, not towards the establishment, but towards the uprooting of order by removing the two functionaries whose impartiality, whose activity, and whose courage in the administration of their judicial duties was the only redeeming feature during those three dreadful months of rioting and partizanship. I allude to Colonel Forbes and Mr. Macarthy. I do not know their creed, and I do not care. I believe that Colonel Forbes is a Protestant, and I have heard that Mr. Macarthy is a Catholic. Colonel Forbes was obliged more than once in the course of these riots to threaten to retire from the Bench of Belfast in consequence of the expressed and earnest determination of the local Justices to stand by their fellow partizans in the dock. It was only by the exercise of that threat that Colonel Forbes, who has now been removed from Belfast, was able to preserve in the Petty Sessional Court of the district any semblance of regard for the due administration of justice. It has been sworn before the Commissioners that an intrigue existed among the more corrupt Justices for the removal of that official. One gentleman came forward and said he heard one local magistrate say to another, "We shall never be easy until Forbes is driven out of Belfast." Colonel Forbes was the stumbling-block in the way. As a public official he had the inconceivable obstinacy to endeavour to discharge his duty. Accordingly he was to be driven out of Belfast, and now the Government have inverted the recommendation of the Commissioners, and have driven out the only two officials who had shown a distinct regard for the interests of public peace, and in replacing them they have struck a criminal blow against the interests of order and have conceded the demands of the faction of disorder. Who is to replace these gentlemen? Is it true that Mr. Rich, an Inspector of Constabulary, who was formerly quartered there, and Mr. Lister, a close connection of his, are to replace Colonel Forbes and Mr. Macarthy? If so, I am afraid that a more calamitous appointment could not be made. Mr. Lister is no lawyer. He is nominally a barrister, but he never had any practice. He is not a barrister of a certain standing, or of any standing, but he is a barrister of no standing whatever—merely a colourable barrister. The Commissioners recommended that the two paid magistrates who are to be appointed should have summary jurisdiction in cases of riot and unlawful assembly and affray. Now, I think that is an important recommendation, and one well worth the attention of the Government. I hold that the public peace will never be secured in Belfast so long as a long interval of time is allowed to elapse between the arrest of offenders and their punishment. Punishment would most certainly produce a more powerful effect if immediately applied. I may remind the Committee that since the murder of Private Hughes and Constable Gardner, in July last, the murderers have not yet been brought to justice. I think that punishment should more speedily follow crime, and I hope that the Government will see their way to invest the local Bench with an enlarged jurisdiction in regard to offences in the nature of riot. I hope to receive an assurance that the Government will, in accordance with the united recommendation of four of the Royal Commissioners, withdraw the Borough Justices, who are condemned in this Report, from any share in the administration of justice; and that they will appoint men who are not merely lawyers in name, but barristers in spirit and fact, as paid magistrates. There is still another point in regard to the law as to property. The Town Council of Belfast have smuggled a clause into a Local Act by which the town of Belfast is at the present moment governed, which will probably startle hon. Members of this House who are lawyers. It is a clause which places Belfast in a different position in regard to the question of compensation for injury to the person and damage to property from all other parts of Ireland. In every part of Ireland, except in Belfast, a man is able to obtain compensation from the Grand Jury for personal injury; but in Belfast he cannot obtain a single penny of compensation. Is that state of the law about to be continued, or will the Government take away from Belfast this exceptional privilege and place that town in exactly the same position as the rest of Ireland? Then, again, as to damage to property. The people injured in this case were Catholics. It was the houses of Catholics which were wrecked and looted, and yet the victims are required to go before a Town Council composed of 40 members, on which there is not a single Catholic. If the Town Council award any compensation whatever; if, for a claim of £100, they award £1, or even only 6*d*., there is no appeal. The Commissioners recommend that Belfast should be placed on a level with the rest of Ireland, both in regard to injury to the person and damage to property; and, further, that, in regard to those matters, the jurisdiction should be transferred from the Town Council of Belfast to an independent tribunal, such as a Government or some other arbitration, and that the applicant should have a right of appeal to the going Judge of Assize. They make one additional recommendation—namely—

> "That it would be advisable to give this tribunal, so suggested by us, power, if they thought it advisable, to applot the amount of compensation over a more limited area than the municipal boundary of Belfast."

I presume the object of making that recommendation is to confine the amount of compensation to that part of the municipal district which may have supplied the riot. These are the recommendations of two Englishmen and two Irishmen—all of them of eminent judicial position—one an English Judge, another a distinguished military officer, and two others Irish barristers. I want to know whether these recommendations, which appear to me to have been honestly conceived and carefully thought out, will be adopted by the Government? There is one final recommendation in reference to the search for arms. The Commissioners say—

> "We are also of opinion that the law as at present existing enabling the police authorities to search for arms in the possession of persons unauthorized to possess them is wholly inadequate, and practically useless, and that the authorities should be armed with adequate powers for this purpose."

They propose that this power should be repealed, and that some more stringent regulations should be substituted. All I know is that hitherto, when the Government have instituted a search for arms in Belfast, they have searched houses where everybody has been convinced no arms could possibly be found; while they have refrained from searching other places where there was a reasonable suspicion that they would be found. I have now gone over the three classes of recommendations made by the Commissioners—the recommendations in regard to the police officers, in regard to the administration of justice, and in regard to the amendment of the law for compensation for injury. I shall feel it my duty, unless the Government give some satisfactory and rational assurance, to press this question still further on the Report. I have mainly spoken to-day in the interest of the Catholic minority, which I chiefly represent in Belfast; but I think I may claim with some confidence that I also speak in favour of all who desire some rational provision for the preservation of social order in that afflicted town—afflicted by the unscrupulous conduct of the educated and by the passions of the uneducated. In calling attention to the subject, I have spoken not only for Catholics, but for persons of every class in Belfast—persons of every creed who desire the prosperity of that town, and who further desire to see that social peace and that settled good order without which material prosperity cannot possibly exist.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR)(Manchester, E.): The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down began his remarks by levelling a reproach at me for not having been in my place when the hon. Member wanted to bring this matter forward.

MR. SEXTON: I did not at all reproach the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As a matter of fact, I did not leave the House until a quarter to 4 o'clock this morning, and, as far as I was aware from what had gone on for the four hours preceding that time, the Committee was not engaged in a discussion of a valuable or instructive kind; and, moreover, the hon. Member had had an ample opportunity before then, if he desired, for bringing the whole Question before the Committee. The hon. Gentleman has complained, first, of the delay of the presentation of the Report of the Commission; but he must be aware that the Executive Government had no control whatever over the Commissioners as a body, or over any individual member of the Commission. It was not for the Executive Government to interfere with their arrangements. Therefore, whoever may be responsible for the delay in the production of the Report, it is neither I nor my right hon. Friend (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), who preceded me in Office. The hon. Member says that after the Report was presented a further culpable delay took place; but I must remind him that even now we have not got the full Report of the Commissioners.

MR. SEXTON: Why not?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: We have only received the Report of four members of the Commission, and the minority Report of Mr. M'Hardy will not be received in London for two or three days.

MR. SEXTON: Why not? He has had five months to prepare it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Report of Mr. M'Hardy will, I believe, be received on the 26th instant. The hon. Member seems to suppose that the delay on the part of Mr. M'Hardy is a very culpable neglect of duty. Now, I regret the delay, but I cannot blame Mr. M'Hardy, because that gentleman has had very grave responsibility thrown upon him outside Ireland. He is a very distinguished and a very hard-worked public officer, and the fact that other and imperative duties have been imposed upon him has interfered to delay the sending in of his final Report. Certainly the Government are not to blame, and, as far as I am acquainted with the facts of the case, Mr. M'Hardy is not to blame either. The delay, however, has occurred, whether we regret it or not; and can the Government be expected to arrived at a final and complete decision on this very difficult question until they have in their possession the Report, not only of the consenting majority of the Commission, but also the Report of the one member of the Commission who formed the dissentient minority? I think it would be a wholly improper course for the Government to make up their minds, finally, upon all the details of the matter before they are in full possession of Mr. M'Hardy's views. At the same time, I think I am able to say something—I will not say to satisfy the hon. Gentleman—but to meet his views. Some of the questions he has asked I can answer. He asks whether the relative number of the Catholic and Protestant members of the Belfast Police Force has not been altered in the course of the last two months.

Mr. SEXTON: No, since October.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no knowledge upon that subject, nor does it in any way fall within the purview of the duties of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. It is a question which is entirely left to the chief of the Constabulary, with whom I certainly do not think it my duty to interfere. If the hon. Gentleman wants to know what the facts of the matter are, I will make the necessary inquiries and give him an answer either in the House or in private on a future day. And so also with regard to other details upon which the hon. Gentleman desires to have further information. The hon. Gentleman has gone through the various recommendations of the majority of the Commission. Those recommendations may be divided into two parts—namely, those which are of an administrative character, and those which require legislative action to effect them. The hon. Member is aware that I have had but a short tenure of the Office of Secretary for Ireland, and during that short tenure questions of great difficulty and perplexity have come before me. I do not pretend that I have had time to consider specially and carefully the question of Belfast; but as far as I have made myself acquainted with the recommendations of the Commissioners, who deal with a variety of details of administration, speaking broadly, it appears to me that they may be regarded as effective, and as indicating the lines on which the Government should proceed.

Mr. SEXTON: Does the right hon. Gentleman speak only of the recommendations which relate to administrative matters?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes; and I may say that the Government intend to accept them. I refer to the recommendations in which the Commissioners say—

"We are of opinion that the Royal Irish Constabulary should be maintained as the police force of Belfast; that the Chief Officer of Police for the town of Belfast should be entirely independent of all police authority—save and except the Inspector General of the Royal Irish Constabulary; we recommend that such officer should have absolute control of the police force of the town, and the sole responsibility of maintaining the peace free from any magisterial or other control, save that of the Executive Government and the Inspector General. We recommend that a special Code be instituted for the police force of Belfast, having for its object the impression upon such force of a civic and urban character; and we further recommend that the changes in that force should be as few as consistent with the exigencies of the service. Power should be vested in the Chief Officer of Police of Belfast to forbid processions, bands, and the erection of arches, when, in his opinion, they are calculated to lead to a breach of the peace. That the Chief Police Officer of Belfast shall have full power, from time to time, to transfer to the headquarters of the Royal Irish Constabulary all such officers and constables as may, in his judgment, prove unfitted for the discharge of urban duties as required in Belfast; that no officers or men shall be otherwise removable except with their consent; that the Chief Police Officer shall have sole control of promotion among the constables under his command; and that the promotion of the officers shall, as far as may be, be dependent upon his recommendation. The object we propose hereby is to secure for the police force to be employed in Belfast thorough fitness and continuity of material, and unity of control and direction, subject to the intervention of the Inspector General and the Executive Government. The number of the normal police force of the town should be increased to such extent as the Executive Government shall determine, so as to render the force as far as possible complete in itself, and competent to deal with rioting, without any assistance from outside police forces; and the military garrison of Belfast should be

> maintained at such strength as will render recourse to police aid outside Belfast unnecessary at any time."

I am speaking under correction; but I apprehend that these recommendations could be carried into effect without any legislative action on the part of this House. The next recommendation, however, could not be carried out without legislation—namely, the recommendation that—

> "The borough magistrates should be relieved of the duty of attending the Petty Sessional Court of Belfast."

I believe that it is the rule which now prevails in Dublin, and I should have no objection to see it carried into effect in Belfast, if it can be done; but, as the hon. Gentleman is aware, it would require legislative action on the part of Parliament before it can be effected. The next recommendation is—

> "The sole jurisdiction at the Petty Sessions should be conferred upon two paid magistrates, who should either be barristers of a certain standing, or selected for this duty from the general body of Resident Magistrates. If Resident Magistrates are appointed, their sole duties should be judicial, and they should not interfere actively against rioters in the streets."

Well, Sir, that recommendation cannot be fully carried out without legislation. One part of it can be carried out, and it has been carried out; and I was sorry to hear the hon. Gentleman criticize the action of the Government in having done their best, apart from the delay, to carry out the recommendations of the Commissioners. They have already arranged that magistrates who are not barristers shall be transferred to other districts, and that barristers shall be employed.

MR. SEXTON: One selected is only nominally a barrister.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No; I understand that the hon. Gentleman is mistaken in that matter; and I am informed that Mr. Lister was a barrister in practice for 10 years. The next recommendation is that—

> "Special jurisdiction should be given to the Belfast Petty Sessions to deal summarily with cases of riot, unlawful assembly, and affray; and, in our opinion, that jurisdiction should provide for the punishment of offenders convicted of such crimes, or any crime against order in the town, by substantial and serious punishment."

That is a provision which ought to be introduced into any Bill that may deal with the question of law and order in Ireland; and I hope, shortly, to lay a proposition before the House upon that matter. The next recommendation of the Commissioners is a long and a very elaborate one with regard to those who may be injured in Belfast in the event of a riot. My view of that recommendation, also, is that it cannot be carried into effect without legislation, and legislation of an elaborate kind. But, at the same time, I do not think that the town of Belfast should be in a different position from the rest of Ireland; and it will be the object of the Government to place the whole of Ireland under one law in regard to injuries sustained through rioting. The next recommendation is that the law, as it at present exists in regard to damage to property, should also be altered.

MR. SEXTON: The Commissioners recommend that there should be an independent tribunal to deal with questions of injury to property, instead of the Town Council, with the right of appeal to the Judge of Assize.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes; but the hon. Gentleman will perceive that that is part of a general scheme for dealing with the question of malicious injury, and the Government are perfectly prepared to consider the whole matter. The only remaining recommendation of the Commissioners deals with the question of the power of the Police Authorities to search for arms. That comes under the same category as the other recommendations in regard to special summary jurisdiction in the case of riot, and it is one with which we also propose to deal at an early date. I think I have now placed before the hon. Gentleman, as far as I am able, the general view of the Government as far as they have made up their minds on the subject. I hope that I have done something to satisfy him. At all events, I have done all that I can to satisfy him. I will assure him that the subject will receive the most careful consideration. The Report of the remaining Commissioner will be in my hands in the course of a few days. As well as the other Report, it will be carefully studied by me, and I trust to be able this Session to lay before the House such part of the recommendations of the Commissioners as we think ought to be carried into effect. In conclusion, let me congratulate the hon. Gentleman and the House on the earnest desire he has expressed that law and order shall be maintained in Ireland. I listened with great satisfaction to that part of his speech, and I hope that in every effort made by Her Majesty's Government to restore law and order in any and every part of the country, we shall have the earnest and zealous support of the hon. Gentleman and his friends.

MR. SEXTON: I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that I have only raised the question at this moment from a sense of duty. I think he has shown a reasonable desire to meet the objections I have raised; and, bearing in mind his brief tenure of Office, I will consider his reply in a fair spirit, and will, at a later stage, again raise the question of the Belfast riots.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): It is quite evident, Mr. Courtney, that, owing to the inconvenience of the course adopted by the Government in pressing forward this Vote, the physical condition of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) is not such as to enable him to carry on the discussion in a satisfactory manner. I think that, now we have all somewhat cooled down, nobody can doubt, after listening to the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton), that he has made out an unanswerable and overwhelming case for his justification in raising, not a question of detail, as he pointed out at an early hour last night, on this Vote on Account, but a question of public policy—a question of public policy which brooked of no delay; one of the most vital and imminent importance, and one there would have been no opportunity of discussing properly for some months to come if this opportunity had been allowed to slip. The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), just before the Chief Secretary came into the House, complained bitterly of the course we have pursued during this Sitting, and he accused us of wishing to adopt the unusual course of discussing items on this Vote on Account. It is perfectly manifest that, by the course the Government have adopted, they desire to prevent us discussing, not only items on this Vote, but discussing at any reasonable length any question whatever on this Vote; and we cannot too strongly emphasize the fact that all the trouble of last night, this first All-night Sitting that has occurred for two Parliaments, has arisen from an attempt on the part of the First Lord of the Treasury to pass through Committee a Vote without any discussion—a Vote raising questions of the most vital importance to Ireland, and upon which we are bound to take every opportunity of raising a discussion. There is another point in our favour. I availed myself of an opportunity the other night of raising a discussion on a question of immense importance to Ireland at the present moment; and it will be within the recollection of Members of this Committee, and perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary may have learned from the facts that have since occurred a lesson of wisdom—it may be in the recollection of hon. Members what treatment I received from the responsible Governor of Ireland. I never received such scant courtesy in my life before. The right hon. Gentleman treated me with the most absolute and supreme contempt; and he did not deign to take notice, not to say answer, a single one of the questions I put to him; or to meet a single one of the charges I made against the Government. If we are accused of coming forward at inconvenient times and taking out-of-the-way opportunities—though I do not admit that this is an inconvenient opportunity of raising this question—I think we are entitled to show that we are driven to expedients of this kind by the reception we met from the responsible officers of the Government of Ireland. Because, when the right hon. Gentleman who has to govern a country in the condition of Ireland treats debates raised in this House with the supreme and studied contempt he treated us with the other night, he must be prepared for repeated attacks upon the same subject. Although I am aware the Chief Secretary is physically incapable of continuing this discussion—[MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, no; perfectly capable.] I am exceedingly glad to hear that, because I shall now raise, at length, several points which are of great importance. The first point I wish to raise on this Vote has reference to the Office of the Chief Secretary in Dublin. It is quite clear that we could not raise such a point until the Chief Secretary was in his place. We have just heard a statement from our new Governor; his experience in the troublesome and responsible Office of Chief Secretary has been somewhat brief; and his visit to the country, his opportunity of attaining an acquaintance with the country he has undertaken to govern, has been exceedingly brief. I am bound to say, from all the information I have been able to collect, from all information which has reached me, that although the right hon. Gentleman's visit to Ireland was brief, it was important and ominous. He made good use of his time. Now, what did he do? He held a meeting in Dublin Castle, as I am informed, of all the District Magistrates or Divisional Magistrates in Ireland. All these gentlemen were summoned to meet him, and he addressed to them instructions of the most extraordinary character. The proceedings at that meeting are reported in the country in such a way that we are entitled to bring the matter under the notice of this Committee. We are informed——

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman has been misinformed as to the fact?

Mr. DILLON: As to your having met the Divisional Magistrates?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No.

Mr. DILLON: The right hon. Gentleman may not have met them——

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I did meet them, and perhaps it would be convenient if I were briefly to state what happened. Among other gentlemen whom I desired to see were the Divisional Magistrates of Ireland. I asked them to come and see me. They came, and I discussed with each magistrate the condition of the district in which he had control.

Mr. DILLON: That explanation, Mr. Courtney, is worth all the sitting up we have had to-night. I can assure you, Sir, that the belief in Ireland, that the popular report in Ireland, founded upon private information which came from one of the magistrates concerned—though, I admit, it reached me in a roundabout way—the popular report in Ireland is that the words used were that—"At evictions for the future, if the least obstruction is offered, do not hesitate to fire upon the people." At Ballindyne, in Mayo, two days after the visit of the right hon. Gentleman, a Divisional Magistrate of the name of Burn, who resides in Athlone, is reported in the papers to have addressed some individual of local influence in these words—"For God's sake, keep the peace, because if there is any resistance, I must fire immediately." Now, Sir, if the right hon. Gentleman will remove entirely the impression that any such instruction or advice was given, our discussion to-night will not have been a fruitless one. Notice how monstrous such an instruction would be. Within the last five or six years there have been evicted in Ireland, I should think, no less than 25,000 families. ["Oh, oh!"] For the sake of argument, I will say 15,000 families—I am not particular as to numbers. [*Laughter.*] Well, the number is very great; but you will see that whether the number is 25,000 or 15,000 it does not affect my argument. At the majority of these evictions large crowds of people have assembled, and obstruction was offered in a great number of cases. What are the historical facts? Why, that during the whole course of these years not one single policeman was killed, maimed, or seriously injured. During these years, in which let us take it that 15,000 families have been evicted in Ireland; there was not as much damage done as was done recently in the streets of Belfast in one half-hour. In face of that fact, to issue instructions to the Irish police that, on the least obstruction being offered, they were not to hesitate to fire upon the people, would be one of the most terrible responsibilities any Official ever undertook. At these evictions it must be remembered that no civil magistrate is ever present, and the Riot Act is not read, and the precautions are not taken which are taken in England when any disturbance is apprehended. It appears from the information we have received that the police officers have been deprived of discretion; for the words reported to have been used at Ballindyne are—"For God's sake keep the peace, or I must fire immediately." Now, Sir, I have mentioned what happened at Ballindyne during the evictions to justify us in giving credence to the rumours which have been set afloat in Ireland. We all know now of the truth of the telegram which was sent to Youghal. That telegram was treated by the newspapers of this country as a bogus message; but when a Question was asked in this House concerning it, the Chief Secretary accepted full responsibility for it. What was the interpretation put upon that telegram by the police authorities at Youghal? It was that they were to use deadly weapons, whether they be bullets or bayonets, and that if necessary they were to act without the presence of a civil magistrate. Not only did they act on the occasion of the recent disturbances without the presence of the civil magistrate, but they took the most elaborate precautions to secure that no civil magistrate should be present. We have had a most deplorable instance of the temper of police officers, who have the lives of a great number of people in Ireland at their mercy. We know that a police magistrate went into the police barracks at Youghal to protest against the conduct of the police, and to remonstrate with Mr. Somerville for his treatment of him as a magistrate, and for not asking him to be present when the extra police entered the town. Mr. Somerville, instead of expressing the slightest regret at the death of the poor man Hanlon, made use of the following words, which will never die out of the memory of the Irish people:—"I am sorry I did not fire on them." It is useless for the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) to tell us that we can raise these points hereafter, when the Civil Service Estimates are in Committee of Supply. Things have moved very fast in Ireland indeed, and we know very little of what may occur in that country during the next three months. It would therefore be preposterous for us to postpone or to neglect any opportunity of bringing forward these facts. Now, Sir, I am bound to take this opportunity of calling attention to a third point raised by this Estimate, and that is in regard to the Irish Constabulary Vote, which I regret to find is steadily assuming greater proportions. It is many years since I first called attention in this House to the monstrous character of the Irish Constabulary Vote. Members of the then Government admitted to the fullest extent the justification of my charge; but in spite of all that can be said, and in spite of the confession of the Government, the Irish Constabulary Vote has mounted year by year until its proportions has become a public scandal, because the larger the Vote grows, the worse the condition of the country becomes. I have prepared some figures of the most extraordinary character in relation to the Irish Constabulary Vote. The Estimate for that Vote for next year has reached the figure of £1,412,000. The expenditure last year was £1,397,000; therefore we are threatened now with an increase of something like £15,000; but that increase is only part of an arithmetical progression which has never ceased. It has gone on steadily, sometimes by great jumps and sometimes by slow progress. In the year 1871-2 the Vote for the Irish Constabulary was £918,000; in the year 1877-8 it was £1,000,000; in the year 1885 it was £1,380,000; in the year 1886 it was £1,397,000; and in the next year it is estimated to be £1,412,000. And, Sir, when we consider that, *pari passu* with this steady increase in the Vote for the Irish police, the population of Ireland has dwindled away, we have a condition of things the like of which I challenge anyone to point to in the whole civilized world. In Ireland, in 1871 it cost £918,000 to police 5,500,000 people. This year, it is to cost almost exactly 50 per cent more to police 4,750,000 people. At the same rate of progress, and after you have brought in more of your Bills for Ireland, and brought down the population to 2,000,000, I suppose the cost of the police will amount to something like £3,000,000. What is the result of all this expenditure on the police? Why, we are told that while you have almost doubled in 15 years the Vote for the Irish police, government in Ireland is paralyzed. I sometimes wonder how it is that the Executive do not inquire whether it is paralyzed by having too many policemen in the country; the present condition of things has no parallel in the civilized world, and it is a positive disgrace to England. I have made a calculation that the increased expenditure from 1871 to 1887 on the Irish police—over and above what the expenditure would have been had it remained during these years at the same figure as it was in 1871—amounts to £2,500,000 sterling. Many an Irish problem would have been settled if that money had been spent on the people, instead of on the police, and in reducing the whole island to chaos. Finally, I will draw your attention to this fact—that in England and Wales you pay for your police 2*s*. 6*d*. per head of the population; while the police in Ireland cost this country 5*s*. 6*d*.

per head of the population. Of course, it requires less, as a rule, to police country districts than town districts; but I have no hesitation in saying that, if we could work out this problem, it would be found that it costs to police the country parts of Ireland five times as much as it costs to police country districts of England. I have devoted a great deal of attention to this subject, and I cannot help being struck very forcibly by a fact recorded in the newspapers a few days ago—namely, that when Father Keller was arrested on Friday last, there was no disturbance. I was glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary say that that was so; because, as it turns out, the police were on the occasion strictly confined to barracks and not allowed to go on the streets. That is a strange statement. It amounts to this, that when the police are on the streets, there is rioting; but when they are confined to barracks, there is no disturbance, no property is injured, no man is hurt. I really put it to you whether you are not wasting money in Ireland; whether you are not turning the country upside down by this enormous expenditure? What did Mr. Justice Lawson say at the Winter Assizes in the County Mayo? His words are characteristic of Irish history; he said—"Undoubtedly this county is remarkably free from crime." It is true that, with the exception of a drunken row or two, County Mayo, as regards crime, will compare favourably with any part of the civilized world. The Judge said—

> "But, although that is true, although the country is remarkably free from all kinds of crime, I cannot say its condition is satisfactory; for the law is paralyzed."

Such a statement from a Judge ought to make us reflect; because, from this statement, it would appear that when the law is paralyzed, there is no crime, and that when it is in force, crime breaks out. It is really a question for Englishmen whether it is worth while spending this £1,400,000 a-year for the purpose of enforcing law in Ireland. Now, I do not want to comment at present at any great length on the subject—which undoubtedly we shall hear a great deal more of in this House—except to say that as often as there is a single shilling voted for the Irish Constabulary I shall speak at considerable length. There is one other Vote I feel it my bounden duty to refer to before this Vote on Account is agreed to. I own I am astonished that the First Lord of the Treasury supposed for a moment that the Vote for the Irish Bankruptcy Court could pass through this House without discussion. It would be a remarkable thing if, in the present condition of Ireland, and in view of events which are happening in that country, and which have convulsed society in that country to an extent which few Englishmen are capable of believing, that we could allow a Vote for the Irish Bankruptcy Court to pass without comment. I endeavoured the other night to show that the Irish Bankruptcy Court has been turned from being a Court of Justice into being a political engine. I endeavoured to show that Judge Boyd, one of the Judges of that Court, has consulted with the men who belong to one side of politics, or to one party or faction in Ireland.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Mr. Courtney, I rise to Order. I wish to ask you, Sir, whether it is in Order to impute to a Judge of a High Court that he has consulted with political partizans, and that his conduct, I apprehend, is influenced accordingly?

The CHAIRMAN: I am sorry to say I did not hear, in the confusion of the Committee, all the words of the hon. Member. But it is undoubtedly out of Order to impugn the conduct of a Judge in Committee of Supply, when there is a definite and well-regulated mode of bringing the conduct of a Judge before the House.

Mr. DILLON: I presume I shall be in Order, when we are voting money for the Bankruptcy Court, to criticize proceedings which have taken place in that Court; at all events, I shall endeavour to do so. The contention I make is this—that at the present moment a gentleman has been summoned to the Court of Bankruptcy in such a way as to convey to the whole population of Ireland—and I speak now of both sides in politics—the impression that that summons was not the result of a *bonâ fide* attempt to investigate a case of bankruptcy, but a deliberate effort to beat down a political movement. I think I am entitled to lay down the grounds which have induced the entire public of Ireland to look upon this act as an attempt to intimidate and beat down a political movement to which one side is intensely hostile, and the other is passionately devoted. The Court of Bankruptcy was invited to extract from a tenant on the estate of Mr. Ponsonby certain moneys he owed to his landlord, and to have judgment entered against him. So far I have no complaint to make; but when a considerable period had elapsed, a summons was issued and served upon the parish priest of this tenant, and the priest of another parish. It is not alleged that these gentlemen were in the possession of funds collected with the estates. It is notorious in Ireland that they are not in possession of funds in connection with the estate; but, Sir, the very line of examination which was commenced in the Bankruptcy Court showed plainly what facts were sought to be ascertained from these priests; they were summoned to give information of a meeting held in a private room to which the police were not admitted. It is all very fine to talk about the jurisdiction of a Court; but at the meeting there were 70 or 80 tenants on the Ponsonby estate. There were many well-known Members of Parliament, and hundreds of laymen. Why select two priests? They could have taken any one of the laymen to give evidence, and to tell everything that the priests knew, unless it be the confidences reposed in the priests as Catholic clergymen? I do not know whether they expected to extract from Father Keller anything of a particularly private or confidential character; but what they were evidently aiming at was, that they should get him in the face of his congregation to turn informer on his own people, to reveal what had transpired at the meeting in question.

THE CHAIRMAN: As far as the hon. Gentleman has opened his case, he makes no case attaching to the Vote for the Court of Bankruptcy. He is impugning the conduct of some persons, who, he asserts, rightly or wrongly, have perverted the Court of Bankruptcy. If the persons who obtained the summons from the Court are provided for in the Estimates, he is in Order in discussing this subject; but he is not in Order in attempting to discuss what has happened under shelter of the Vote for the Court of Bankruptcy.

MR. DILLON: Your ruling, Sir, shows clearly that I am in Order, because the men whose conduct I am impugning are officers of the Court of Bankruptcy.

THE CHAIRMAN: Their duty is purely ministerial.

MR. DILLON: I think that if you will bear with me for a few moments, Mr. Courtney, I shall be able to show you that, under your own ruling, I am strictly in Order. When it came to the summoning of Father Keller, the landlord and the solicitors who set the Court of Bankruptcy in motion, withdrew from the case, and when they were asked on Saturday last whether the proceedings were taken with their authority, they replied that they were not taken with their authority. When the case came into Court the solicitor for Father Keller brought under the notice of the Judge the fact that the landlord of the estate and his representative were no parties to the proceedings. But what did the Judge say? Why, that "the matter" is now taken out of the power of the creditor, and is in the hands of the official assignees, and they will proceed in the matter in due course. Now, I am not sufficiently a lawyer, and I do not know whether you, Mr. Courtney, have sufficient technical knowledge, to know what the discretion of the official assignees is; but I want to point out that this extraordinary circumstance arose, that the creditor, having realized the fatal character of the step he was taking for his own future, wished to withdraw, and he is now in a vice and compelled to go on in a course which will inevitably wreck his estate and leave him a pauper. I think this contention, Sir, brings me completely in Order. I want to know what was the mysterious influence at work which led this man into a struggle which, if he continues in it, will leave him a beggar; and which, when he had realized the character of the step he was taking in getting a priest arrested, prevented him using his own discretion, and extracting the Government of Ireland from a most unpleasant position. If the official assignees are exercising their discretion, I venture to say that a more injurious act of discretion was never made in any country. In the long run, they will deprive this man of the money he would have got if he had acted reasonably; and they are landing the Irish Government in the most unpleasant position in which the Irish Government has ever been landed. I maintain that no regard ought to be had, in a case which comes before a Court, to the politics of the people concerned. Cases of this character have all been brought in the Junior Court, except one, in which it was attempted to adopt the same course, but in which Justice Miller promptly said—"I will hear nothing about the Plan of Campaign; I sit here to administer law." The consequence of which dictum was that no "Plan of Campaign" cases were ever brought in Justice Miller's Court again. I venture to say that, although he is a Conservative in politics——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is proceeding in direct violation of my ruling.

MR. DILLON: I was trying to bring before the notice of the Committee the large expenditure which has been incurred in Ireland in recent years. I will content myself with moving to omit the sum of £1,500, being the amount asked for the Irish Bankruptcy Court.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is out of Order to move the omission of this item.

MR. DILLON: Then I beg to move the reduction of the whole Vote by the sum of £1,500.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the sum of £3,622,600 be granted to Her Majesty, for the said Services."—(*Mr. Dillon.*)

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Mr. Chairman, I repudiate absolutely the attack which has been made upon Judge Boyd by the hon. Member (Mr. Dillon). I consider it most intolerable that any Gentleman in this House should bring against a Judge the accusation that he has been influenced in his action by political motives. With this repudiation, I will leave this part of the hon. Gentleman's case, and proceed to refer to some other remarks of his. The hon. Gentleman began his speech by saying that in consequence of the treatment he received on Friday night, he was compelled to bring this question before the Committee to-day. Let me say, at the onset, I meant no discourtesy to the hon. Gentleman, or to any other Member of the House. On Friday night the hon. Gentleman deliberately accused me of promoting murders in order to get a Coercion Bill passed through the House; but even such provocation as that would not have justified discourtesy, and no discourtesy was intended. The hon. Gentleman will recollect that the Motion he made on Friday night did not touch at all the question of the attitude assumed by the coroner at Youghal. I dealt with the whole extent of the Motion the hon. Gentleman made, and if I omitted to deal with one fragmentary part of his speech, not knowing the relevancy of it, he must forgive me. The hon. Gentleman has, to-day, accused me of having gone to Dublin, called together the Divisional Magistrates, and given them instructions to shoot down the Irish people, whenever any obstruction was offered to any process of eviction. That is entirely baseless fiction, conjured up by the hon. Member himself. I went to Ireland, not for the purpose of giving specific directions to the Divisional Magistrates, but to hear what they had to say about the state of the country. If the hon. Gentleman asks me what views the Government hold on this question, I shall say I stated them adequately in answering a Question put to me with regard to the telegram sent by Captain Plunkett. To the terms of that answer I absolutely adhere. The hon. Gentleman has dealt at great length with a question which I think he has already brought before the House—namely, the growth of the Constabulary and of the Constabulary Vote. I admit it is greatly to be regretted that the Constabulary Vote is growing. I do not wish to introduce controversial matters in this debate; but I will ask the hon. Gentleman whether he does not think that others besides the Government are responsible for the growth of the Vote. I may remind the hon. Gentleman of an answer given by my right hon. Friend the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), who preceded me in Office, in a debate on this subject. My right hon. Friend pointed out that the increase in the Constabulary Vote is partly due to the riots in Belfast, partly to the enormous amount of personal protection which has to be given to people who are in danger of their lives and property; and partly due to the fact that from motives of humanity, if from no other motives, it is absolutely necessary to have at any point, where disturbance is apprehended, a large and, if possible, an overwhelming force. These are the reasons, I admit the melancholy reasons, which have made it necessary to increase the Vote for the Constabulary. The hon. Gentleman says that in spite of the gigantic Constabulary Vote, Government is paralyzed.

Mr. DILLON: I said that you stated Government was paralyzed.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, Government is paralyzed. But does the hon. Gentleman confound the Police Force with the whole machinery of Government? Does he not know that there are other parts of that machinery not less necessary to the healthy working of any Constitution? The Government of Ireland is paralyzed because the Courts of Law are paralyzed; and no one is more ready than I to admit that increase the Police Force as you may, pile up this Vote as you will, it will all be in vain if the Courts of Law, whom the police have to obey, are paralyzed in the fulfilment of their functions. I hope I have now dealt with the chief question which the hon. Gentleman has raised. Let me conclude by again assuring him that neither in my reply the other day, nor in the few words I have uttered now, nor in any reply I shall ever make in this House, do I intend any discourtesy either to the hon. Gentleman opposite or to any Gentleman in any part of the House.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): The speech of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) is, from the point of view of hon. Gentlemen on these Benches, a very unsatisfactory reply to the unanswerable indictment brought forward by the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon). The right hon. Gentleman stated that he did not hold such language with the Divisional Magistrates assembled in Dublin, as that my hon. friend attributed to him; but he left entirely unexplained, or unsatisfied, the action of the police in obedience to whatever commands or instructions he gave them in Dublin Castle. He did not deny that the police had been ordered to shoot down the people on the smallest provocation. The other day, I asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he disputed the telegram of Captain Plunkett, ordering the police to shoot down the people without delay or hesitation. He objected to the interpretation I put upon the telegram of Captain Plunkett, but I maintain the words of the telegram bear the construction I put upon them, and are, in fact, incapable of bearing any other. The right hon. Gentleman says the Government are bound in the interests of humanity to send large forces of Constabulary to points where disturbance is apprehended. But to Youghal, they sent the small force of 24 men. The unhappy consequences which followed were the result of neglect to carry out what the right hon. Gentleman has just stated to be necessary. Where do these disturbances take place? They take place at evictions carried on by the landlords with the assistance of the police. What are these evictions for? They are for the non-payment of unjust and impossible rents. [Colonel King-Harman: No.] Did I understand the hon. and gallant Gentleman to say "No?" [Colonel King-Harman: Yes.] I congratulate the hon. and gallant Gentleman on his courage, for he must know by this time that in stating that the rents of Ireland are possible, he stands alone almost amongst civilized men. He certainly stands in opposition to Lord Cowper, to Sir James Caird, to Mr. Knipe, I think to a large extent to Judge Flanagan, and to a large extent to Lord Milltown. I will not go into personal matters with reference to the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel King-Harman); but I am afraid his experience has rather prejudiced his judgment. If I were to go into the details of his own estate, I think I could show there is a large discrepancy between what is his opinion of what is a fair and possible rent and the opinion of some of the Courts of Law; but I will return to the point—that the resistance to eviction is, in nearly every case, the resistance of men and women, and sometimes of children, to eviction for unjust and impossible rent, and I ask every Member of the Committee, as humane and Christian men, what are they to think of a system of Government which orders police officers to shoot down, without hesitation, men who are defending their homes against unjust and impossible rents. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary never made one allusion to that portion of the speech of my hon. Friend (Mr. Dillon). The right hon. Gentleman denied the statement of my hon. Friend—that he gave orders to the District Inspectors to shoot the people down without hesitation; but he did not offer any defence or explanation of the telegram of Captain Plunkett. Compare the action of the authorities in this country with the action of the authorities in Ireland. Will anyone tell me that a Minister in this country who had given the order to English magistrates to shoot down English crowds without hesitation could survive for 24 hours? A Minister who had dared to give so savage and barbarous an order would be immediately swept from his seat in a cyclone of popular wrath and hate. What do you do here when there is a riot in a town? The Mayor is called in—the Civil Authority has all the initiative, and the Civil Authority, before he gives the order to the police, even to use batons, much less rifles, uses all the resources of persuasion. The law is carried out in England and Ireland in an exactly converse manner. In England you have a superabundant hesitation before shooting down any rioters. In Ireland the police have orders to shoot the people down without hesitation. Now, objection seemed to be taken to my hon. Friend's (Mr. Dillon's) statement that in the last five or six years 15,000 Irish families have been evicted from their homes. Why, in two years alone there were 7,000 evictions.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Will the hon. Gentleman say how many were readmitted as caretakers?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I anticipated the question of the hon. and gallant Gentleman, and, if it will be any satisfaction to him, I will read the figures from the Blue Book. What I wanted to point out was, that my hon. Friend (Mr. Dillon) was talking of the number of people evicted. Whether the people were re-admitted as caretakers has really nothing to do with the question.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Will the hon. Gentleman fulfil his promise, and read the figures?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I will read the figures if you like; but I am afraid it would be a waste of the time of the Committee. [*A laugh.*] If hon. Gentlemen are careless with regard to the time of the Committee I do not share their feeling. Mr. Courtney, the point my hon. Friend (Mr. Dillon) raised was this—that although there have been 15,000 evictions in Ireland in the course of the last five or six years, no policeman has been killed or seriously injured at any one of them.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I only want the hon. Gentleman to fulfil his promise.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I said I would read the figures from the Blue Book, if the Committee desire that I should do so. I will place the figures at the hon. and gallant Gentleman's disposal.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I rely upon the hon. Gentleman to fulfil his promise.

[Dr. TANNER walked across the floor of the House and offered the Blue Book to Colonel King-Harman.]

THE CHAIRMAN: I must ask hon. Gentlemen to conduct this debate in a seemly manner.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I think I was right, Mr. Courtney, in resisting the attempt of the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel King-Harman) to get me to deal with entirely irrelevant matter. I have pointed out that in two years there were 7,000 evictions, and therefore I think my hon. Friend (Mr. Dillon) was quite justified in saying that in the last five or six years there have been 15,000 Irish families evicted from their homes. In spite of this terrible number of evictions in Ireland, there has not been one case of serious injury to a policeman; yet we have this extraordinary increase of police on one side, and this barbarous and savage order to the police on the other side. It seems that evictions can be carried out without any serious danger to life or limb, and yet we have directions given to the police to shoot down the people without hesitation. There is only one excuse for shooting down people without hesitation, and that is the imminence of great danger to human life. We are driven to this conclusion—that the reason of the recent order to the Irish police was not to save the lives of the police, but to strike terror into the hearts of the people. There was a time when massacre was the avowed policy of the English governors of Ireland; and I saw, not later than a week ago, that a newspaper with which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was once intimately associated, declared that the weak point in the policy of Mountjoy and

Cromwell, and the general laws, was that they were not carried out with sufficient force and continuance. We have now Gentlemen who wish to carry out a policy which differs very little from that of Mountjoy and Cromwell. When the English people understand that this is so they will raise a storm which no one can withstand. My hon. Friend (Mr. Dillon) is quite justified in endeavouring to impress the English public with the full meaning of the extraordinary growth of the Irish Constabulary Vote—for what does it mean? It means that the people of this country have not only the responsibility and the shame and the guilt of the misdeeds of the Irish police, but they have to pay for the misdeeds out of their own pockets. I shall be surprised if the result of bringing these facts before the people of England is not a crushing verdict against the Government.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Perhaps I may be allowed to address a few words to the Committee with the view of expediting the issue which the Government, no doubt, desire. Thirteen hours ago we were willing that the Navy Vote should be taken, on condition that the Vote on Account was subjected to a debate of moderate length at a future Sitting of the House. The Government refused that offer, and I think it is apparent their then refusal has not resulted in an economy of public time. At an early hour this morning, I suggested to the Government, that if they would put the Vote on Account down as the first Business to-day, we would consent to a Division being taken at 10 o'clock to-night—that is, after a debate of about four hours—after which the Government might proceed with the other Business on the Paper. Since that offer was made eight hours have elapsed. We have, however, succeeded in obtaining the discussion which we claimed and sought. My hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), who, when he speaks, speaks with the assent and confidence of all the Members of the Irish Nationalist Party, has been enabled to place before the Committee and the country his case and ours upon the questions of the increase of the Constabulary Vote, the misuse of the Bankruptcy Court, and the sinister instructions given to the police. He has extorted a reply from the Government. I do not say it has been a satisfactory or an adequate reply; but, at any rate, it has been such a reply as the miserable pass to which the foolish policy of the Government has got enables them to make. I have had an opportunity of raising the question of social order in Belfast. I think if there was anything to justify the stand we have made it would be this—that the principles I stated in debate in this House last year, which have now been ratified by a Royal Commission, have been practically adopted by the Government, and that we, by what I beg, without undue egotism, to call patriotic persistency, have placed social order in Belfast upon a basis more permanent and more safe than that upon which it has hitherto rested. We have held the field, and we have won. Our persistency has been vindicated by the result. The masterly statement of my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), the miserably weak reply of the Government, the valuable declaration which I myself have obtained with respect to social order in Belfast, are vindications of the course we have taken. There is not a man in the House who will now get up and, judging us by the declarations of the Government themselves, say that we do not stand justified before the House and before the country in what we have done. We do not wish to argue further with the majority of the House, but with the justice of the people—not of Ireland only, but of England and of Scotland—we leave the moral merit of this conflict between the Government and ourselves. Now, Sir, so far as we are concerned, the Vote on Account may be taken.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Member for East Mayo withdraw his Amendment?

Mr. DILLON: No, Sir; I intend to vote upon it.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 80; Noes 255: Majority 175. [1.0 P.M.]

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, A. H. D.
Blake, J. A.
Blake, T.
Blane, A.
Bradlaugh, C.
Brown, A. L.
Byrne, G. M.
Campbell, H.
Carew, J. L.
Chance, P. A.
Clancy, J. J.
Cobb, H. P.
Connolly, L.
Conway, M.

Conybeare, C. A. V.
Corbet, W. J.
Cossham, H.
Cremer, W. R.
Deasy, J.
Dillon, J.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dodds, J.
Ellis, J. E.
Ellis, T. E.
Esslemont, P.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fenwick, C.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Fuller, G. P.
Gill, T. P.
Gourley, E. T.
Harrington, E.
Hayden, L. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Hooper, J.
Howell, G.
Illingworth, A.
Kenny, M. J.
Lalor, R.
Lane, W. J.
Leahy, J.
Leake, R.
Mac Neill, J. G. S.
M'Cartan, M.
M'Carthy, J. H.
M'Donald, P.
M'Kenna, Sir J. N.
Molloy, B. C.
Morgan, O. V.
Morley, A.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Connor, J. (Tippry.)
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Doherty, J. E.
O'Kelly, J.
Pease, A. E.
Pinkerton, J.
Playfair, right hon. Sir L.
Quinn, T.
Rowlands, J.
Rowntree, J.
Russell, E. R.
Sexton, T.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stack, J.
Stuart, J.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Tanner, C. K.
Tuite, J.
Wallace, R.
Watt, H.
Wayman, T.
Will, J. S.
Williams, A.
Wilson, H. J.

TELLERS.

Labouchere, H.
Sheil, E.

NOES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ainslie, W. G.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, Colonel R. H. L.
Anstruther, H. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, G. S.
Baggallay, E.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Balfour, G. W.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Bartley, G. C. T.
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Beach, W. W. B.
Beadel, W. J.
Bective, Earl of
Bentinck, Lord H. C.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bickford-Smith, W.
Biddulph, M.
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Boord, T. W.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, Col. A. M.
Brooks, Sir W. C.
Bruce, Lord H.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Burghley, Lord
Caine, W. S.
Caldwell, J.
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Charrington, S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Coghill, D. H.
Collings, J.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Corbett, A. C.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Cranborne, Viscount
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Curzon, Viscount
Curzon, hon. G. N.
Dalrymple, C.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
Dawnay, Col. hn. L. P.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Edwards-Moss, T. C.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Elliot, Sir G.
Ellis, Sir J. W.
Elton, C. I.
Ewart, W.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Feilden, Lieut.-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, W. H.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitz-Wygram, Gen. Sir F. W.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Fry, L.
Fulton, J. F.
Gardner, R. Richardson-
Gedge, S.
Gent-Davis, R.
Gibson, J. G.
Gilliat, J. S.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Gray, C. W.
Green, Sir E.
Grotrian, F. B.
Grove, Sir T. F.
Gunter, Colonel R.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hall, C.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord E.
Hanbury, R. W.
Hardcastle, F.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hastings, G. W.
Heath, A. R.
Heaton, J. H.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hill, A. S.
Hoare, S.
Hobhouse, H.
Holland, rt. hon. Sir H. T.
Holloway, G.
Holmes, right hon. H.
Houldsworth, W. H.
Howard, J.
Howard, J. M.
Howorth, H. H.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Hubbard, rt. hn. J. G.
Hubbard, E.
Hughes, Colonel E.
Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hunt, F. S.
Hunter, Sir W. G.
Isaacs, L. H.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
Jarvis, A. W.
Johnston, W.
Kelly, J. R.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kerans, F. H.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
King-Harman, Colonel E. R.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, H. T.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir J. J. T.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Lethbridge, Sir R.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Low, M.
Lowther, J. W.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Lymington, Viscount
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
MacInnes, M.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclean, J. M.
Maclure, J. W.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Mallock, R.
Manners, rt. hn. Lord J. J. R.
Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Marriott, rt. hn. W. T.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Matthews, rt. hon. H
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Admiral R. C.
Mills, hon. C. W.
More, R. J.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Muncaster, Lord
Muntz, P. A.
Noble, W.
Norris, E. S.
Northcote, hon. H. S.
Norton, R.

O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Paget, Sir R. H.
Parker, hon. F.
Parker, C. S.
Paulton, J. M.
Pearce, W.
Pelly, Sir L.
Penton, Captain F. T.
Pitt-Lewis, G.
Plunket, right hon. D. R.
Pomfret, W. P.
Powell, F. S.
Price, Captain G. E.
Puleston, J. H.
Quilter, W. C.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Reed, H. B.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Ross, A. H.
Round, J.
Royden, T. B.
Russell, Sir G.
Russell, T. W.
Saunderson, Col. E. J.
Sellar, A. C.
Seton-Karr, H.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Sidebottom, W.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Spencer, J. E.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Sykes, C.
Talbot, J. G.
Tapling, T. K.
Temple, Sir R.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Tottenham, A. L.
Townsend, F.
Trotter, H. J.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Vernon, hon. G. R.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Waring, Colonel T.
Webster, R. G.
Weymouth, Viscount
Wharton, J. L.
White, J. B.
Whitley, E.
Whitmore, C. A.
Wilson, Sir S.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wolmer, Viscount
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.
Wroughton, P.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

### COMMITTEES.

*Ordered,* That all Committees have leave to sit during the sitting, and notwithstanding any Adjournment of the House.

### BANKRUPTCY OFFICES (SITES) BILL.

(*Mr. David Plunket, Mr. Jackson.*)

[BILL 197.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): In moving that the Bill be now read a second time, it is only necessary to explain that its object is to authorize the Office of Works to purchase land close to the Royal Courts of Justice, on which to erect buildings for the accommodation of the Bankruptcy Offices.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Plunket,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee of Five Members, Three to be nominated by the House and Two by the Committee of Selection.

*Ordered,* That all Petitions against the Bill, presented two clear days before the meeting of the Committee, be referred to the Committee; that the Petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, or Agents, be heard against the Bill, and Counsel heard in support of the Bill.

*Ordered,* That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

*Ordered,* That Three be the quorum.

### ISLE OF MAN (CUSTOMS) BILL.

(*Mr. Jackson, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

[BILL 199.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid.): There is a little doubt as to the object of this Bill; perhaps the hon. Gentleman will explain what it is.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The object of the Bill is simply to correct a difference which was created by the alteration of the duties on wine in the United Kingdom last year; it is to raise the strength on which the lower rate of duty is paid from 26 degrees, which is now the limit in the Isle of Man, to 30 degrees, which is the limit in this country.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): What is the nature of the power under which this House legislates for the Isle of Man?

MR. JACKSON: The power of levying duties is regulated by Parliament. The Isle of Man authorities can make no alteration without the sanction of this Parliament.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

### SMALL DEBTS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

(*Mr. Caldwell, Mr. Sinclair, Mr. Thorburn, Mr. Watt.*)

[BILL 42.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I have to ask the House to read this Bill a second time. Its object is to enlarge the jurisdiction of the

Scotch Courts in respect to small debts, to simplify the procedure, and to reduce the expense. Since the Bill has been printed, there have been several valuable suggestions made regarding it by both the present and late Law Officers of the Crown; and it is intended that if the House will assent to the second reading, affirming the principle of the Bill, the suggestions of the Law Officers will be given effect to by Amendments of the Bill in Committee, and the Bill, as so amended, will thereafter be reprinted. I hope that, as the Bill has received the assent of the Law Officers, it may now be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): This is a Bill relating to legal procedure; and the Government are quite prepared to allow it to be read a second time. In conference with my hon. Friend (Mr. Caldwell), I have arranged that certain alterations should be made in Committee.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Wednesday.*

### PAUPER LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND) (SUPERANNUATION) BILL.

(*Mr. Chance, Mr. William Corbet.*)

[BILL 62.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): This is a Bill to assimilate the law in Ireland to that in England. It carries out the recommendations of a Select Committee of this House which sat in 1860; it also carries out the unanimous recommendations of the Lunacy Authorities, and I believe it has the assent of the Government. I hope it may now be read a second time. If so, I shall be quite prepared to postpone the Committee stage until a fairly distant day.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Chance.*)

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Holmes) (Dublin University): The Government are prepared to assent to the second reading, without pledging itself to the details of the Bill, on the understanding that the hon. Gentleman will allow a reasonable time to elapse before he takes the Committee.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Tuesday*, 19th April.

### WAYS AND MEANS.

*Considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

1. *Resolved*, That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the Service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1887, the sum of £1,251,076 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

2. *Resolved*, That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the Service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, the sum of £12,078,800 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

House adjourned at twenty minutes after One o'clock p.m.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Tuesday, 22nd March,* 1887.

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MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Sheriffs (Consolidation) * (50); Merchant Shipping (Fishing Boats) Acts Amendment * (51).

*Committee*—Church Sites (Compulsory Powers Repeal) (22), *negatived.*

*Report*—Church Patronage (44-52); Pharmacy Acts Amendment * (28).

*Third Reading*—Glebe Lands * (45), and *passed.*

### THE COLONIAL CONFERENCE—REPRESENTATION OF MALTA.

QUESTION.

Earl DE LA WARR asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether Malta will be represented at the approaching Colonial Conference; and, if so, whether by one or more elected Members of the Council of Government?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (The Earl of Onslow), in reply, said, that Malta would not be officially represented at the approaching Colonial Conference, inasmuch as no special Representative, as requested in the terms of the late Secretary of State's (Mr. Stanhope's) despatch, had been sent to this country; but care would be taken that some person acquainted with and interested in Malta should be present when any question affecting that Colony came under consideration. If any elected Member of the Council of Government should express a desire to be invited on the opening day, an application from him would be carefully considered, having regard to the fact that the accommodation in the Conference Room would be very limited. Owing to a misunderstanding of what he said on a previous day, in reply to his noble Friend (the Earl of Harrowby), he wished to make it clear that if any unofficial Members of any Colonial Legislature were in this country at the time of the Conference, preference would be given to them in respect to admission, in order that they might have the advantage of learning the views of Her Majesty's Government.

## CHURCH PATRONAGE BILL.—(No. 44.)

(*The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.*)

REPORT.

Amendments *reported* (according to Order).

Clause 2 (Rights of alienation).

On the Motion of The Lord Archbishop of CANTERBURY, the following Amendment made:—In page 1, line 8, leave out ("commencement"), and insert ("passing").

On the Motion of The Lord HERSCHELL, the following Amendments made:—In page 1, lines 10 and 11, leave out ("or until"), and insert ("unless"); and in line 12, after ("provided"), add ("without the applicant having been informed of the result thereof").

LORD GRIMTHORPE moved the omission of the sub-section, which provided that the right of patronage should not be sold until the proposed purchaser was certified to be a fit person to possess that right, or until four months should have elapsed from the date of the application thereunder provided for. He said, their Lordships must not suppose that the £18,000,000, which the Treasurer of Queen Anne's Bounty told the Commission of 1879 was the probable value of all the private patronage, was all in the hands of rich people. Many poor people, the widows and daughters of clergymen, had nothing to live on but the proceeds of advowsons which their ancestors had bought many years ago. It was not even pretended that the right of patronage had been exercised badly; and its exercise was now to be safeguarded to a very great extent. Although a Papist, a Jew, or an Atheist was to be allowed to present to any living, yet this sub-section made every person who bought an advowson a suspected or objectionable person. The measure would give the Bishops greater power than they had possessed in any time of which we had record in regard to the sale of livings and to presentations, and the effect would be to seriously diminish the value of patronage; but he did not think it would diminish the sale of advowsons. The only effect would be that a worse class of purchasers would come forward. He begged to move the omission of Sub-section 1 of Clause 2.

Amendment *moved*, to leave out Sub-section 1.—(*The Lord Grimthorpe.*)

THE EARL OF SELBORNE, in opposing the Amendment, said, he held that it was necessary to provide some security against the free traffic in next presentations. He contended that the abolition of the scandals that now attended the sale of patronage would produce a better class of purchasers.

Amendment *negatived.*

THE BISHOP OF LICHFIELD, in moving, as an Amendment, to insert the following new sub-section to Clause 2:—

> "The sale of any right of patronage shall not be valid within a period of five years from the date at which the said right of patronage shall previously have been sold, unless on occasion of the death of the patron for the time being."

said, that, in doing so, he wished to cut at the root of the scandals existing, and to put an end to jobbing in livings; but, at the same time, to protect the rights of *bonâ fide* purchasers.

Amendment *moved,* in page 1, line 12, after ("provided") insert as a new sub-section—

> "2. The sale of any right of patronage shall not be valid within a period of five years from the date at which the said right of patronage shall previously have been sold, unless on occasion of the death of the patron for the time being."—(*The Lord Bishop of Lichfield.*)

THE PAYMASTER GENERAL (Earl BEAUCHAMP) said, he was of opinion that the new sub-section went too far, and that the object of the Amendment might be better secured by amending Sub-section 10.

The Earl of HARROWBY said, that he fully appreciated the object of the right rev. Prelate; but thought that it would be wiser to leave this matter to the discretion of the Commission.

The Bishop of LICHFIELD said, he was willing to do so, if the question could be dealt with by the Commission; but, as he was advised, that Body, as constituted under the Bill, would not be able to deal with it. He felt that, unless some such limitation as the one he proposed was inserted, they had done but very little to put down the traffic of the jobber in advowsons. He hoped that the object of the Amendment would be secured in some form or another.

Amendment *negatived.*

On the Motion of The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, the following Amendments made:—In line 16, after ("of") insert ("the chancellor of the diocese"), and after ("archdeacon") leave out ("the chancellor of the diocese") and insert ("of the archdeaconry"); in line 17, after ("rural dean") insert ("of the rural deanery in which the benefice is situated"); and in page 2, line 21, leave out ("commencement") and insert "passing").

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

On the Motion of The Lord Bishop of London, the following new clause *agreed to,* and *added* to the Bill:—

"It shall not be lawful for any person who shall purchase any advowson or any right to a presentation to a benefice, afterwards, on any avoidance thereof, to offer himself to the bishop for admission or institution thereto; and the Act of the thirteenth year of Queen Anne, chapter eleven, intituled 'An Act for the better maintenance of curates within the Church of England, and for preventing ecclesiastical persons from buying the next avoidance of any church preferment,' shall, as regards any purchase after the passing of this Act, be read as if the words 'advowson of or any right of presentation' were substituted for the words 'next avoidance of or presentation' in the said Act."

Earl COWPER, in moving, as an Amendment, to leave out Clause 14, and insert a new clause in lieu thereof, said, he had fully argued the question when the Bill was in Committee, and he would not detain the House by repeating those arguments.

Amendment *moved,* to leave out Clause 14.—(*The Earl Cowper.*)

The Bishop of LONDON said, the noble Earl proposed to do two different things—to leave out Clause 14 and to insert the new clause. But there was nothing in Clause 14, or in the new clause, which rendered it necessary that Clause 14 should be omitted before the new clause was inserted. The two clauses should be considered separately.

The Earl of SELBORNE said, that the clause about to be moved by the noble Earl behind him (Earl Cowper) would cover everything in Clause 14, besides remedying certain defects in that clause. He thought that service by post of the representation was quite sufficient, and that personal service in cases of that kind was unnecessary.

Amendment *agreed to;* clause *left out* accordingly.

On the Motion of The Earl Cowper the following new clause *inserted:*—

"On a representation being made to the bishop by any three parishioners, by writing under their hands, that any incumbent ought, on the ground that he has for the three years last preceding been incapacitated by continuing mental or bodily infirmity from the due performance of his duties, to retire from his benefice, it shall be lawful for the bishop, if he see fit, to cause a commission to be issued in manner and form provided in the Incumbents Resignation Act, 1871, and that Act shall apply in all respects as if the said representation had been a representation by the incumbent himself in pursuance of the fifth section of that Act: Provided, that one month at least before issuing any such commission, the bishop shall cause a copy of such representation to be sent by post to such incumbent, addressed to him, either at any place where he may happen to be for the time residing, or at the house of residence of his benefice."

The Bishop of LICHFIELD said, he would not propose the new clause which stood in his name, but would take another occasion of raising the question embodied in the clause, which was that it should be lawful for any patron to present or collate, and for the Bishop to institute or license, a presentee to any benefice for a limited term of years not being less than five years.

On the Motion of The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury the following Amendment made:—In page 7, line 38, leave out from ("of") to ("shall") in line 41, and insert—

("The Act of the ninth year of King George the Fourth, chapter ninety-four, shall be read subject to the following additional proviso: Provided also that no person to be specially named and described in any such engagement shall be a person then under seventeen years of age; but it is hereby provided that this addition.")

Bill to be read 3ª on *Tuesday* next; and to be *printed* as amended. (No. 52.)

## CHURCH SITES (COMPULSORY POWERS REPEAL) BILL.—(No. 22.)

(*The Lord Bishop of Lichfield.*)

### COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee read.

THE BISHOP OF LICHFIELD, in moving that the House do now resolve itself into a Committee upon the said Bill, said, that its object was to remove from the Statute Book an enactment which concerned the Church of England alone, and enabled it compulsorily to acquire sites for churches. The Act was passed 70 years ago, when a great deal of church building was going on throughout the country; but from that date to the present time, in only one instance, and that within his own diocese, had it ever been put in operation. He did not believe that there was any chance of the Act being ever again made use of, and on that ground it ought to be removed from the Statute Book. In addition to that there was no doubt that the existence of the Act furnished a serious and continual grievance to Nonconformists; and it was frequently stated in public that it was unjust that the Church of England should possess this power. The Church of England did not seek any special privileges of this kind, nor did it need any such powers to be granted to it, as it had sufficient influence to obtain all the sites it required. The Church only desired the same freedom to build as was enjoyed by other Bodies, and had no wish that this enactment should remain on the Statute Book.

*Moved*, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee."—(*The Lord Bishop of Lichfield.*)

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, that he could not help feeling some doubt as to the expediency of the House going into Committee on the Bill. As far as he could make out, it was not said that any harm had resulted from the Act proposed to be repealed, but only that it had been put in operation on only one occasion. But the second, and he imagined the chief, reason why the Bill was introduced was, that the Act afforded some ground of complaint to Nonconformists. He did not go into the question whether a general Act should be passed, giving compulsory powers for the purchase of sites to all religious Bodies; but still, if the present measure were to become law, while the particular grievance arising out of the exceptional treatment of the Church of England was removed, the complaints of other religious communities would be left untouched. He thought, therefore, that, as the object of the Bill was rather to remove an argument than a grievance, in the interests of the Church of England itself this matter had far better be left alone.

LORD GRIMTHORPE said, he also thought that the Bill was unnecessary. It was founded on an altogether mistaken assumption, which was put forward in "another place," as an excuse for a Bill to enable Dissenters to seize land anywhere to build chapels; that the Church had that power under the Acts named in the Schedule to the Bill, of which the first was in 1818, and the last of the Amending Acts in 1831. The right rev. Prelate had said that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners—who alone had the power to take land by this so-called compulsory purchase—had done so once; but he could add, from the information of their secretary, that in that one case they had not acted *in invitum;* and he was quite sure that they never could or would. The Acts contained none of the old-established machinery or proper words for that purpose, but only enabled the Commissioners to get over all difficulties of absence, bad titles, and the like. Besides that, he could show, if the Bill went into Committee, that it went too far, and destroyed some really useful powers for no object whatever. He was not present when the Bill was read a second time, or he should have given their Lordships that information then.

LORD HERSCHELL said, that this Bill would perpetuate an inequality between the Church of England and other religious denominations.

On Question? *Resolved* in the *negative.*

## LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE ARREST OF FATHER KELLER.

### QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN, in rising to call attention to the circumstances in connection with the committal to prison of Father Keller, and to ask, Whether the prison rules ordinarily applied to persons committed for contempt of Court are to be applied in Father Keller's case; and, if not, for what reason any relaxation was to be permitted? said, that the case had excited considerable attention both in Ireland and on this side of the Channel, and reports had appeared in various newspapers as to the treatment of Father Keller by the Government, and for this reason he thought it desirable to ask the Government their intentions in regard to this matter. He wished, in a very few words, to recall to their Lordships' attention the events which had led to the arrest of Father Keller. In the latter part of last year the tenants on the Ponsonby estate, at Youghal, had adopted the Plan of Campaign, and paid their rents to a certain person. Amongst other persons having a knowledge of the circumstances was Father Keller, who was also parish priest of Youghal. In the Court the ordinary course of proceedings were taken against the tenants, and one named Patrick O'Brien was made a bankrupt. Father Keller was called upon to give evidence in the Bankruptcy Court in Dublin last week, but he refused to attend. A summons was served upon him in the ordinary way, and when he failed to appear a warrant was issued for his apprehension. He was apprehended by a messenger of the Court, and on Saturday last he attended the Bankruptcy Court in Dublin. When he was called he refused to answer the questions put to him, and he did so on the ground that they related to matters which had been communicated to him secretly and in confidence in his capacity of priest. Of course, he (the Earl of Camperdown) did not need to argue before their Lordships that that was a state of things which could not for a moment be allowed, and perhaps the best answer that could be given to the contention was given by the learned Judge. Judge Boyd thereupon told him that if witnesses were allowed to refuse to answer questions put to them upon such a ground the whole object of the Bankruptcy Law might be defeated by the simple expedient of getting a priest to occupy a position of trust with respect to the property of the bankrupt. Notwithstanding this remark of the learned Judge, however, Father Keller refused to answer the questions put to him, and accordingly he was committed to prison for contempt of Court. He (the Earl of Camperdown) thought that, in the first place, this contention of Father Keller could not be allowed. He quite admitted that if a Home Rule Government were to be established in Dublin, judging from the way in which the Nationalists had behaved at every town along the railway from Cork to Dublin, it was very likely such a privilege as that claimed by Father Keller might be allowed; but as long as these countries remained the United Kingdom of Great Britain such a claim would never be submitted to by Parliament or by the country. He now came to the point of his Question, which was, whether the present rules ordinarily applied to persons committed for contempt of Court were to be applied in Father Keller's case; and, if not, for what reason any relaxation of them was to be permitted? He put that Question in consequence of what he had read in the newspapers. He put it to their Lordships that if ever there was a case in which the ordinary prison discipline and rules ought to be enforced it was the present one. In the first place Father Keller had committed a contempt of Court in the ordinary manner; and he had been committed to prison in the ordinary manner; and therefore, so far as he knew, there was nothing peculiar in the circumstances of his case that called for any relaxation of the ordinary prison discipline. In the next place, Father Keller might purge himself of his contempt at any moment, and might come forth from prison at any time he chose. There were, however, under the circumstances of the case, special reasons that made it, in his opinion, peculiarly undesirable that any extraordinary leniency should be exhibited towards Father Keller. In the first place, all the circumstances connected with Father Keller's imprisonment had been used as means for promoting so many National League demonstrations throughout Ireland. When Father

Keller was arrested he was conveyed to Dublin by a slow train. It might, perhaps, be open to question whether it was wise to allow Father Keller to travel, not by the proper train, but by a later and a slower one, so as to give time for demonstrations and meetings to be organized all along the route between Cork and Dublin. Their Lordships would remember that such demonstrations took place everywhere. At one place Father Keller was greeted by the Archbishop of Cashel, and at Dublin he was met by the Lord Mayor and several Members of Parliament, and on this occasion language of a very turgid character was used for the purpose of bringing the law, and the persons appointed to administer the law, into contempt. For his part he thought, if they were to carry on the Government, they could not allow the law and the Judges to be brought into contempt. He was convinced that, in the peculiar state of things in Ireland, it was most unwise to allow the law to be brought into contempt. The Lord Mayor of Dublin was a member of the Prisons Visiting Committee, and as such he had already visited the prisoner. There was another reason why the prison regulations should not be relaxed in this case. A statement had been made in the newspapers—he did not know whether it was correct or not—to the effect that Father Keller had applied to be attended in prison by a physician not belonging to the gaol, but who was notoriously connected with the National League. The Lord Mayor of Dublin had taken the earliest opportunity he could find of identifying himself with Father Keller—he had met him at the station, and the next day Father Keller, accompanied by the Lord Mayor and by the Archbishop of Dublin, was driven in the Lord Mayor's carriage to the Court, and Father Keller entered the Court in company of the Archbishop of Dublin and the Lord Mayor; but afterwards the Lord Mayor took a course which he (the Earl of Camperdown) had observed many Irish patriots take in similar circumstances. He had watched the papers to see whether, when Father Keller was removed to prison, he was accompanied by the Lord Mayor of Dublin; but the Lord Mayor had been much too wise to accompany Father Keller on that journey to prison. The Lord Mayor of Dublin was perfectly ready to encourage Father Keller to resist the law and bring it into contempt; but as soon as there was any danger to himself of incurring any inconvenience by opposing the law he very wisely desisted from doing anything further. The Lord Mayor of Dublin was one of the Prisons Visiting Committee, and is was quite plain what course he would take, and that he would do everything in his power to relax prison discipline, and to make the treatment of Father Keller as little disagreeable as possible. He (the Earl of Camperdown) hoped this would be prevented, as far as it was possible to do so. He was quite convinced that if the Government in this case displayed any want of firmness, or allowed any relaxation of the rules, their motives would be misinterpreted and misrepresented exactly in the same manner as the action of the law had been misrepresented throughout Ireland. It had been stated far and wide in Ireland that Father Keller had been put in prison because he would not betray his duty and trust as a Catholic priest. Of course, there was not a word of truth in that assertion. If there was any want of firmness in the treatment of Father Keller in prison, it would be said that it was from fear of the Nationalist Party. The noble Earl concluded by asking the Question of which he had given Notice.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Earl CADOGAN), in reply, said, he thought the noble Earl (the Earl of Camperdown) had stated with accuracy the earlier circumstances connected with the case of Father Keller. But he could inform the noble Earl that the Executive Government and the Police Authorities had nothing whatever to do with the journey of Father Keller having been undertaken in a slow instead of a fast train. The arrangements for the journey were under the direction of the Court of Bankruptcy, whose messenger was sent to bring Father Keller to Dublin. With regard to the Question asked by the noble Earl, the rules which were applied to prisoners for contempt were to be applied in this case. These rules empowered the Visiting Justices to make certain relaxations in particular cases, and application was made, on behalf of Father Keller, by the Governor of the prison for some of those relaxations which it was in the power of the Committee to grant. It might interest the noble Earl if he read the requests. Father Keller requested that he might be allowed to say mass daily in his cell. That was granted, subject to the approval of the Board. He requested to be allowed to see more than two visitors for more than a quarter of an hour daily. He was allowed to see three persons for half-an-hour. Father Keller also asked to have Dr. Kenny as his medical attendant. The Committee had not power to grant that request. He asked to have four hours' exercise, and to be furnished with a fire and bed clothes. These requests were granted. He then requested that he might be supplied with two daily and two weekly papers, and with periodicals, the daily papers being *The Freeman's Journal* and *The Pall Mall Gazette*, and the weekly *The Nation* and *United Ireland*. He was to be allowed one Dublin daily paper, one weekly paper, one London paper, one local paper, and periodicals. He asked to be allowed to provide himself with food from outside and to wear his own clothes. That was granted. Finally, he asked to be supplied with such stimulants as the doctor might think necessary, and to be allowed to use snuff. This was granted. The signatures appended to these orders were those of the Lord Mayor, Mr. Ion Hamilton, and two other Justices—Mr. Godley and Colonel Hartley. He could assure their Lordships that all these relaxations were such as, according to the prison rules, the Committee were entitled to grant, and that no exceptional facilities and no "extraordinary procedure" would be permitted in this case.

### SHERIFFS (CONSOLIDATION) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to consolidate the law relating to the office of Sheriff in England, and to repeal certain enactments relating to Sheriffs which have ceased to be in force or have become unnecessary—Was *presented* by The Lord Chancellor; read 1ª. (No. 50.)

House adjourned at a quarter before Seven o'clock, till Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Tuesday, 22nd March,* 1887.

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MINUTES.]—Supply—*considered in Committee —Resolutions* [March 21] *reported.*

Ways and Means—*considered in Committee—Resolutions* [March 21] *reported.*

Public Bills — *Ordered — First Reading* — Consolidated Fund (No. 1).*

## *QUESTIONS.*

### SCOTLAND—CROFTERS' COMMISSION—VALUERS AND ASSESSORS—APPLICATIONS.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Lord Advocate, If it is the intention of the Government to appoint valuers and assessors to assist the Crofters' Commission; if he will lay a Return upon the Table, giving the number of applications to the Court, and the number of decisions made up till 1st March; and, when the first annual Report of the Commission will be presented to Parliament?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities), in reply, said, the Government had no power to appoint valuers and assessors to assist the Crofters' Commission. This power was, by Section 20 of the Crofters' Act, vested in the Commissioners themselves. The Commissioners were bound by Section 18 to issue a Report in every year after the first year, and they could not yet say when their first Report would be ready. As regarded the Return asked for by the hon. Member, the Commissioners were of opinion that such a Return would be misleading at the present time, as a very large number of cases were far advanced, although decisions have not yet been given; and the decisions were in many cases delayed at the request of the parties themselves.

### WAR OFFICE—OFFICIAL STATEMENT—ALLEGED DEFICIENCY OF £635,735—NAVAL ORDNANCE.

Mr. H. F. PEASE (York, N.R., Cleveland) asked the Secretary of State for War, with reference to the War Office Official Statement, which appeared in *The Times* and other papers on the 1st of January last, denying that some hundreds of thousands of pounds have been voted for guns for the Navy and spent by the War Office, but that no guns have been supplied to the Fleet in consequence, Whether his attention has been called to Mr. Burdett's letters, published in *The Times* on the 3rd and 31st of January and the 24th of February, showing a total money deficiency of £635,735, and also year by year the ordnance actually manufactured and supplied by the War Department to the Navy, compared with the estimated value of guns, iron and steel, taken credit for yearly issue from store in the War Office Estimates for 1877-8 to 1883-4; and, whether these figures are correct?

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE (Mr. NORTHCOTE) (Exeter) (who replied) said: The two Returns quoted in the Correspondence to which my attention has been called do not refer to the same class of subjects. The one dated May 12, 1884, includes only expenditure on certain new guns manufactured for naval use; while the other, which is taken from the annual Estimates, represents the value of guns to be issued from store. Morover, machine guns are included in the latter case, while they are not included in the Return of 1884.

## LAW AND POLICE (SCOTLAND)—ARBROATH POLICE COURT — JAMES BENNETT.

MR. LACAITA (Dundee) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the case of James Bennett, before the Arbroath Police Court on the 27th of February last; whether it is true that Bennett was sentenced to 60 days, for having been in the High Street of Arbroath after 11 o'clock on a Saturday night; and, if so, under what clause of what Statute it is criminal to be in a public street after 11 o'clock; whether Bennett was ready to go home at once, had he been warned to do so by the constable who apprehended him; whether it is true that Mr. Selby, clothier, of Arbroath, deponed that, having employed Bennett for two months during 1886, he had found him regular in his attendance, and honest; and, whether any evidence was given to show that Bennett's conduct had been other than honest whilst in Mr. Selby's employment, or at any other time during the last 18 months?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): James Bennett was apprehended on the 26th of February, and on the 28th of February he was sentenced to 60 days' imprisonment in Arbroath Police Court. He was charged under the 15th section of the Prevention of Crimes Act, 1871, by which any suspected person or reputed thief, frequenting any street with intent to commit a theft, may be apprehended and committed to prison, with hard labour, for a period not exceeding three months. The presiding magistrate was satisfied that felonious intent was established. Bennett has all the characteristics of a suspect. Between 1863 and the present date he has been convicted more than 20 times—in the Criminal Courts in Dundee nine times of serious offences, and seven times of theft, one of these thefts being by housebreaking. He has also been frequently convicted in other places. He came to Arbroath from Dundee about a year ago. He worked for Mr. Selby in June and July last; but Mr. Selby gave no evidence, as stated in the Question. Except for those two months he has had no lawful means of subsistence, and he was notorious as associating with thieves and bad characters. On the night in question he was found going in a direction which led away from his residence. It was suspected that he was watching an opportunity to commit theft, and he was arrested. I cannot tell whether his frame of mind would have led him to go home if told to do so. Evidence of Bennett's previous character was fully laid before the magistrate, and this evidence could not be in favour of his mode of life during the last 18 months; though, so far as I am aware, no absolute charge of dishonesty has been made against him during that period. He was twice recently suspected of assault and robbery, and in January last was apprehended on one of the charges. The report in the newspapers, which seemed to form the basis of the Question, was most inaccurate.

## POST OFFICE—LEASEHOLD INSURANCE.

COLONEL MAKINS (Essex, S.E.) asked the Postmaster General, If he will consider the practicability, and, if practical, the advisability, of instituting in connection with the General Post Office, a system of National insurance, by the issue of policies to secure the return of the value of leasehold premises to insurers on the termination of their leases, so as to enable thrifty artizans and others to set aside a safely invested sinking fund to recoup their outlay on houses or shops (including goodwill) when the leases fall in?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I have considered the suggestion of my hon. and gallant Friend, but do not think that it would be advisable for the Government to apply to Parliament for legislative sanction to enable it to embark in such a business as that to which he refers. The scheme could only be attempted through the medium of the Post Office Savings Bank; and, if adopted, would involve for a specific purpose the abolition of the limits now imposed by law in regard to the amounts which can be deposited in the Post Office Savings Bank.

## ROADWAYS AND STREETS (METROPOLIS)—CANTERBURY ROAD, CAMBERWELL.

MR. BAUMANN (Camberwell, Peckham) asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether the Metropolitan Board of Works have ordered the Canterbury Road, situate between the parishes of St. Giles's, Camberwell, and St. Paul's, Deptford, should be, for the purpose of paving, under the exclusive management of the Vestry of Camberwell; whether the Metropolitan Board have ordered and directed in what proportions the cost of paving and making the roadway should be borne by the Camberwell Vestry and the Greenwich District Board; whether he is aware that Canterbury Road is still unpaved and an insanitary swamp; and, whether the Metropolitan Board of Works will compel the Local Authorities to put the road into a proper condition?

THE CHAIRMAN (Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG) (Middlesex, Hornsey): The position of the parishes of St. Giles, Camberwell, and St. Paul, Deptford, with reference to the Canterbury Road, is one, I am informed, of considerable legal difficulty; but, as a matter of fact, the Board made an Order on July 31, 1885, vesting the care and management of the whole road in the Vestry of St. Giles, Camberwell, with the direction that one-half of the expense of the maintenance and repair should be paid by the District of Greenwich to the Vestry of Camberwell. The Metropolitan Board is advised that it is for the Vestry of Camberwell to enforce the terms of this Order, and take steps to recover from the District Board of Greenwich their share of such expense; and I am afraid that the Board has no power to move further in the matter.

## NAVY — DOCKYARDS — DISCHARGES FROM HAULBOWLINE.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) (for Dr. TANNER) (Cork Co., Mid) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether it is true that the Government intend discharging 80 men on the 1st June proximo, from the works now being carried on at Haulbowline; whether any steps have been, or are about being, taken to make a channel from the main river channel to the floating dock; when will this work be actually commenced; when will the new coaling wharf be commenced; and if it is a fact that £5,000 has been advanced for the construction of the said wharf; and, whether, taking into account the depression of the times and the work still to be done in connection with the completion of the Haulbowline Docks, the Government will continue to employ the men whose services it was proposed to dispense with on the date in question?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): Eighty men, having finished the particular work they are engaged on at Haulbowline, will be discharged, there being no longer any need for their services. A channel from the main river to the floating dock will be commenced this summer. Three thousand pounds has been taken for the construction of a coal wharf in the Estimates for 1887-8. Local men will be employed, as far as is possible, to complete the work; but the men under discharge cannot be retained, as there is not work for them to do.

Subsequently,

DR. TANNER apologized for not being present when the Question was asked, and he would feel greatly obliged if the noble Lord repeated his answer in reference to the paragraph in the

Question asking whether it was a fact that £5,000 had been advanced for the construction of the new coaling wharf?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, a Vote for £3,000 was down on the Estimates for next year for the work.

Dr. TANNER: When will the work be commenced?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I cannot state exactly the week or the month when the work will commence.

### EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—THE LAND TAX.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.) (for Mr. Dillon) (Mayo, E.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is true that the Land Tax has been reduced in Egypt in accordance with the Earl of Northbrook's recommendation, which was agreed to by the Financial Convention; and, if so, where information concerning this reduction is to be found?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): A reduction of £450,000 on the Egyptian Land Tax was recommended by the Earl of Northbrook. There is no mention of such a reduction in the Financial Convention. Still, it was tacitly accepted by the Powers. Soon after the acceptance of the Convention the Egyptian Government proposed that the greater portion of the £450,000 should be devoted to the abolition of the *corvée*, in lieu of the reduction of the Land Tax; and a discussion ensued between the Egyptian Government and the Powers, reference to which will be found in many despatches in the Blue Book "Egypt, No. 4, 1886." Ultimately, all the best authorities being agreed that this was the manner of reduction best calculated to benefit the cultivators, £250,000 was devoted to hiring labour in place of the *corvée*. The Commissioners of the Caisse, to whom the question had been referred by the Powers, refused to allow any permanent remission of the Land Tax beyond this £250,000. The Egyptian Government has, however, with the concurrence of the Commissioners, refrained from enforcing payment of about £100,000 of the Land Tax due in 1886. This remission was, I presume, as in the case of a similar remission of £189,000 in the preceding year, made principally in respect of the poorer land.

### COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS.

Mr. KING (Hull, Central) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, When the Government propose to ask the House to appoint the Committee on Indian affairs promised last Session?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir John Gorst) (Chatham): Since last Session a very important Commission, to which I have several times alluded in answering Questions, has been appointed in India, and is now engaged in making a comprehensive inquiry into the organization of the Government Departments in India. Until this Commission has reported, the Secretary of State does not intend to ask Parliament to appoint a Joint Committee on Indian Affairs.

### POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—MANORHAMILTON DISTRICT, CO. LEITRIM.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) (for Mr. Conway) (Leitrim, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether his attention has been called to the repeated complaints of the inadequate deliveries of letters at the rural post office No. 3, Gurteen, Manorhamilton, County Leitrim; whether the inhabitants have been put off repeatedly, on the plea of insufficiency of number of letters; whether the deliveries take place on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays only; whether the village of Lurganboy, consisting of six houses, and which is in the neighbourhood of Gurteen, has bi-daily deliveries; whether the letter carrier receives 6*s.* per week for his bi-daily deliveries at Lurganboy, with a slight monetary recognition for the additional journey to Gurteen tri-weekly; whether an improvement in wages of letter carrier would suffice for a daily delivery of letters at the last-named place; and, whether he will recommend that this course be adopted for the convenience of the inhabitants of the district?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): There is no record of any recent application for a more frequent delivery of letters at Gurteen; but I will have inquiries made whether the circumstances will admit of the improvement desired being afforded. It is the case that there are two deliveries a day at Lurganboy.

### DUCHY OF LANCASTER—THE MIDDLEMAN SYSTEM.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether the middleman system of letting the land prevails on other portions of the Duchy Estates than the 6,000 acres in the North Riding held by a gentleman residing near Pickering; and, if so, how many acres are so let; and, how many middlemen are there as tenants of the Duchy?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) (who replied) said: The practice of the Duchy has for many years past been to get rid of the old system of middlemen, and at Lady Day next there will only remain four such tenants of about 2,900 acres.

### COAL AND WINE DUTIES (METROPOLIS).

MR. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether the annual sum levied for Coal and Wine Duties on the Metropolitan Police Area in 1861 was about £230,000, and now is about £450,000; whether such Duties are yearly increasing, and what proportion is levied on the area not represented by the Corporation and Board of Works; and, whether the present annual rateable value of the area of the Corporation and Board of Works is £30,856,472?

THE CHAIRMAN (Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG) (Middlesex, Hornsey): My hon. Friend is quite correct in stating that the Coal and Wine Duties have increased from about £230,000, in 1861, to about £450,000 per annum in the present year, during which time the population has also increased by about 1,500,000. No doubt, the Duties, if renewed, will continue to increase with the population; but I am unable to state what proportion is levied outside the Metropolis. My hon. Friend is also correct in the amount at which he places the present rateable value.

### PRISONS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1877—LUNACY DISTRICTS.

MR. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce a Bill during the present Session to restore the means for the division of lunacy districts in Scotland, which were accidently abrogated by the Prisons (Scotland) Act of 1877?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities), in reply, said, it was intended to deal with this subject, and a Bill would be shortly introduced in "another place."

### INLAND REVENUE—STAMP DUTY ON YEARLY LEASES IN SCOTLAND.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Stamp Laws at present existing in Scotland, If he will make further inquiries so as to determine as to the desirability of introducing a Clause into the Annual Revenue Act, to legalize written missives for annual lets, where the rent exceeds £10, upon a nominal stamp of 1*d*., with the view of affording a safer method than the legal custom of annual leases without writing, and which would constitute, at the same time, a new source of revenue?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Yes. I am making inquiries into the matter; but I do not want the hon. Member to infer that, because I am making inquiries, it will be possible for me to give effect to the desire expressed in his Question.

### LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE RIOTS AT YOUGHAL—CORONER'S WARRANT.

SIR JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When Her Majesty's Government will be prepared to state whether, in the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown, the Coroner's warrant lately issued by Mr. Coroner Rice to commit Constable Bulmer, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, is legal or illegal? As the Chief Secretary, to whom the Question is addressed, is not in his place, I will ask the Attorney General for Ireland to answer it.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University), in reply, said, he had only seen this Question within the last two or three minutes; but he hoped to be able to give an answer on the subject on Thursday.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): Has a week elapsed without the Representatives of the Irish Government in the House of Commons asking their Law Officers whether the Constabulary are justified in disobeying the warrant of the Coroner?

Mr. HOLMES: A misapprehension in reference to this matter seems to exist in the minds of several hon. Members. Friday evening was the first occasion the attention of the Chief Secretary was called to the matter. I immediately communicated with Ireland; and the reply I gave to a Question on yesterday evening was the reply that came from Ireland. I have since communicated by telegraph with Ireland to get a copy of the warrant and have it forwarded here, in order that the Law Officers may be able to express an opinion on it.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked, whether it was not the duty of the Sub-Inspector of Police, to whom the warrant was handed, to put it in execution, leaving the question of the legality of the warrant to be decided by the Law Officers?

Mr. HOLMES said, it was certainly the duty of a Sub-Inspector of Police to take instructions from the Heads of Departments, who would take the opinion of the Law Officers in the ordinary course, with whom rested the question of the legality of the warrants. The matter not having been brought to his notice, he took steps to ensure that it should be brought to his notice as soon as possible.

Mr. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.) asked, who in Ireland was responsible to the Chief Secretary for informing him of these irregularities before they were brought up in the House of Commons by hon. Members? Was it General Buller's duty?

[No reply.]

### LONDON COAL AND WINE DUTIES CONTINUANCE BILL—PUBLIC PARK IN TOTTENHAM.

Mr. J. HOWARD (Middlesex, Tottenham) asked the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London, Whether, if the Bill for the renewal of the Coal and Wine Duties should pass the Second Reading, any guarantee can be given that sufficient provision will be made out of the Duties for the acquisition and maintenance of a public park for Tottenham, which is rendered necessary by its rapidly growing population?

Sir ROBERT FOWLER (London), in reply, said, the Corporation quite concurred in the course taken by his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) in regard to the Bill. In that course the outlying districts would have the disposal of the revenue which they contributed towards the Coal Duties, and the Corporation of London had every sympathy with the object the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Howard) had in view.

### EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY BILL—LEGISLATION.

Mr. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can now say when the Government will introduce the Employers' Liability Bill?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I am afraid I can hardly fix a day. The Bill is in the hands of the draftsmen, and I will lose no time in pushing it forward.

### CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT, 1886 — PLEURO-PNEUMONIA (SCOTLAND).

Sir CHARLES PALMER (Durham, Jarrow) asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, in view of the continued prevalence of pleuro-pneumonia in the United Kingdom, especially in Scotland, What steps are being taken by the Government to check the spread of the disease and stamp it out; and, why the amended Act of the 25th June, 1886, has not been put in force by the Privy Council?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) (who replied) said: Pleuro-pneumonia only prevails to a serious extent in Scotland, and the Privy Council have recently declared three Scotch counties infected areas, in the hope of checking the spreading of the disease. The question of applying provisions of the Act of 1886 has been under consideration; and it has been decided that before making any attempt to stamp out pleuro-pneumonia in Great Britain it is essential that means should be adopted to prevent its re-introduction from Ireland, and the Privy Council are in communication with the Irish Government on this subject.

### FINANCE—TREASURY BILLS.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether Treasury Bills for £2,486,000 were sold on the 9th instant, at a time when the Government balances at the Bank of England amounted to about £7,000,000; and, whether a considerable saving to the Exchequer (of several thousand pounds annually) would accrue, if, when the Government balances are large, the floating debt were reduced by the repayment of Treasury Bills falling due?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I am not surprised that the hon. Gentleman has called attention to the facts which are stated in the Question. My attention has been previously called to the same matter. The explanation of the transaction is this—that it is a principle of English finance that the Executive Government—that is, the Chancellor of the Exchequer—may not increase the debt permanently in any year without the special sanction of Parliament. The powers under which he can obtain temporary loans, such as Deficiency and Ways and Means advances, are strictly limited, as those advances must be repaid within a very limited time. In accordance with this principle the Chancellor is only permitted by law to re-issue Treasury Bills or Exchequer Bills in the same financial year as that in which they have been paid off—that is to say, he is not allowed to increase his Ways and Means in any year by the issue of fresh Exchequer Bills or Treasury Bills without the special assent of Parliament, previously obtained.

### CONVEYANCING (SCOTLAND) ACT (1874) AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. J. B. BALFOUR (Clackmannan, &c.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he intends to introduce a Bill, similar to the Conveyancing (Scotland) Act (1874) Amendment Bill of last year, or any other measure, directed to redress the grievances which that Bill proposed to remedy?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Owing to the lateness of the hour at which the House adjourned, I was not aware that the Question had been put down on the Paper for to-day. But I hope the hon. Member will be satisfied with the assurance that the matter is receiving our careful consideration; and, in the course of a few days, I hope to be able to tell him precisely what we propose to do.

### LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881, AND PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACT, 1885—THE ROYAL COMMISSION—MR. KNIPE'S REPORT.

MR. COLERIDGE (Sheffield, Attercliffe) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the Report of Mr. Knipe will be in the hands of Members of the House; what is the cause of the delay in the printing; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will postpone bringing in any measures for coercive legislation in Ireland until the Members of this House have had an opportunity of studying its contents?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) (who replied) said, he had no knowledge of the facts of the case; but he understood the reason of the delay was that Mr. Knipe did not himself return the proof of the Report to the Secretary of the Commission until within the last day or two. It had now been received by Her Majesty's Government, and was laid on the Table of the House last night.

MR. COLERIDGE said, the right hon. Gentleman had not answered the last part of the Question.

MR. W. H. SMITH: No; we are not in a position to do what is suggested.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said, the newspapers had been furnished with a synopsis of the Report, although it had not been put into the hands of Members.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that was a matter which rested with Mr. Knipe. The Government was not responsible in any way for the newspapers obtaining a surreptitious knowledge of the documents.

## CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT, 1886—ANTHRAX IN CHESHIRE.

Mr. TOLLEMACHE (Cheshire, Eddisbury) asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether the attention of the Agricultural Department of the Privy Council has been called to the serious outbreak of "anthrax" in Cheshire; and, whether they will consider the advisability of extending the powers of Local Authorities under the Animals Act, 1886, so as to empower them to order the slaughter of animals affected with this disease, and to pay compensation for animals so slaughtered?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) (who replied) said: The Government do not propose to treat anthrax in the same manner as pleuro-pneumonia, as they are advised that the two diseases are of a totally different character. Slaughter in anthrax would, in most cases, be impracticable, as animals are usually found dead without any warning, or die very quickly after the symptoms become apparent. Further, as the disease does not spread by association of diseased with healthy animals, as is the case with pleuro-pneumonia, slaughter and compensation would only be for the benefit of the owner, and not for the community.

Sir JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) asked, What steps Her Majesty's Government have taken, or intend to take, to stamp out the recent outbreak of anthrax, which is committing such ravages in the county of Cheshire?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: The recent outbreak of anthrax in Cheshire has apparently been confined to one farm, and chiefly affected swine, of which 34 are reported to have died, and also three sheep. No cases have been reported since March 19. Immediately the disease was recognized the Local Authority took action under the Anthrax Order, and prevented the movement of animals from the farm. An Inspector of the Privy Council has visited the farm, and from his Report it does not appear that there is anything remarkable in the outbreak of anthrax, which disease, it is said, occurs every year on this farm, and is accounted for by the existence of insanitary conditions which are most favourable for the development of the disease.

## EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—MR. SHIRLEY'S FARNEY ESTATE, MONAGHAN.

Mr. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has received any information that Mr. S. E. Shirley intends evicting 32 families on his Farney Estate, in the County Monaghan, on the 22nd instant; whether it is a fact that the tenants to be evicted offered to pay one and a half year's rent before eviction proceedings were instituted, which offer was refused by Mr. Shirley; whether it is a fact that the tenants on this estate have served Mr. Shirley with the necessary originating notices, preparatory to going into the Land Court to have fair rents fixed; whether it is true that, since the service of these originating notices, Mr. Shirley has caused 200 additional processes of ejectment to be served; and, whether it is true that an extra force of 200 police has been drafted into Carrickmacross for the purpose of turning these 32 families out of their homes in this inclement season; and, if so, whether, pending the decisions of the Land Court in their cases, he will withhold the sanction to the forces of the Crown being used for the purpose of carrying out the eviction of the tenantry on this estate, which numbers 2,000, and represents about 12,000 persons?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) (who replied) said: The hon. Gentleman knows that many Questions are on the Paper to-day of which no Notice has been given. I believe that this Question only appeared on the Question Paper at 2 o'clock this afternoon. It is, therefore, impossible to answer it.

Mr. P. O'BRIEN: I may inform the right hon. Gentleman that the Question was on the Paper two days ago. I received a very characteristic evasive answer from the Chief Secretary; and I put it down again on the Paper of yesterday, having intimated to the Chief Secretary that I would do so. As the evictions are taking place to-day, the right hon. Gentleman might have taken the trouble to send a telegram to the place.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Dr. TANNER: Hear, hear!

## POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—DELIVERY OF LETTERS AT NEWTOWNARDS, &c.

Mr. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he has yet completed arrangements by which the people of Newtownards, Downpatrick, Newcastle, and intermediate towns, will be enabled to reply to letters from England on day of delivery; and, if not, whether, considering the urgent necessity for the increased postal accommodation, he will take steps to have the new arrangements made and entered into without further delay?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): I am fully alive to the importance which the localities interested attach to an improved service; but it is necessary that further information, which is now being collected, shall be in my possession before a definite decision can be arrived at. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Down (Colonel Waring) some weeks ago called my attention to this matter, and I have since been giving it my careful consideration

## ANGLO-AMERICAN FISHERIES CONVENTION, 1818 — PURCHASE OF ARMED CRUISERS.

Mr. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether there is any truth in the statement that the Canadian Government is negotiating for the purchase of armed cruisers for the purpose of enforcing the Anglo-American Fisheries Convention of 1818, as interpreted by the Dominion Government; and, if so, whether the proposed proceedings have the sanction of Her Majesty's Government?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): I only saw the Question on entering the House, and I beg to submit to the House that a somewhat longer Notice of such Questions should be given than even one night. No information on the subject had reached the Foreign Office; and the Secretary of State for the Colonies informs me that he has not heard of it. I may add that the purchase of cruisers is a matter within the discretion of the Canadian Government.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked, If they were to understand that the Canadian Government had power to set up armed cruisers without the sanction of Her Majesty's Government?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON asked Notice of the Question.

## *MOTIONS.*

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## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT (IRELAND) BILL —MOTION FOR URGENCY.

### [first night.]

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): Sir, I rise to move—

> "That the introduction and several stages of the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motion, including the Rules of Procedure, whenever the Bill shall be set down for consideration by the Government as the first Business of the day."

I dare say I shall be asked why I move for precedence for this measure. It is because the country is in a state of disorganization, because the ordinary law is not enforced, and because it is the duty of the Government to see that the law of the land is observed, and that the machinery by which the law of the land is enforced is in complete and successful operation. That has been recognized as the duty and responsibility of all Governments at all times and under all circumstances in this House. It is our duty simply to maintain and to carry out the law of the land, and the Government which failed to do this would obviously be perfectly unfitted to discharge the duties for which it is responsible. Sir, if we have formed a wrong judgment as to the powers which we require to enable us to enforce the law, or if we are asking for powers which are unnecessary, there is an alternative which the House possesses and which it is its duty to exercise. But we are bound to act upon our sense of public duty. Our sense of public duty is informed by facts which are known to everybody in this House and to the whole world. Those facts amount to this—that juries are intimidated, and that criminals notoriously guilty of acts inimical to the best interests of society pass scot-free from the dock, against the declaration of the Judge and to the distinct prejudice of the best interests of the community. I have read very lately an extract from a speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), made in 1881, under circumstances like these, in which he said—

> "When the Executive Government of the country have arrived at the conclusion that there is sufficient evidence to convince Parliament that a demand for extraordinary powers ought to be made and acceded to, it becomes the duty of the Executive Government—and I would also humbly presume to say the duty of the House of Commons in conjunction with the Executive Government—to use every lawful and proper means for giving due despatch to the consideration of that demand."—(3 *Hansard*, [257] 1316.)

That is the position we take. We believe—we know—that there is evidence which ought to convince Parliament that the demand for extraordinary powers ought to be made and acceded to; it is our duty to place that demand before the House of Commons; and I humbly say, in the words of the right hon. Gentleman, that it is the duty of the House of Commons to use every lawful and proper means for giving due despatch to the consideration of that demand. I again say, without entering at all upon the details of the measure which it will be the duty of my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to explain to the House, that we have arrived at the conclusion that the measure is in itself necessary for the public safety and for the security and happiness of the law-abiding people in Ireland; and we claim from the House of Commons that they shall give despatch to the consideration of the demands we are now making. The speech from which I have quoted was made in January, 1881, when an association called the Land League was in existence in Ireland. There is now an association called the National League. [An hon. MEMBER: "The Loyal and Patriotic League."] It is a conspiracy. To use the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), the one is in apostolical succession to the other. Our case, to use the language used in 1881, is—

> "That the state of Ireland is one in which the administration of justice has failed, and in which, to a very considerable extent, the influence of terror places in abeyance the discharge of civil duties and the exercise of civil rights."—(*Ibid.*)

The powers we ask for are necessary to maintain social order; they are necessary to maintain the very existence of society upon the conditions enforced and recognized by every civilized community. They are not in the full sense of the word, political, unless it be a political duty to maintain order, to respect the rights of property, and to secure to everyone the enjoyment of complete personal liberty. We may say that the object we have in view is political in the sense that it is the highest duty of those engaged in politics to see that all subjects of the Queen are personally secure in every part of Her dominions. It is not a Party question, but it is a duty which the House of Commons owes to society in Ireland as much as it owes to society in England or in London. If there were persons in any part of London organized for the purpose of robbery or spoliation, it would not be called a political or Party object if we found it to be necessary by direct legislation to secure to the law-abiding portion of the citizens of London peace in their own dwellings and the absolute control of their own property. That is the object which the Government feel it their duty to press now upon the attention of Parliament. But I am told in the Amendment which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) proposes that—

> "This House declines to set aside the business of the Nation in favour of a measure for increasing the stringency of the Criminal Law in Ireland, while no effectual security has been taken against the abuse of the Law by the exaction of excessive rents."

This Amendment is almost identical with the one moved in 1881 to the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. But, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman then saw no reason for giving way to the Amendment proposed or for departing from the course of action and duty which he had laid down for himself. The right hon. Gentleman used these words—

> "From our point of view the question presents itself thus: that the state of Ireland is one in which the administration of justice has failed, and in which, to a very considerable extent, the influence of terror places in abeyance the discharge of civil duties and the exercise of civil rights . . . . but there are some Members of Parliament . . . who say that the Government has made a great mistake in giving the first place in the deliberations of Parliament—at least, the first place in the proposals laid before Parliament—to a subject of this kind, and that they ought to have commenced the Session by an attempt to deal with the intricate question of a Land Bill in all the manifold points of view from

which it has been approached during the last few months. Well, it is impossible for us to accept any proposal of that kind." (3 *Hansard*, [257] 1316-7.)

That, Sir, is our view of the case. The Government had in contemplation an extensive scheme of what they believed to be land reform dealing with that land question which was the subject of the agitation of the Land League. The Government on their responsibility declined to take up the land question first, but insisted that the law should be maintained, and that the lives and property of the subjects of Her Majesty should be preserved and protected, and then they undertook and dealt with the land question. Well, Sir, I have stated in this House, and my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland has stated, that we are prepared and are dealing with the land question. There are two Bills in preparation. One is in print and will be introduced immediately; another dealing with the subject of purchase is in an advanced stage of preparation, and will, I hope, very shortly see the light. But, Sir, what was the attitude of Her Majesty's Government in 1881, and what was the position they took up? I will read another quotation. The words are so apt and express so completely the sense of duty which the Government of to-day feel, that I can without the least hesitation appropriate and use them as arguments in support of our own case. The Solicitor General for Ireland stated in the debate on this very Motion that—

"It was his conviction that no Land Bill could be presented to Parliament framed in accordance with the principles of honesty and justice, which would satisfy the members of the Land League." —(*Ibid* 1658.)

Now, Sir, I venture to say that the present Government cannot present any measure to Parliament which is not framed upon principles of honesty and justice; and I am afraid also that I must say that no measure which is likely to be framed upon those principles or which we can present to Parliament will satisfy that apostolic successor of the Land League which is now the source of so much terror and disorganization. Let us go back to the simple duty of the Government—of the Government represented by the right hon. Gentleman opposite as of Governments under any circumstances in this country. I say it is the duty of the Government to maintain the law and to secure the liberties of the people. Dare we stand by and see juries intimidated and prisoners acquitted who, by the declaration of the Judge on the evidence adduced, ought under all the circumstances to have been found guilty? Dare we stand by and see the country disorganized and do nothing? I say we cannot and we will not. If this is wrong, and these things are to go on, let the House and the country relieve us of our responsibility. I beg to move the Resolution that stands in my name.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the introduction and several stages of the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motion, including the Rules of Procedure, whenever the Bill shall be set down for consideration by the Government as the first business of the day."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne), in rising to propose the following Amendment:—

"To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'This House declines to set aside the business of the Nation in favour of a measure for increasing the stringency of the Criminal Law in Ireland, whilst no effectual security has been taken against the abuse of the Law by the exaction of excessive rents;'"

said: Mr. Speaker, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury appears to me to have taken up a very extraordinary position in endeavouring to institute any comparison whatever between the state of affairs on which the Government base their proposals and the state of affairs which prevailed in 1881. The right hon. Gentleman tells us that Ireland is in a state of disorganization. With all deference to the facts which the right hon. Gentleman may afterwards produce, I venture to traverse that proposition absolutely. You may from the area of exceptional disorder exclude the Provinces of Ulster and Leinster; also Tipperary, Waterford, Leitrim, and Sligo —in all 25 counties. Now, of the remaining seven counties, you may treat as partially disturbed Kerry and Limerick, the half of Galway, the half of Roscommon, one-third of Clare, one-sixth of Cork, excluding the City, and possibly one-sixth of Mayo. Thus you have, taking in the whole of that area, one-eighth only of the population of the country which the right hon. Gentleman says, without any qualification, is in a state of complete disorganization. Then, there is another point of difference between what is happening to-day and what happened in 1881. In 1881 the demand for precedence for the Motion taking the time of the House did not, as to-day, precede, but followed, a very ample and elaborate statement by the Chief Secretary of that day on the state of things which was thought to justify his demand. How is it then that the right hon. Gentleman has asked the House to surrender all its time, before the Chief Secretary has made a statement of the facts upon which the Government base so important a demand? Will the right hon. Gentleman who talks of the "complete disorganization" of Ireland lay upon the Table of the House a comparative Return of the outrages in January, 1881, and of outrages reported to the Chief Secretary during this last month? If he will do that, we shall have a means of measuring how far there is a parallel between the state of things which was thought to justify the demand for coercion and for the whole time of the House in 1881, and the same demand for the same policy and similar legislation proposed in 1887. Sir, the Amendment which I have put down is meant to dispute the necessity for urgency: it disputes the priority of the Coercion Bill over other measures for Ireland. I am aware, therefore, that in discussing that Amendment I shall not be able to cover the whole length and breadth of the objection which many of us sitting on this side feel, and shall continue to feel, to the kind of legislation which the right hon. Gentleman is going to propose. This Amendment, with which we meet the first stage of what is likely to be an arduous and protracted discussion, only deals with one particular aspect of this great controversy; and our position in moving this Amendment is that the Government are going to work in an inverted order—that they are beginning with a policy which will aggravate the existing evil, and will weaken and spoil the operation of whatever future remedies they may be able to propose. We take the very earliest opportunity, and shall to the very end take every other legitimate opportunity, of protesting against a policy of that kind. We are not acting without a precedent, because in 1846 so staunch a stickler for Parliamentary and Constitutional usage as Lord John Russell took the same course as we are now taking in demurring to a demand for the whole time of the House for a Coercion Bill. He did it, too, upon grounds very similar to those which I myself wish to press upon the House of Commons this afternoon. Lord John Russell said—and it shows how our Irish dealings are constantly repeating themselves—

> "That he felt that more useful effects would be likely to follow from this measure (the Coercion Bill of the day) if Her Majesty's Government had an opportunity of producing some remedial measures at the same time. He thought that they were bound to consider whether there were not measures that would lessen the causes of this crime."

Then Lord John Russell, along with Mr. Cobden and my right hon. Friend the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), went into the Lobby against the very same demand as that which the right hon. Gentleman has now made. We are not, therefore, without a precedent. As to the point with which I began, I must ask what excuse there is for the proposal of the Government? We are told that disorder is triumphant. I venture to repeat that outside that very narrow area to which I have already alluded, Ireland has seldom been quieter than it is to-day. The evidence of that is to be found in the Judges' charges outside the districts I have spoken of. It is to be found in the testimony before the Commission that I shall presently have to deal with. It is to be found even in the evidence given before the Commission by an hon. Member whom we always listen to with interest on the Irish Question—the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald). That hon. Gentleman was asked whether the powers of the League had diminished, and he said "That is a very hard question to answer." But he then went on to say this—

> "If you ask me pointedly whether I am in favour of the immediate suppression of the League by force of law I should say No, because I think it is gradually losing its power."

But he said more; he was asked by one of the Commissioners about the forcible prevention of the meetings of the League. His answer was this—

> "I do not know that you can forcibly prevent people from giving bad advice. It is a difficult question; but I do not think that direct interfer-

ence with the Land League such as the passing of exceptional legislation would be advisable in the immediate present. What should be done in those parts of the country where extraordinary violence occurs I am not capable of offering an opinion upon, but I do hope that no such measure will be extended over the whole of Ireland."

He was further asked if it would be just as unfair to treat the whole of Ireland as if it were one—and to treat the whole of the United Kingdom as one area, deserving of exceptional legislation—and the hon. Gentleman, in reply, said, "Quite so, there are many parts of Ireland as quiet and well-behaved as any portion of the United Kingdom." That is the opinion of the hon. Member for Cambridge. What is the real reason for the Bill? There is no use beating about the bush. Hon. Gentlemen opposite will not agree with me, but I hope they will listen to what is the real reason. What are you actually aiming at? You are not aiming at putting down rebellion. You are not aiming at quelling sedition. You are acting against a combination to protect the tenants—to protect the tenants against rents which you know, and which you yourselves will admit — are now compelled to admit—to be excessive and exorbitant, and against which these combinations are the only existing safeguard. That is the proposition, and it is one of the foundations of our argument against urgency. We have now before us, not only the charges of the Judges describing the state of the country, but we have the Blue Book, with regard to which I do not scruple to say it is one of the most important documents issued since the Devon Commission in 1844. We are charged with raising over again the question which was supposed to have been settled last September, and again last month, on the Amendment of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell). Yes, because we have new proofs, and a fresh body of evidence. I do not doubt that anyone who will read, or even dip into, this voluminous Blue Book will see that not only the Report, but the whole mass of the evidence in that Book, supports every one of the leading propositions which we, on this side of the House, endeavoured to press on the Government as soon as this Parliament was elected in 1886. I am going to trouble the House with as few extracts as possible from that document; but they shall be such as to have really an important bearing on this debate. Our first proposition was, and has been throughout, that there has been so serious a fall in prices as to interfere with the payment of judicial rents. In September that was denied on those Benches, above and below the Gangway. Well, the Commission reported on that. They admit to the full everything that we ever said as to the effect of the fall in prices upon the ability of the tenants to pay their rents. And they overthrow all the propositions that were advanced by right hon. and learned Gentlemen from the Benches opposite. The Commission say that this sudden fall in prices has been aggravated by a gradual deterioration going on in the quality and produce of the soil. And here I cannot help noticing an illustration of the spirit in which the "landlord party"—I do not say it offensively—endeavour to mislead official opinion. Mr. Kavanagh, in his evidence, says that the agitators tell the people that there has been a gradual deterioration of the soil, and he would lead you to think that there was nothing in it. It is not the agitators who tell us this; it is your own Commissioners who tell you. Then the next point is the great increase in the cost of cultivation. But I will not labour that, but leave it. Sir, they also say that this state of things is the secret, in fact, of the formation of these combinations against which your proposed legislation is to be directed. They use moderate language. They say the refusal by some landlords to grant reductions may explain much that has occurred. "May explain!" They say that the formation of these combinations has doubtless been facilitated by the circumstances which it is now proposed to consider. The plain English of that is, of course, that in the opinion of the Commissioners these combinations arising in localities had their root in the inability of the tenants to pay excessive rents, and, what is still more to the point, in the resolution of many landlords—I do not say all, but of many—to exact those excessive rents which they can only collect when armed with sufficient power to do so. You need not go, as my noble Friend the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) went, as far as the Chicago Convention for an explanation of the rise of these combinations. They have had their rise in the natural necessity of the Irish tenants. That is my first proposition. The second proposition is that the evidence given before Lord Cowper's Commission is conclusive, and shows that, but for these combinations, many of the landlords would not have made the abatements which the late Chief Secretary and others, after fair and impartial inquiry, knew to be just and reasonable, and required by the circumstances. I am not going to draw up an indictment against the Irish landlords. I am not very fond of drawing indictments against any class. I suppose there is as much human nature in the Irish landlords as in the National League. Only do not let us overlook the motives that impel them to screw out high rents. The Irish landlords are in a terrible fix, and there is one very remarkable point bearing upon the probability that they would press their claims if they could. Many Gentlemen are acquainted with Mr. Hussey, the land agent. He made this statement. He said he collected a rental of £250,000 a-year, and he was asked how much of that £250,000 was intercepted before it gets to the landlord, and he said, "I should think four-fifths." "Then a landlord with a rental of about £5,000 a-year gets for himself about £1,000?" To this Mr. Hussey replied, "About that." Well, that remarkable admission as to the landlords for whom Mr. Hussey was agent is typical of too many landlords, and it explains the pressure that is put on them, and that they in their turn put on the tenants. I should be forbidden by you, Mr. Speaker, if I attempted to discuss the Act of Union now, and I have no desire to discuss it; but I will make one remark on a fact of this kind revealed by the Blue Book, that landlords only draw one-fifth of their rents, is very remarkable proof that the Act of Union has led the Irish landlords into habits of extravagance in their emulation with the richer landlords in England, and that they have been left in a very desperate condition—a condition in which they will be very little likely to do much good for the country in which they live. There is evidence to show what would have happened if pressure had not been put on the landlords. Mr. Hussey was asked why he made a certain abatement. He said, "Why, the lawlessness of the country prevented me asserting my right." He was then asked, "It was in consequence of the utter absence of any power to enforce it, that you felt incumbent upon you to make this abatement?" "Yes, that is so." He was glad to get any money he could. This was in the face of what the Commissioners called the inability of the tenants to pay even the judicial rents. I submit that what Mr. Hussey calls the lawlessness of the country was natural combinations of the tenants to resist payments which they could not make. This Bill, Sir, is a Bill for enabling landlords to exact exorbitant and excessive rents. There is one other witness who is much too important for me to pass over, because his evidence is of the first significance—I refer to Sir Redvers Buller. He is perfectly impartial, and not likely to over-state the case against the landlords, nor take an unjust view against that class. I will read a few words here and there from his evidence. He says—

> "My view of the country is this, that the majority of the tenants meant to pay the rents, and, where they could pay them, did pay them; but the rents have been too high. I do think they are too high."

He said—"Nobody"—and this is of the first importance—"Nobody did anything for the people until the League was established."

> "And when the landlords could not let their farms, then they were forced to consider the question of rents."

I appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite, if they are not too biassed by Party feeling, whether these combinations in preventing the landlords from exacting rents, which Sir Redvers Buller declared were too high—whether a service was not being done to the tenants of the country, and indirectly to the Government of the country. Then Sir Redvers Buller says—

> "I think it was the pressure of high rents which produced the agitation and the intimidation against the payment of rents."

Mark that. It was not the Chicago Convention; it was the pressure of high rents. Then Sir Redvers Buller said—

> "Unfortunately, the tenants had been led to think that the law was only on one side; they were an ignorant, poor people, and that the law should look after them, instead of which it had only looked after the rich."

Yes, and your Bill is a measure for throwing the law more than it has ever been on the side of the rich. Sir Redvers Buller said—and this is the last quotation I shall make—

> "I should like to have a Court which would have a certain amount of coercive power on a bad tenant, and a very strong coercive power on a bad landlord."

The effects of this Bill will be to remove all the coercive power that General Buller wanted to put upon the landlord, and to put all the coercive power upon the wretched tenants. There is other evidence in this Book which hon. Gentlemen opposite will be still less likely to deny than that of Sir Redvers Buller, as to the contention that combination is justifiable directed against the payment of excessive rent. I refer to the evidence of Lord Milltown, who is by no means a revolutionary person, and to the Ulster evidence. Lord Milltown denied in his dissentient Report the position taken up by the Commissioners—namely, that the refusal of abatements by some landlords might explain much that had occurred. Lord Milltown did not assent to that; and, with an ingenuousness that is really admirable, he proceeded—

> "The chief refusals to grant abatements have been in Ulster, where combinations do not as a rule exist."

That is the very point. Abatements were refused exactly because combinations do not exist. Of course, Sir, in that proposition Lord Milltown was admitting, in the plainest manner possible, the very proposition which in an earlier paragraph he denied. He was admitting that where combinations did not and do not exist abatements against excessive rents were not there made. I do urge hon. Gentlemen opposite to read about 100 pages of the Ulster evidence, because they will there find what harsh landlords are capable of doing when they are free from the pressure of popular opinion and of these combinations. No more painful evidence has been laid before this House for many a day than the evidence as to the treatment of the Ulster tenants. Mr. Dickson, who was formerly Member for Tyrone, gave some very interesting testimony, and there is one sentence which struck me as very important. He said—

> "The question is how long the tenants in the North of Ireland will pay what I regard as impossible judicial rents, fixed between 1881 and 1885."

Then he was asked what he thought the effect would be on the tenants if the landlords continued to refuse to sell—as they do in the North of Ireland, for the very good reason that they get their rents—and he replied—

> "I believe that if land purchase goes on very extensively over the South and West of Ireland at low prices now prevailing, and if reductions are made on judicial rents in the South and West of Ireland, and if no purchase is permitted in the North of Ireland, and no abatements on judicial rents, I believe we will have the agrarian question breaking out in all its intensity in the North o Ireland."

That means that the agrarian combinations in the South and West of Ireland are in effect fighting, not only their own battle, but the battle of the North of Ireland. I should like, in passing, to give the House some idea of the struggle which the Irish tenant farmer has to carry on in the face of present difficulties. I will refer the House to the evidence of a Mr. Charles Dennis, a tenant farmer of Waterford, who referred to a danger to the whole of Ireland, which is in process of realization, and which the Commission recognized. The Commissioners say that to force the tenants to sell their working stock in order to pay full rent would be fatal to their future prosperity. But it must be perfectly clear, even to an Englishman who reads the evidence, that this very process of the impoverishment and ruin of Ireland by forcing the tenants to sell their stock are at this moment going on at a rapid and an advancing rate—

> "We have," he says, "to keep this stock from month to month, and already we are overstocked. They are depreciating. We have offered them to the landlord"—

and this is a most important point of evidence—

> "and the landlord would not accept them. Some time ago I stated publicly in print the names of my neighbours who offered their stock to the landlord, and proposed to charge half the cost of keeping them sooner than sell them off the place. If the landlord will not do that at the present time, he must only expect to impoverish the tenants further by obliging them to sell off their stock at any price to save eviction more than seizure. The land then becomes unstocked, and the consequence is that the tenant is left no means at all then of paying the rent."

Now, I desire to give a picture from Mr. Dennis's evidence of the struggles that a tenant sometimes has to go through in order to do what he believes to be honest and right—

> "Only this time 12 months," says Mr. Dennis, "walking before my gate by accident on the public road leading from Waterford to Dunmore I picked up 15 pawntickets. I looked at them, and on some of the tickets was marked 'cash,' and on others was a certain name that I happened to know. There were a great many persons of that name in the place. I went to one, and I did not think it could be him; but he said, 'I am so much obliged to you for bringing me these tickets, because if you told anybody it would ruin me. I went to the fair to raise my rent, and I could not sell a single thing, and I brought in these things to pawn them.' Among the things was his own coat, his son's coat, a splendid-made coat of frieze, a horse collar, and a shawl belonging to his wife. With the exception of this last article, no exception could be taken to any of the articles. On the whole he had received a sum of £4 3*s.*; and he said to me, 'You see I have two horses; I have two for working, and a yearling. I have six or seven yearling calves, 16 sheep, and several pigs—I have all that, and yet I cannot raise the money, and if I wanted £5 to-morrow you know I could not raise it. So I had to take these clothes and pawn them.' I said to him, 'Why did you do it?' I spoke to him like a first-class Land Leaguer. His answer to me was, 'I have a good landlord. He reduced my rent considerably upon the last gale day, and if I told him I was not able to meet my reduced rent now he would not believe me, and sooner than that he should disbelieve me, or think I had cheek to go and ask him to make any further reduction, I went and pawned these things."

I can only say that man excites my deepest commiseration, and I am sure he will have the sympathy of Members in all parts of this House. I say that that case is an illustration of what I believe to be the position of the great majority of the tenant farmers in Ireland. And we are so often reminded, Sir, of the villainy of the character of the Irish nation, that I rejoice to be able to bring these facts forward. The whole of this Bill is based on the theory that the Irish people are incorrigible. The Commissioners have put upon public record that the Irish people are naturally honest, hard-working, and deeply attached to their country. And I say, Sir, that a man of this kind who makes such a sacrifice—and there are thousands of them in Ireland—excites my pity quite as much—as the victim of a moonlighting outrage. I say I am less anxious—anxious as I am—to secure vengeance upon 100 or 200 ruffians than I am to secure rightful and humane treatment for the thousands of poor tenants in Ireland. There is the difference between Gentlemen opposite and us on this side of the House. I will now proceed to one or two interesting matters which ought to be brought to the notice of the House as illustrating the meanness landlords are not above resorting to, and which come out in a very clear light in the Blue Book as showing the value of combination. As hon. Members from Ireland are aware, there is a device in operation in Ireland called joint tenancy. In one part of the Blue Book there is an account of a combination in a certain part of the country—I think Galway—not to pay rents until joint tenancy was broken up. The House will be able to judge whether these joint tenancies ought to be broken up or not. In this case there were five or six tenants on each holding—that is to say, these five or six men are made joint tenants, and are severally responsible for the whole rent. But that is not all. This is a device for bringing the rent above the significant figure of £4, for if the rent is over £4 the landlord pays only half the rate, while if it is below £4 the landlord pays the whole rate. By this precious manœuvre, although a tenant has a holding which is really under the value of £4, and ought not, therefore, according to the intention of Parliament, to pay any poor-rate, he yet is made to pay that which the Legislature never intended him to pay. I say that this is a fraud upon Parliament. It shows that some landlords practise what I may call a Plan of Campaign of their own, which is quite as immoral as that which Lord Salisbury described as arrant swindling. There is another much more important complaint to be made against the action of the landlords which these combinations in Ireland have endeavoured to meet, I mean their mode of dealing with their tenants in the matter of the purchase of properties. One subject referred to the Commissioners was whether combinations prevented the operation of the purchase clauses of the Act of 1881, or Lord Ashbourne's Purchase Act of 1885. There is plenty of evidence on the subject. What, for instance, does Mr. J. G. MacCarthy say? As hon. Members are aware, he is one of the Commissioners under the Act of 1885—

> "The operation of the Act has been hindered by an unwise attempt on the part of some land agents to coerce tenants into buying, and as to the terms of buying. How does he exercise the pressure? By telling the tenant he must either

sign a contract for sale or go out. I have seen letters of this class. I have a letter in my possession from an extensive land agent, telling the tenant that the sheriff could not be put off beyond to-morrow, but that if she handed the sheriff the contracts for purchase, duly executed, he would not take possession. Surely a contract signed under such circumstances could not be free."

I hope the House understands the drift of that. English Members and English taxpayers are not entirely uninterested in these transactions. You see what the device means. It means that a tenant under the threat of being turned out, whatever for, agrees to purchase terms practically fixed by the coercive agent or landlord. Then the Commissioners, when they inquired into these cases, have constantly found that the price so fixed was a most monstrous price, which would have left us, the British taxpayers, completely in the lurch. These combinations, against which the Bill to be introduced by the Government is directed, rightly set their faces, and rightly set their faces, against coercive operations of this kind, which would have had the effect I have stated. See what is the landlords' Plan of Campaign for which you, by your proposal, demand urgency to-night. Their Plan of Campaign is to force a tenant to pay an unreasonable rent, with the delightful alternative of driving him to purchase at an unreasonable price, thus exposing the British taxpayer to an unreasonable risk. You are asking for urgency to make Parliament an accomplice in that benevolent design. It is the old story. This is Irish history in a nutshell—what it has been too long—unredressed grievances, moral wrongs without legal remedy, then illegal acts to secure something like moral rights, and then Coercion Bills with the admirable purpose, as righteous as it is statesmanlike, of driving just discontent beneath the surface. I know what I shall be told by one of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite. I shall be told that the Government are going to bring in land proposals; but it is useless to bring them in while these combinations exist. I reply, there is abundant proof to be got from the Blue Book that the unwillingness, for example, of the Irish tenants to avail themselves of the purchase provisions of the Acts of 1881 and 1885 is due to other causes far more potent than these combinations. It is impossible to read the Blue Book without seeing that the mass of tenants holding aloof from purchase are influenced by the consideration of the possibility of a still further fall in prices; by the apprehension that taxation may be increased; and by other apprehensions of one kind and another, and that combination is one of the least of the forces that are now operating upon the tenants and making them afraid of purchase. Therefore it will not do for the Government to say that they are prepared to bring in land proposals, but that they must first get combination out of the way. I go a little further, and I say that to give urgency to coercion will do no good. It will do no good in the way of meeting the evils of which you complain. I will take the evidence of Captain Plunkett on Boycotting. I daresay I shall be told that although there is active disorder only in a very small part of Ireland, yet that Boycotting prevails over a large area. Well, but it is the opinion of one of the most experienced magistrates in all Ireland, that Boycotting will not be affected by such coercion as the Government have in view. This is the evidence of Captain Plunkett, when under examination by the President of the Commission—

"Boycotting went on under the Crimes Act? —Oh, yes. As strongly as before?—It was as strong, I think, then as it is now."

Is not that a warning to the right hon. Gentleman not to hope that by coercion Boycotting will be put down? Captain Plunkett tells you stringent coercion was ineffectual against Boycotting. There is another point I will notice in passing. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) the other night gave us some horrible figures of the murders committed in the disturbed times of 1881-2. He is going to vote for a Coercion Bill, and yet, let me tell him, in spite of two Coercion Bills, 75 per cent of these murders remain undetected, and their perpetrators unpunished, to this day. Do not think, therefore, that a Coercion Bill, however strong, will, in the future, give you any security that you will detect the perpetrators of these crimes, or that you will be able to bring them to justice. I regret that the Government have addressed themselves to their task in this way. It is, I repeat, an invested order. Here is a single instance to show what I mean. There has been no worse or more disturbed district in Ireland than Castleisland since these troubles began some years ago. This is the evidence of a land valuer who knows it well—

> "I attribute the difficulties of a district I am well acquainted with, the Castleisland district, which has unhappily had a very evil notoriety, to the fact that the Land Act operated to a very limited extent there, owing to a very large proportion of the tenants there being leaseholders. Their rents are high, but abatements have been made in some instances."

What is the use, I would ask, of our spending weeks to drive the discontent of Castleisland below the surface, when the same weeks that we shall spend in passing a Coercion Bill would suffice to cut off the root of the disorder in Castleisland? If you suspend the Habeas Corpus Act, will you have more power to deal with the disorder of which the First Lord of the Treasury complained? Will the Bankruptcy Court have more power to compel persons to give evidence? If mobs resist, you have all the military forces of the Empire at your back. Why do you need more? What is the case? There are sinister signs that the temper and spirit of the Irish Government are not improving. There are signs that they are not to be trusted. I am perfectly sure that they, like their Predecessors, when they have been armed with these weapons, will inevitably be drawn into attacks upon their political opponents, and when that happens, depend upon it, we shall again be in quite as deep waters as we were in 1881-2. The events of 1881 are fresh in our minds, and I may perhaps refer to them with the more freedom because I was not then in this House. What happened after the House had assented to the Motion the right hon. Gentleman referred to, and the House had passed the Bill in favour of which the Motion was made? You were always talking about restoring law and order. It was argued then, as now, that you must restore law and order before you bring in remedial legislation. What was the effect of that measure for restoring law and order? This is not inapposite. In the fourth quarter of 1880 the number of evicted persons was 954. In the first quarter of 1881, when coercion was on the stocks here, they increased to 1,732, and in the second quarter, when the Coercion Bill had been passed, they rose to 5,500. Certainly, I should not be surprised if something of the same kind were to follow now. If you suppress these combinations, if you rouse the temper and excite the passions of the Irish people by this kind of legislation, I should not be surprised if the same thing occurs again. And not only did evictions go up—I implore the House to remember what passed in 1881—but outrages, which in February, 1881, the month when the Coercion Bill was before the House, were 170, by January, 1882, when these exceptional powers were in full force, had risen to 479, and by March to 531. Why, what did that come from? It came from striking at the tenants' organization before you struck at the land system which that organization was directed against. Well, that is all past. I will venture to quote a passage from a very wise man. Mr. Burke said—

> "I have constantly observed that the generality of people are 50 years at least behind in their politics. In books everything is settled for them without the exertion of any considerable diligence or sagacity. For which reason men are wise with but little reflection, and good with but little self-denial in the business of all times except their own. Few are the partizans of departed tyranny."

We now can see the iniquity of the penal laws of the 18th century. Yet I declare, Sir, I am with those who doubt whether the penal laws of the 18th century were more iniquitous, or brought greater woe on the population of Ireland, than the landlord system of the 19th century. We are very astonished that a Coercion Bill should have been brought in in the year 1846, when the Devon Commission had just reported, and when the astounding evidence of that Commission ought to have been deep in all men's minds. We are amazed that the Parliament of that day, and the Leaders of Parties in that day, could think of nothing better than a Coercion Bill. But are we sure that we are acting more wisely to-day in this House than our forefathers acted then? I do not wish to leave off with any particularly bad language against the Irish landlords. I do not want to introduce at this very early stage what is only too likely to be a protracted discussion anything like passion. But I must point out finally what is in my view the object of the legislation which the right hon. Gentleman is about to propose, and the acceptance of which will mark an unwisdom compared with which that of any generation of our forefathers will be slight. Sir, I wish to call the attention of the House to the evidence of Captain Hamilton. Captain Hamilton, as many hon. Gentlemen know, is the chief director of the Landlords' Defence Association. What he says is this:—

> "His view was"—they are most remarkable words—"that in dealing with the tenants there should be no door of hope. If the man goes out he should only be able to come back again on making terms with his landlord. The whole cause of the troubles and evictions is the idea that is in the minds of the Resident Magistrates and others who go in charge that they are to settle between the landlord and tenant. At nearly every eviction the Divisional Magistrate and Resident Magistrate, and very often the District Inspector, all bear down upon the landlords' representative the moment he goes in, to make terms with the tenant, and, as it were, put themselves on the side of the tenant as against the landlord. I have never seen trouble at an eviction that has not been caused by delay and that idea among the people. My plan has always been to take one or two of the tenants and evict absolutely, but there must be no settlement except through the solicitor, and probably if that idea was carried out, and the duty of the Resident Magistrate was simply to preserve order, there would be no trouble about evictions; and I think that is doing a great deal of mischief at the present time, because the people are taught that the Government are on the side of the tenants against the landlords, and you cannot get that out of their heads."

What he wants us to get into their heads is, I suppose, that the Government is on the side of the landlords. This, Sir, is a Bill for placing the Government on the side of the landlords, and in Captain Hamilton's very expressive words, it is a Bill for shutting the door of hope. I do not say that I would never in any circumstances or in any emergency or in any crisis assent to increasing the stringency of criminal procedure either in Ireland or anywhere else. This I do say; considering the just odium with which exceptional criminal legislation has come to be surrounded in Ireland, I would put it off to the extreme moment. I would be very sure that the emergency was so perilous, the crisis so pressing, and the circumstances so overwhelming in their character, that no other less costly or less perilous instrument would enable me to grapple with it. Sir, I am expressing my deliberate conviction when I say there has never been a more wanton, a more gratuitous, and a more unjustifiable resort than on this present occasion to what my right hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham (Mr. Bright) once called "the ever-failing and ever-poisonous remedy of coercion." I do not deny for a moment that the Executive are bound to enforce the law. But we who are Members of the Legislature are bound, when we are deliberating on these great issues of policy, to see that the law is brought into harmony with the just claims of honest and industrious men. The right hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the Amendment which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House declines to set aside the business of the Nation in favour of a measure for increasing the stringency of the Criminal Law in Ireland, whilst no effectual security has been taken against the abuse of the Law by the exaction of excessive rents."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): In rising to reply to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman I find myself under the necessity of asking from the House even a greater measure of that kindness and indulgence which they have often been pleased to extend to me, for I speak under considerable difficulties on this occasion. It was only about 24 hours ago that the right hon. Gentleman gave Notice of this Amendment. I make no complaint. I merely state the fact. Since that time, Sir, I was in the House till a quarter to 4 this morning, and I had to return at 10.30, and had to make two speeches before breakfast. The House did not rise till past 1.30, and at 1 there was a Cabinet. In these circumstances, the House will understand that I approach the consideration of a large, complicated, and difficult question under conditions less favourable than usually attend a Minister of the Crown replying to what is in reality a Vote of Want of Confidence in the Government. The right hon. Gentleman has, I suppose, got some scheme in his head to deal with the present difficulty which he alleges to exist with regard to the payment of rent in Ireland. To that scheme, whatever it is, he has made no reference from one end to the other of a long speech. What he has referred to are measures which we propose to bring in, which he has not seen, of which he knows nothing, but which he criticizes in advance with no possibility of knowing whether when he does see them they will or will not deserve the strictures which he has passed upon them. As an illustration of that position, I recollect that the right hon. Gentleman began his speech by giving us his views as to the precise area in Ireland which was, in his opinion, disturbed, and which, he said, was a very limited area. I do not mean to criticize those views now. But how does the right hon. Gentleman know that if the disturbed area is limited, our Bill is not limited too? There are parts of Ireland, as the House perfectly well knows, in which law is at this moment as well obeyed as in any part of the United Kingdom. But if the right hon. Gentleman supposes that is a scintilla of argument against our Bill for restoring law and order in those parts which are disturbed, I feel myself unable to agree with him. The right hon. Gentleman not having heard the case of the Government considers, I suppose, that he is peculiarly well qualified to criticize their acts and to give his view as to the exact amount of disturbance which does exist in Ireland. I am not going into that question now, and I shall reserve my defence of the Bill which we are going to introduce until that Bill is before the House. But I may remind the right hon. Gentleman, who places so much reliance upon statistics of crime as affording proof or disproof of the necessity for a Criminal Law Amendment Bill—I may remind him of the words of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). [*Home Rule Cries of* "Oh!" *and cheers.*] Since when have hon. Members opposite learnt to treat quotations from the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman with derision and contempt? In introducing one of his Coercion Bills the right hon. Gentleman used these words—

> "We have never said that the amount of this crime, taken by itself, was the basis of our propositions. That is not the case. You must consider the amount of crime in conjunction with its source, with its character, with what it indicates, and what it means."—(3 *Hansard*, [257] 1697.)

That which was the view of the right hon. Gentleman in 1881 is the view of Her Majesty's Government now, and that is all which I think it necessary to say upon the condition of Ireland as far as crime is concerned. It is an unpleasant and a melancholy subject upon which I shall have to detain the House before long at no inconsiderable length. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. John Morley) based a large part of his argument upon the extreme difficulty of paying rents owing to the fall in prices. Now, if my memory serves me right, the reduction in rents consequent on the fall in prices is estimated in the most recent decisions of the Land Court at between 14 and 18 per cent. Let us take 16 per cent as the mean figure between these two extremes. Now, 16 per cent is about one-sixth part of the rent, and while I do not say that a rent which is one-sixth too high is not a rent which ought to be altered, I do say that the fact that some rents are too high by so much is not a reason for a social revolution. If the right hon. Member is going to apply a parallel rule in every part of the United Kingdom to every suffering interest, this country will be landed in a chaos such as no civilized country has ever been landed in before. I suppose right hon. Gentlemen opposite have not so far thrown over the Land Act of 1881 as to suppose that rents now fixed, or which were fixed before the agricultural crisis, are grossly unjust. Just before I came down to the House I looked at some statistics with regard to evictions, and made some hasty calculations. There were in the last quarter of last year 522 cases of eviction. Of these under 50 were for less than one and a half-year's arrears of rent. The remainder were for arrears varying from one and a half-year's rent to 10 years' rent. The total number evicted for owing more than one and a half-year's rent was 456. Of these only 132 were judicial rents. Therefore, of the tenants evicted for non-payment of rents due for more than one and a half year, no fewer than 324 were evicted for non-payment of non-judicial rents, and every one of those tenants could have gone into Court and had a judicial rent fixed. [*Home Rule laughter and cheers.*] Is that proposition denied? [*Cries of* "Yes!"] On what ground? Am I to understand that the Act of 1881 is, in the opinion of its authors, not only a total failure on account of the length of the period fixed, but also because the tenants who have a right to go into Court cannot or will not do so? If my calculation is correct, it will go far to prove that it is not true with reference to the majority of evictions, that they are due to the fact that judicial rents were fixed at a period when prices were different from what they are now. When you consider that there were only 132 cases of eviction in which the arrears were for more than a year and a-half—and in which the rents were judicial rents—you must consider also that only one-fifth of these tenants will have been finally turned out of their holdings. That greatly reduces the magnitude and proportion of the grievance on account of which the right hon. Gentleman wishes to disturb the settlement solemnly made in 1881. Before I pass from that part of the subject, let me say a word with reference to the attack made by the right hon. Gentleman upon the Irish landlords. Of course, we need no prophet to tell us that there are bad landlords in Ireland; we need no carefully-prepared and elaborate Reports to prove to us that where there are 500,000 tenants some rents will be too high. Of course, some are too high; but, on the other hand, some rents are too low. Are right hon. Gentlemen so sanguine that they conceive you will be able to have a system which works with such absolute mathematical exactness that when you have a vast number of transactions to deal with, everyone of those transactions shall be exactly in accordance with the dictates of conscience and of the most strict morality? The country and the system have not been found, nor ever will, while human nature remains as it is, in which you can hope to have a perfection such as I have vindicated. I turn to another part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech. He told us that he and his Friends had been occupied ever since this Parliament met in pressing the claims of tenants whose rents were judicially fixed before the fall in prices for some reconsideration of the bargain which the State enforced on them. Ever since this Parliament met he has been taking that course, and ever since this Parliament met he has been in Opposition. But the crisis began in 1884, and prices were as low as they are now in 1885 and 1886. During a large part of that time the right hon. Gentleman was in Office. When did he first think of carrying out the scheme which he now thinks so absolutely necessary? Was the case of the Irish tenants not pressed upon the attention of the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends by hon. Members from Ireland below the Opposition Gangway?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: The first vote I ever gave was in 1883 in favour of the Bill of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell).

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am only alluding to the right hon. Gentleman in the character of spokesman for the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian and the right hon. Gentlemen who sit near him. The right hon. Gentleman told us that ever since this Parliament met he had been pressing the claims of the tenants to a reconsideration of the bargain made for them in 1881. But why did he only begin to do this when in Opposition? The evil, so far as it is an evil, is one which has existed ever since the fall in prices—in other words, since the beginning of 1885. The right hon. Gentleman and his Friends cannot claim that the case was not pressed upon them at a time when they could have dealt with it. In January, 1886, the hon. Member for Cork brought forward his case and made almost the same speech which he made last autumn when right hon. Gentlemen came from all parts of the country to support him. The hon. Member for Cork said that the condition of the Irish tenants was desperate in consequence of such a reduction in the prices of agricultural produce as had not been known for many years. Was he to understand that the excuse which was about to be made for their inaction by right hon. Members opposite was that the speech of the hon. Member for Cork was made five days before the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) came into Office? Did right hon. Gentlemen hold that that fact entitled them to treat the speech of the hon. Member for Cork as if it had not been delivered?

MR. PARNELL (Cork): I do not know whether it is necessary to remind the right hon. Gentleman that the speech to which he refers was delivered at a moment when coercion was threatened by the Conservative Government.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no objection to the interruption of the hon. Gentleman, though I think it is hardly relevant, unless I am to understand that the hon. Gentleman does not consider that he is bound to a statement of fact made in opposition to a Conservative Government which brings in a Coercion Bill. He made the statement, and pressed it upon the House as true; and, therefore, I ask why did not right hon. Gentlemen opposite take up the case and deal with it in their own manner? [An hon. MEMBER: They did.] I think I heard some hon. Gentleman say that they did deal with it. That is perfectly true; but in what manner? What they proposed was that Irish land should be bought from the Irish landlords for the Irish tenants, and at a valuation based on the rents fixed in 1881. ["No, no!"] It is true that that was in 1885; but the rent in 1885 was in many cases the rent fixed in 1881. The right hon. Gentleman opposite took the rent fixed in 1881 as the basis on which he asks the British taxpayers to lend £160,000,000. I do not wonder at the hesitation which the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends have shown in becoming converts to the doctrine of the hon. Member for Cork, because their conversion is the most humiliating confession of their failure with regard to the Irish Land Question ever forced from any Administration. In 1881 they solemnly passed an Act establishing contracts in regard to rent for 15 years, and before that Act has been six years in force you say that these contracts must be broken. Nor can right hon. Gentlemen opposite say they had no warning. I myself, in the debate that took place on the Land Bill of 1881, called attention to the danger that there was in establishing contracts for 15 years in view of the possible fall in prices. I turn now to what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle called the central part of his argument; and what is it? It is that in all cases of this kind, before you make the Criminal Law, as he calls it, more stringent, and, as I term it, more perfectly adapted to the end of punishing crime, you ought to pass remedial measures, according to the old formula, to which I have not the slightest objection. Remedial measures should precede repression. I consider that formula a most valuable truth, if it is properly limited and properly understood. Let me remind the House that my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury has informed the House that we intend, not in the dim and distant future, but in the immediate future, to bring in a Bill in "another place," where work can be more expeditiously transacted; and we intend, as quickly as possible, to carry our views into effect. I do not know whether I shall be in Order in indicating very faintly what those views are. We consider that, under the circumstances, two Bills will be necessary. The first Bill will not alter—and does not profess to alter profoundly—the system established by the right hon. Gentleman in 1881; but we think it will make the working of that system more smooth, more equitable, and more beneficial to all concerned in the great agricultural interests of Ireland. The Bill, among other things, will deal with leases, and give to the tenant some equitable relief such as was given to debtors in the Bankruptcy Act of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain). It will have other provisions which we think of a valuable kind. But we do not suppose that a Bill of these comparatively humble proportions can possibly solve the great Irish Land Question. That question, we believe, and we have always believed, can only be solved by a large measure dealing with purchase. ["Oh!"] Every Party in the House and every section of every Party is, I think, agreed on this. ["No no!"] Well, with the exception of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell). That measure, as may be conjectured, is of too large proportions to be passed immediately unless hon. Gentlemen opposite are prepared to pursue very different tactics with regard to the Business of the House from those with which we have been made painfully familiar this Session. We shall be ready to bring in that Bill as soon as they are ready to allow that Bill to be discussed. Having thus stated in the rudest and barest outline—for I should not be justified in going more into details—the remedial measures which we propose to bring in, let me meet directly the argument that these measures ought to precede the criminal measure for which we are now asking urgency. I do not think there is a single man in this House who knows what he is saying who will not admit that the prime necessity in every society is that the law shall be effective. Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite cannot for a moment doubt that the primary necessity for society is a stable and acknowledged system of law. If that be admitted, I, on my side, am ready to admit that if you can get your law effective, not by increasing its stringency or altering its machinery, but by remedial legislation, you had better do so. If the effect of passing our Land Bills or any Land Bill would lead to such a change that juries would cease to be intimidated, and that witnesses would come forward and give their evidence—then every one of my Colleagues would hasten to bring forward such a measure. [*Cries of* "Try it!"] But what chance is there that if we put off this Criminal Bill, when Ireland is weekly going from bad to worse, when society is crumbling into its original atoms, we shall restore the sanctity of contract and respect for law by introducing any Land Bill? The hope that now exists, provided we take measures in time, would be finally destroyed, and it would be useless to try and battle with the forces of anarchy. We should have to give up the task in despair. The right hon. Gentleman based his argument upon the view that the Land League—I have used the wrong *alias*, I mean the National League—corresponded with and resembled a combination of trade unionists in England for obtaining fair and equitable terms from their masters. But that is a total misconception. Since when have the Opposition come over to the doctrine that the National League is this innocent form of trades union, organized in order to obtain for the tenants fair and equitable terms? I have not taken the trouble of reading the cartloads of speeches in which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) denounced the Land League, which, in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman, is the same thing as the National League except in name. In 1881 the right hon. Gentleman said that the Land League organization was "really Fenian in its character"—in other words, that it was a treasonable organization which carried out its treasonable designs by murder and outrage. Is the right hon. Gentleman and are his Friends converted to the idea that the National League has cast off its "original sin" and has come out in the new guise of an innocent combination, with no other object than to enable tenants who were asked to pay an excessive rent to resist their landlords? Have right hon. Gentlemen studied the recent speeches of hon. Gentlemen opposite who sit for Irish constituencies? One speaker had said that the time would come when rent would be abolished altogether, not all at once, but step by step. Is that the advice of an innocent combination to enable tenants to exact a fair rent? In November last, another speaker said—

> "We are not only working to abolish the landlords; we are also working for the holy cause of Irish nationality, and if to-morrow every landlord were swept out of the country, we still should have to work in order to realize the dream of the Irish martyrs in the past to make Ireland a nation with her own flag among the nations of the world."

I could multiply quotations such as these; but they are sufficient to prove my propositions, which are these—in the first place, that the League aims at political objects wholly alien—in my opinion treasonable—to the question of a combination for the purpose of exacting a fair rent; and, in the second place, that it aims at these treasonable ends by the spoliation of one particular class—those who support the Union. If these propositions are true—and they were believed to be true by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby one year ago, and they are proved to be true by the quotations of speeches made only a few months ago—then what becomes of the contention of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle that we are here dealing with an innocent trade union organization. The truth is that the source of our disorders is not the exaction of extreme rents by the landlords. The tenants of Ulster and the leaseholders of Ulster are in some ways more hardly treated than any other tenants in Ireland. The case of the leaseholders of Ulster was before the Colleagues of the right hon. Gentleman opposite Session after Session in 1882, and they never lifted a little finger to relieve them. The case is, in my opinion, far harder than that of any other tenants in Ireland; but they have not, under the temptation which the right hon. Gentleman thinks adequate to justify a socialistic revolution, engaged in any of these nefarious schemes. I shall often have to talk of the National League, but there is one epithet which fell from the right hon. Gentleman opposite to which I must call attention now. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of it as a spontaneous combination of the tenants of Ireland. Sir, is the right hon. Gentleman so ignorant of the country which, not eight months ago, he was occupied in governing, as not to know the species of terrorism by which the tenant is brought into the network of this organization, from which he only longs to be free as soon as the law will allow him to free himself with impunity? My first answer, therefore, to the question of the right hon. Gentleman opposite as to why we did not bring in remedial measures before criminal measures, is that to do so would not have had the effect which he thinks it would have had—namely, to restore respect for law and order in Ireland, to enable peaceable men to go about their business in peace, to give freedom under the law, and to enable the Courts of Law to carry out the law of the country. But I have another argument in favour of the course which we propose to pursue. Not only would the order which the right hon. Gentleman proposes with regard to our measures fail in its effect, but if we were to follow his advice and put off day after day the measure which we think necessary to restore respect for the law, it would render the effect of every future remedial measure absolutely nugatory, and destroy at its very source and beginning every hope of a better state of things for the Irish tenantry. I have already told the House that the Government are of opinion that the only hope for the ultimate settlement and solution of the Irish Land Question is a scheme of purchase. What hope would there be of the success of any scheme of purchase if, at the bidding of an agitation like this, you broke a solemn contract entered into only five years ago? Would any tenant in Ireland believe that a settlement guaranteed by Parliamentary pledges would be a lasting one, and if any tenant in Ireland did believe that, would he not be an idiot to believe it; would he not be a fool, in the face of what Parliament has done, in the face of the readiness of Parliament to stultify itself; would he not be a fool if he believed that the contract which he entered into with the State would be a final contract, and that it would not be in his power by using the same machinery of agitation which had been so often found effective in the past to wring what new terms he chose out of the British Government and the British taxpayer? It is because I know that if you begin now; if you precede the restoration of law and order by what you call remedial measures, every tenant in Ireland will believe that he has only to go upon the same lines which they have been pursuing, and the property of every landlord will be whittled down, and that ultimately by slow but sure degrees he will get his land for nothing. This is the creed, and these are the sentiments, preached by hon. Members opposite in Ireland. Is that the policy of the legitimate Opposition? If it is not, I wish to ask how they can possibly justify this alteration in Parliamentary policy adumbrated in the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman opposite? I speak as one of a Government determined to preserve the Union, and possibly many may have thought that the arguments I have used can only be properly addressed to those who agree with me in that broad policy which we think ought to guide the common destinies of the two countries. But, Sir, that is not my opinion. I believe that every man in this House who wishes to stop short of absolute separation is perfectly mad if he follows the policy suggested by the right hon. Gentleman in his Resolution. [*Opposition cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and* "Withdraw!"] I do not think there is anything disorderly in using the word mad; but if the delicate sensibilities of hon. Members opposite are offended, I will say that any such man must be singularly unwise if he follows that policy, because every scheme which the ingenuity of man can suggest which stops short of absolute separation involves some kind of arrangement and some kind of bargain between the people of Ireland and the people of England. If in your madness—[*Cries of* "Order!"]—well, if in your folly you break the contract entered into by Parliament in the most solemn manner, how can you possibly imagine that the great international contract which some of you desire will remain inviolate a moment longer than suits the convenience of hon. Members opposite? Of course the screw will be put on then as now. The people of Ireland from one end to the other would know that however firmly you have appeared to put your foot down, the smallest touch will shake you from your balance; and with that conviction deeply rooted in their mind, do not suppose that any arrangement that you may enter into—fence it round with all the securities you like—can possibly cause you to pause for more than a few brief years at any point on the inclined plane down which you will inevitably slide towards absolute separation, if you once leave the present united Constitution of this Empire. For these reasons, not certainly in the interests of the landlords, not even in the interests of the Unionist Party, but in the interests of every man in this House who desires some kind of link to be kept up between England and Ireland, I earnestly press the House not to accept the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman, and to allow us as soon as may be to take those steps which we think necessary for the restoration of law and order in Ireland.

MR. ALLISON (Cumberland, Eskdale) said, the Report of the Royal Commission amply justified every one of the allegations made by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) last autumn as to the necessity of reducing agricultural rents in Ireland. He had to complain that now that the Commission had reported the Government took no notice of the Report, but were proceeding on the old path of coercion, which had so often failed before, and which he predicted would undoubtedly fail again. The Report contained a lesson for their Liberal Unionist Friends. If any Party insisted more than another on public platforms in this country upon the duty of remedial measures it was the Liberal Unionist Party. They constantly spoke of the manner in which this Parliament could redress the grievances of Ireland, and said a great many things could be done by this Parliament better even than by an Irish Parliament. Instead, however, of proceeding to assist in redressing grievances the Liberal Unionists intended, it seemed, to support those measures of the Government which were intended to put down agitation sprung from the very grievances which the Royal Commission had exposed. They were told that the land measure would be produced almost immediately. That was rather a vague phrase, and he should like to know how far the "almost" was to qualify the "immediately." It was, it appeared, to be produced in "another place," where land measures had been known to fail before, but where he doubted not the Coercion Bill would go through quickly enough. If one thing could make the Government's policy more suicidal than another it would be the idea of attempting to put down the National League after the statement of their special Commissioner, Sir Redvers Buller, who had declared that the "great majority of the Irish people thought the National League had been their salvation." The tenants were right in their supposition. He challenged denial of the statement that there was not a single concession but had been wrung from reluctant landowners by the operations of the League and the agitations it had set afoot. In the face of the Report he could not conceive any body of men "mad enough" to go forward with a policy of coercion at the present time. He confessed, after the promises which had been given deliberately to the people of Ireland, it was simple madness to abandon those promises and resort to a policy of coercion, which had failed in the past, and which he was certain would fail in the future.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN (Kent, Isle of Thanet), said, in answer to the challenge of the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Allison), he would point out one Act which had not been got from the Government by the action of the Land League—he alluded to the first Act under which the relations between landlord and tenant was first disturbed in Ireland—the Land Act of 1870; for he would remind hon. Members opposite that at that time, thank God, neither the Land League nor the National League existed. He did not believe for a moment that that Act had been extorted by the Clerkenwell outrage or the Manchester murder. The hon. Member referred to Mr. M'Carthy as an absolute judge of the state of Ireland. With respect to the action of Lord Ashbourne's Act, that gentleman might be a good judge in his way; he was a solicitor in practice in a small town in the South of Ireland; but he could not agree that he knew more about the land question than the landlords. Mr. M'Carthy was a Sub-Commissioner under the Act, confined mostly to his office or Court; but the landlords heard all that was going on. He (Colonel King-Harman) considered that the attack made on the landlords by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) was uncalled for, cruel, and unjust; and when the right hon. Gentleman spoke of the landlords as a body oppressing the poor, he must remind him that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), on a memorable occasion, declared that the Irish landlords had been tried, and that they had not been found blameworthy. Ireland was now organized from one end to the other by the National League against English rule, against loyalty, law, and order; and men, through fear of the power of the League, led the life of dogs, hunted and Boycotted. Talk about evictions by landlords, had there ever been an eviction so cruel as the case of the Misses Curtin—driven out of the country by the hell-hounds of the League because they nobly stood up to defend their father from the assassins of the League, paid by American dollars? [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen thought this a laughing matter? Was it a laughing matter to drag a girl out by the hair, and pour tar on her head? It might be a laughing matter to those who knew more, thank God, than he did how those things were got up. Any man who stood up for what he conceived to be his duty in Ireland was made to suffer for it. In the course of his speech, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. John Morley) had referred to the state of Ireland in 1846, when Lord John Russell and Mr. Cobden were taking a leading part in Irish affairs. True, Ireland was in a fearful condition then. But in that year no remedial measures had been passed, the deepest distress existed, famine stalked the land, the people were poor, and the emigrant ships were leaving Ireland with thousands of emigrants, many of whom died. Now, however, matters were different. There was more money deposited in Irish Savings Banks now than there ever had been. The Dublin Stocks were largely invested in, but not by the landlords, because the National League took care that the Irish landlords received no money. The League coerced the people, and were it not for the League they would be as peaceful and as law-abiding as the people of any other part of the Three Kingdoms. Those who had been murdered, wounded, and terrorized over were not of the landlord class. The landlords were pretty well able to take care of themselves, as they had done up to the present time; but they were of the tenant class, and the nefarious combination which had been spoken of in such laudable terms was not intended to protect but to coerce the tenant. The majority of the tenants of Ireland wished to pay their rents honestly when they could do so; but in thousands of cases they had been prevented from doing it by the system of tyranny which overshadowed and controlled them. The right hon. Gentleman had quoted from the evidence of Sir Redvers Buller. Now, he admitted that Sir Redvers Buller was an able and a gallant soldier, but he was unaware that that officer had had sufficiently long and wide experience of land and of the value of land to be able to give a standard opinion on the subject. This he did know — that on one occasion, when Sir Redvers Buller was talking to a landlord friend of his in the County Kerry about land matters, he pointed to a field belonging to the landlord and said, "Your land is over-rented. You are charging 25*s.* an acre for that land, while only 21*s.* would be charged in England." The landlord asked him whether he knew that there was any difference between an English acre and an Irish acre. "No," said Sir Redvers Buller; "is there any difference?" The landlord told him how much larger an Irish acre was than an English acre, and showed him that this would far more than account for the difference in price. So much, then, for the evidence of Sir Redvers Buller in regard to land questions; the right hon. Gentleman was quite welcome to what he could get out of it to strengthen his case. The right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary next said that all the Irish legislation that had been passed of late years had been against the tenants, and he intimated that hon. Members on the Conservative side of the House were always harping for increased powers in favour of the landlords. He emphatically denied both assertions. What the Government were now asking for were increased powers in favour of maintaining law and order—powers which landlords, tenants, and all classes alike in

Ireland would have to submit to and obey. As to legislation for the landlords, he would ask whether any law was ever enacted which weighed more heavily on any class than the Act of 1881 weighed on the landlords of Ireland, both in regard to their power and their pockets. It was a law which would never have been passed in any foreign country, and he was certain it would not have been passed by England for Englishmen. In respect of the evidence of Mr. Dickson, all he would say was that that gentleman told a different story now, when he wanted to get into the House as a National Leaguer, to that which he gave when he was the Liberal Member for Tyrone. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of landlords giving time to their tenants to pay. Doubtless there were bad landlords, just as there were bad men in every class; but, as a rule, the landlords of Ireland have not been such fools as to refuse to give time wherever and whenever it could be reasonably granted. In their own interests they had done so, and would continue to do so. The right hon. Gentleman wound up his speech with a remark in which he entirely concurred. He said that we wanted to protect the good, honest tenants from the ruffians. Just so. They believed the majority of the tenants to be good and honest men, but that those tenants were tyrannized over by a body of lawless ruffians who were subsidized by American dollars; and they wanted to protect the honest, law-abiding men from those whom the late Mr. Forster termed "the village ruffians." With respect to rent and prices, he might remark that Griffith's valuation in 1854 was made for a basis of taxation and not for rent. The valuation was 25 per cent below what he considered to be the value of the rent, and when the agitation was first begun the cry all over Ireland was for Griffith's valuation. Moreover, prices in 1852, 1853, and 1854 were considerably lower than they were at the present time. For example, in 1852, in the part of the country to which he belonged, milch cows sold for £8 to £14; at Boyle Fair, in March last, similar animals sold for £10 to £19; in 1852 two-year-olds sold for £4 to £8 10*s.*; at Boyle Fair for £8 to £11; in 1852 one-year-olds fetched £2 10*s.* to £3 10*s.*; at the Fair referred to £4 to £7; in 1852 lambs made from 18*s.* to 26*s.* each; at Boyle Fair in March 36*s.* to 42*s.* was obtained. He was entitled to argue from this that in regard to Griffith's valuation, tenants did not now pay too high rents, at all events in the part of the country he referred to; still, the Sub-Commissioners made a considerable reduction below what Sir Robert Griffith deemed a fair valuation in 1854. When the prices of produce rose, landlords did not raise their rents in anything like the same proportion; and, therefore, when prices fell, rents ought not to be lowered to a ridiculous extent. He should be as slow as anyone to ask for a measure of coercion; but when he saw honest and law-abiding people unable to follow their lawful vocations, the whole country disturbed, and much-needed capital being driven out by the action of a few lawless men, and when he saw that—because juries were terrorized, verdicts could not be found and ruffians could not be punished—he felt it was time to ask the House to strengthen the hands of the Executive in such a manner that justice should be done speedily and surely, so that Ireland might be saved from the worst oppressors and the greatest destroyers that ever ruined any country.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.) said, that possibly the fact that the Land Commissioners had reduced considerably the rents of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman's) tenants, accounted for that hon. Gentleman's opposition to the Land Act of 1881. Was not the fact that the Commissioners had reduced the rents by 45 per cent a sufficient proof that rents were too high before? That seemed to him to be the case, especially as Lord Cowper's Commission reported that in many parts of the country rents were still 17 or 18 per cent too high. Our troubles in Ireland had mainly been produced by the oppressive conduct of the landlords; and when the right hon. Gentleman asked them to believe that the Irish landlords had never done anything wrong, he put a strain on their credulity which it would not bear. The value of the land of Ireland had been mainly created by the tenants, who had not received the reward of their labour, but had, on the contrary, seen its results confiscated by the landlords. The Act of 1881 perpetuated the feeling that it was a very great wrong; but it was to expect too much to think the Act would remove the stain of centuries, the removal of which must be a gradual process. Why, every west wind of the last few centuries had reached England laden with sighs, sorrows, and tears, and he rejoiced that he had lived in a time when the Liberal Party had made strong efforts to wipe out these sorrows and lessen these tears. Notwithstanding their position, he could see that circumstances were working in favour of the Irish tenant. Before long we should see still greater remedial measures passed for Ireland; and he had strong hope that he should live to see the day when Ireland would be cemented to England, not by force, but affection; not by law, but love. Listening to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), he (Mr. Handel Cossham) came to the conclusion that the Tory Party had no solution of the Irish problem to offer but the old-tried and found-wanting system of coercion, and he looked to see the early retirement of the Tory Party from Office—and the earlier the better. Errors might have been made by the National League. Oganizations of the kind were prone to err; but recollect what reform that organization had accomplished. Had it not been for organization the English ports would have been shut against foreign corn. Force was no remedy. The people of Ireland held to their right to live on their native soil, and the world being made for the many—not the few—their claims could not be denied. The Government had got as far as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) had six years ago; and even yet he did not lose hope that strenuous persuasion might induce the Government to retrace their steps along the mischievous road of coercion.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) said, I have listened this evening with very great care to the remarks that fell from the Chief Secretary for Ireland in reply to the speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley). I must say that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland invariably puts his case before this House with considerable clearness and force. My object in following him so carefully through his remarks was to discover, if possible, the grounds upon which Her Majesty's Government rely in coming down to this House a second time this Session and asking hon. Members to place entirely at their disposal the whole time of the House. I confess, Sir, that the only reason that I was able to discover was that the right hon. Gentleman considered that as a Member of the Government it was his duty to preserve the Union. No doubt, that is a most honourable and patriotic duty; but I am not aware that it is a duty peculiar to Her Majesty's Government. There are hon. Members on this side of the House, as well as on the other side, who consider it their duty to preserve the Union. I am aware that hon. Gentlemen opposite very often in their speeches regard us and speak of us on this side of the House—and especially hon. Members who sit below the Gangway on this side of the House—as Separatists; but we have repeatedly denied that assertion, and we claim for ourselves to be as sincere in the opinions that we hold as hon. Gentlemen who sit on the other side of the House. That there are differences of opinion amongst hon. Members of this House as to how the Union is to be preserved, I will admit; but that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite are any more sincere in their desire to preserve law and order, and to preserve the integrity of the Empire, than hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who sit on this side of the House, I entirely deny. Now, Sir, what are the grounds on which hon. Members are asked to give up the time of this House—to place it entirely at the disposal of Her Majesty's Government? It is in order that the Criminal Law in Ireland may be increased in its stringency. For my own part, I am as anxious that social order shall be maintained in Ireland as hon. Gentlemen opposite can be. I am willing to admit that hon. Gentlemen opposite have a mandate from their constituents to preserve social order in Ireland, and also to preserve the Union between Great Britain and Ireland; but there are hon. Members on this side of the House, and right hon. Members as well, who have a mandate from their constituents to see that no coercive measure is introduced into this House for Ireland until some remedial measure has been adopted by Her Majesty's Government. If Her Majesty's present Advisers had deemed it advisable to introduce remedial measures, I should not have hesitated to give them every assistance it was in my power to give in carrying their remedial measures successfully through this House. But when they come down to the House and tell us that their only policy for Ireland is to increase the stringency of the Criminal Law in that country, then I at once unhesitatingly refuse to sanction that policy, and to give up the time of the House to the right hon. Gentleman opposite. Why do I hesitate, Sir, to place at the disposal of the Government the whole time of the House? Why, there are industrial questions that are ripe for solution—questions that affect most closely and deeply the industrial classes of the country. No one Member of this House could be more painfully aware of the urgency of these questions than I am myself. I have the honour to represent in this House a constituency amongst whom considerable suffering exists to-day on account of certain industrial restrictions that are placed upon the product of their labour; and I and my Friends have been anxiously awaiting and wishing for an opportunity to discuss these questions in this House, and to bring under the notice of Her Majesty's Government questions that affect most closely the working classes of this country, and we have not had up to the present moment an opportunity of so doing. And with these questions ripe for solution, and demanding the immediate attention of the Government, we are asked to sacrifice the time of the House to Her Majesty's present Advisers, in order that the stringency of the Criminal Law in Ireland may be increased. If the Government, I repeat, are prepared to introduce remedial measures, based on the recommendations of their own Commission, to alleviate the condition of the suffering tenants in Ireland, however sincerely we may desire the passing of industrial measures, I am prepared to say that the working classes of this country are prepared to waive their claims on the attention of the Government, if the Government will give to the House an assurance that, instead of a measure of coercion, they will at once proceed with remedial measures for Ireland. Coercion, Sir, has been tried in the past, and admittedly has failed—admitted by Her Majesty's present Advisers. In 1885 they resolved to rely on Constitutional law—the ordinary law—for the maintenance of social order in Ireland. Why, then, do they now revert to the old policy of coercion? If they had been successful in the Election of 1885, when they had behind them the full strength of the Irish vote, they would not now be asking us to increase the stringency of the law in Ireland. The full strength of that Irish vote was given against the Liberal Members. Its full strength was given against me in my constituency at that time; but, notwithstanding the strength of the vote being given against me, I then pledged myself in favour of Home Rule. The problem that the Government has to solve to-day is still the problem laid down by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham in 1885. The right hon. Gentleman said the problem we had to solve was the conciliation of the national sentiment of the Irish people. That is still the problem that remains unsolved; and if Her Majesty's Government expect that they will be able to solve it by an increase of the stringency of the Criminal Law in Ireland, I venture to predict for their action an ignominious failure. I would remind them that law and order can only be maintained in Ireland by Constitutional means, and I would assure them that, if they will at once set themselves to pass remedial measures, they may hope to earn the gratitude of the Irish people, and hope to make this year of Jubilee one of real and true union between the people of Great Britain and Ireland.

COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, S.W., Ince): I would congratulate Her Majesty's Government, when bringing in the measure to strengthen the law, in not having hesitated to shadow forth their intention of dealing with the Land Question in Ireland, and I believe that, by the policy they are about to pursue, they will not only give security to Ireland generally, but will be giving security to the labourer there to earn his livelihood. We must recollect, in speaking of the landlords of Ireland, how little many of them are masters of their own estates. If these estates were mortgaged as were estates in Great Britain, the probability would be that they were mortgaged at one-third, or possibly 40 per cent, before the judicial rents were fixed. These judicial rents lowered the value by 20 per cent, so that little margin, if any, was left to the landlord; and, depend upon it, over a great part of Ireland the landlord is hardly a free agent. But, while I would urge upon Her Majesty's Government to persevere in grappling with the Land Question, as they have shown it to be their intention to grapple with it, I would earnestly ask them to turn their attention to another matter about which I must say that, as a listener in this House, I entertain the strongest opinions. I firmly believe that when the history of our time comes to be written that this Irish Question which looms so large and separate to our eyes will be regarded as the first acute symptom of the congestion of population in the British Isles. Our population is now 37,000,000, which is within a million or two of that of France. In order to feed our large towns we have to allow bread to be imported free, and a very good thing too; but the effect of that has been to depopulate our agricultural districts. There has been less land ploughed up, less crops, and many of those crops which have been gathered have been gathered by mowing machines and reaping machines. Ireland has felt this more even than our agricultural counties. Irishmen used to flock over to this country in large numbers, and used to carry back to their little holdings large sums of money, having lived, while working here, on the smallest amount of sustenance. These means of earning money have been cut off, and not only have the Irish lost that, but they have lost the power of labouring in our large towns to the extent to which they used to. Many of the agricultural labourers in our country districts here now flock into the towns, and are unable to find employment in them; consequently the Irishmen who now come over meet with their competition. All this, depend upon it, has affected Ireland most severely, and if you will trace the history of that country you will find her downward progress began in 1846, after those two years of the potatoe famine. You will observe a depletion of population, and that, notwithstanding that there has been no proper system of emigration. The system of emigration—if it can be called a system—has been the departure of the least fit. The men who have left Ireland have departed from their native land for America, Australia or some other Colony as best they could, almost like men who have been pushed overboard from the deck of a crowded vessel. No wonder there has been disaffection in Ireland; but you may depend upon it that disaffection has been caused in this way, and has had its root in poverty. I recollect being told years ago by a distinguished Irishman that poverty was at the root of Irish disaffection. I believe that to be the case, and I would therefore strongly urge upon Her Majesty's Government to consider the advisability of adopting some system of State-directed Colonization, not only for Ireland, but for the United Kingdom generally——

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. and gallant Member; but the point before the House now is whether or no the House shall give precedence to the consideration of the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill, whilst no effectual security has been taken against the abuse of the law by the exaction of excessive rent. The general question of the condition of Ireland is not before the House.

Colonel BLUNDELL: I believe, Sir, that Her Majesty's Government, in grappling with the Irish Land Question, will give security against the exaction of excessive rents. When the Irishman feels he can own his bit of land he will work with much greater will than when he feels that the product of his labour is not his own, and that a bad season may make it impossible for him to pay the rent of his holding. I will say no more on that subject, but will urge the Government to persevere and to bring forward both their measures contemporaneously, and to persevere with them; and I firmly believe that if the Government will do that the country will support them, and that this year will yet prove a year of peace for the United Kingdom.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I think the House will be of opinion, at all events those of us who sit on this side of the House, that we have listened to a very remarkable speech this evening from the First Lord of the Treasury. There have been many occasions when the House of Commons has been invited to give precedence and to grant urgency for the introduction of Bills of the character of that contemplated by the Government in respect to Ireland; but I venture to say that any person will search the Records of the House without success to find any such request made as inadequately as was the right hon. Gentleman's this evening. Not only were the observations of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury of the briefest possible nature; but I venture to assert with confidence that when they come to be read to-morrow morning, no one will find in them any facts or arguments warranting the tremendous conclusion that he asks us to arrive at in the Motion that he has submitted to us. On the other hand, I think that no one can have listened to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, whether sitting on this side of the House or on the other, but will admit that his speech from beginning to end was full of facts and saturated with argument such as we expect from such a quarter on a matter of this kind. I am not now dealing with the correctness of these facts, or the soundness of the arguments; but I maintain that no hon. Member on the other side of the House will be able to go through the right hon. Gentleman's speech to-morrow and say that it was devoid of fact and wanting in argument like that of the First Lord of the Treasury. The Bill that has been shadowed forth this evening by the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant is, according to the Notice Paper, "to make better provision for the prevention and punishment of crime in Ireland." Well, now, crime in this connection always means crime which springs out of the relations between landlord and tenant in Ireland. Now, it is a remarkable fact, as the House will be aware, that in Her Majesty's Speech we are emphatically told that great crime has decreased in Ireland; but I find, on reference to the figures that have been supplied to Members, that the word "great" might have been dropped out of them, for crime—that is to say, agrarian crime, which is the only description of crime we are speaking of at this moment—has largely decreased in Ireland. For the last three months of 1885 there were 279 agrarian offences committed in that country; but during the last three months of 1886 they have fallen to 166, which is not far short of a half, and this, Sir, in spite of an increase in that which is always the parent of crime in Ireland, and always will be the parent of crime in Ireland so long as it continues—namely, evictions. Whereas the number of crimes fell to nearly half, the persons evicted during the last six months of 1885 numbered 5,470, and in the last six months of 1886 had increased to 9,295. So that whereas evictions nearly doubled, crime fell to nearly one-half. That, I maintain, is a remarkable testimony to the law-abiding sense of the people of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle very justly pointed out to the House that some Judges have been declaring that, as compared with the condition of things 12 months ago, the state of the country is vastly improved. I should like here to call attention to some very remarkable testimony that was given by Inspector Davis in the district of Castleisland, which we have been reminded was one of the most disturbed districts in the country. I was in that district myself at the end of last year, and I know that what I say is the fact—namely, that it was considered one of the most difficult districts to govern in the whole of Ireland. I will read an extract from the evidence given by Inspector Davis before Lord Cowper's Commission; and, if I may be allowed to make a short digression, I would invite the hon. Members who sit on those Benches opposite to read the Blue Book published by that Commission; and, if they do so, I venture to say that we shall hardly have a repetition from them of some assertions which have fallen to-night from the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Mr. William Davis, District Inspector of Castleisland, in Answer 21,444, said—

> "My Lord, there were English gentlemen came round and denounced outrages in Kerry, and said they were a disgrace to Ireland. Mr. Davitt came round and denounced outrages, and appealed to certain persons against them. That had a very great effect indeed in preventing them.
>
> "21,483. I am glad to hear from you that Mr. Davitt had denounced outrage?—Oh, yes; he came down specially to denounce outrage.
>
> "21,489. At any rate your evidence goes to prove, and I have unfeigned delight to hear it, that Mr. Davitt did what he could to put a stop to these fearful outrages?—He did, and there were

English gentlemen went down there, amongst them a clergyman, I do not know their names, who denounced outrages; but there was a Mr. Fagan, an English clergyman. I think some of them were Members of Parliament."

I would invite the attention of the House to Question 21,446—

> "Is there much Boycotting?—To a certain extent there is, my Lord; but it is practised in such a way that the law cannot get hold of it. In fact, there are only what might be called two people who are suffering very much from Boycotting in the district of Castleisland. They are subject to some annoyance, but not so much as they were. One of them is a very recent case."

I think you have here some evidence out of the mouth of District Inspector Davis to prove that in this very disturbed district there are only two persons suffering from Boycotting, and that the sufferings of even those people are less than they were. I entirely agree with what fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, that the upshot of this Bill is to enable landlords in Ireland to collect excessive rents. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland let the cat out of the bag in almost his first sentence. Referring to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, who had just sat down, he said, "He has not developed to us his scheme, and I suppose he has some scheme for the better payment of rent;" as if the whole object of our proceeding was to adopt a scheme for bringing about a better payment of rent. I think that is very remarkable evidence as to what is in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. He thinks of nothing apparently but what will conduce to the better payment of rent. I must say I was very much astonished, when listening to the two speeches which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland told us he delivered before breakfast the other day, by some of the statements which he made, for they seemed to my mind to show an extraordinary want of acquaintance with the present circumstances of Ireland. After all, I do not know that there is anything to be surprised at. When history comes to record the manner in which we are governing Ireland, nothing will be more remarkable than the fact that a right hon. Gentleman who has never made Ireland a special study, and who, perhaps, has hardly been in the country half-a-dozen times in his life, should be pitchforked at the request of a noble Relative into the position of Chief Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman said that the Royal Commission had declared that the fall in the price of gross produce was from 14 to 18 per cent—which was about one-sixth. He maintained, therefore, that rents ought only to fall one-sixth. But, surely, in making that statement he must have been aware that a fall in the price of a commodity affects the producer in this respect—if his expenses remain the same, the reduction all comes off the margin of profit. The right hon. Gentleman's argument would lead to this, that the whole of the loss owing to the fall in the price of agricultural produce is to be borne by the tenant, and none of it by the landlord. Anyone who has worked out the sum will know that a fall of one-sixth in the price of produce implies the necessity for a much greater reduction in rents, in order that the tenant may be in the position he occupied before the reduction took place. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the solemn compact of 1881, and enlarged upon the direful consequences which would ensue if we attempted to meddle with the settlement brought about by that Act. He seemed to be ignorant of the fact that Earl Cowper's Commission speaks of revision of rents, but he will find that it does do so. The assertion of the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) is, that the Business of the nation should not be set aside in favour of a measure for increasing the stringency of the Criminal Law in Ireland, while no effectual security has been taken against the abuse of the law by the exaction of excessive rents. Now, I am not going into that at any length; but I wish to quote one or two figures, because it seems to me that figures are worth consideration in these matters. Does anyone deny that rents in Ireland are excessive? Why, judicial rents, by the admission of Lord Lansdowne and others, are excessive, and rents fixed during the first three or four years of the operation of the Land Courts have turned out to be entirely inadequate. I believe the last statements that have been circulated amongst Members contain most emphatic testimony to that effect. If hon. Gentlemen will refer to those statements they will find that in the province of

Connaught, there were 99 tenancies during the month of October in which the rents which had been £2,600 were reduced to £1,077—that is to say, it was declared that for every 20*s.* exacted only 8*s.* was due. I find, also, that in the case of 35 of the tenants of a certain Colonel King-Harman, rents were reduced from £669 to £409; and with all respect to the hon. and gallant Gentleman, who is not in his place, I would venture to say we may expect that he will deal with some reluctance with this subject if he should happen to touch upon it, looking at the predicament he and his Friends are in with regard to it. I was glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle refer to the system of joint-tenancies in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman used the word "mean" as to that, and I do not believe the expression a bit too strong. There is no more fruitful source of mischief and injustice in Ireland than this system of joint tenancies. What do we find under it? Why we find that four men may be put down as joint and several tenants of four adjoining plots of land on the books of the estate, and if one of the four does not pay his share of rent all of them are liable to eviction. Landlords favour that mode of tenancy, because, if the rent is more than £4, the landlords are relieved from half the poor rate, and by granting one joint tenancy instead of four separate ones the rent is kept above that sum. Not long ago, on the shores of Clew Bay, there was a remarkable example of another great grievance of Irish land system on the estate of Lord Lucan. In this case, although the tenants had all paid up their rents to the day, owing to the absconding of a middleman, a number of men were evicted from their holdings. That system of joint tenancies and the middleman system are fruitful sources of mischief and disorder. Not only does this rating manœuvre—for I can call it nothing else—of joint tenancies relieve the landlords of the legal obligation to pay the poor rate, but it gives him security for the payment of rent against the poor class of tenantry, while it imposes upon that tenantry the serious disability that, if one of their number falls behind with his rent, the rest may be evicted. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury used an expression which I think he will ponder over when he sees it in print. He said the object of the Government was to give the people "peace in their own dwellings." I listened to the words which fell from the right hon. Gentleman, and there came back to my mind a case about which I asked a Question only this week—namely, the case of John McNulty. That was a case in which a man, indeed, had peace in his own dwelling. What happened in that case? Why, it was admitted by the right hon. Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland that, under the order of a District Inspector of Royal Irish Constabulary, a certain sergeant went one Sunday evening with a force of men outside McNulty's house, and, according to the sworn evidence in Court, when he heard coin passing inside he made a forcible entry, searched the persons of men he found there, and took them before a magistrate who was a brother of Lord de Freyne, whose tenants the people were, and whose rents the people were unwilling to pay without an adequate reduction. All this was done—the forcible entry, the searching, the drawing of the revolver upon the men, the arrest, and the taking off of the prisoners before a magistrate without any warrant whatever. It was all in absolute defiance of the law, and that is what you call giving men "peace in their own dwellings." Now, I should like to say a word or two as to the National League. I have referred to this subject outside the House, and as it is a principle with me never to say outside the House what I will not say inside it, I desire to repeat the remarks I have made elsewhere. I took some pains to investigate the National League, and inquire into its working. I went to its head office in Dublin, where I spent several hours. I was very courteously received by the secretary—who represents in this House one of the Divisions of Dublin—although the hon. Member had no knowledge of the fact that I intended to call. During the time I was at the office I saw every letter that had been received there that morning, and investigated the books from top to bottom; and in every place I went to in Ireland I endeavoured to find out the officers of the National League, and put myself in communication with them in order to get what information I could. I will not detain the House upon this point, but I will merely say in one word that the impression left upon my mind after the most painstaking investigation I could make, was that the National League is a perfectly Constitutional association; that those who guide its policy are anxious to prevent outrage; and that if you attempt to suppress it, discontent will be driven within and below the surface, and the results will be very serious. I believe that those who talk against the National League in the way that I hear right hon. Gentlemen opposite speak of it, are merely walking in the footsteps of Lord Sidmouth and Lord Castlereagh after the unfortunate massacre of Peterloo in 1819. They may have reason to regret their efforts to put a stop to a perfectly legitimate and Constitutional organization. I thank the House for having given me its attention, and I will merely say in conclusion that I come here with the most emphatic mandate from my constituents to oppose on every possible occasion this coercive policy, the first step in which is being taken by Her Majesty's Government this evening. I do not join battle with them with a light heart, and I am certain that from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) down to the humblest of his Followers, all are in the same mood. It is in no light spirit that we enter upon this contest against coercion, and we are determined to use every effort to secure that Ireland in the future shall be treated in a very different way from that which has characterized its Government by England during the present century, and that the past policy of coercion shall, indeed, be a policy of the past.

Mr. PINKERTON (Galway) said, he considered it was a good admission of weakness on the part of the Government that they had not sufficient knowledge among themselves to originate a Land Bill for Ireland, and had to be indebted to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain) for their ideas. If the Land Bill was one of the same shreds-and-patches principle as the Provincial Councils proposed by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, it would not be received with satisfaction by the people of Ireland. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) showed that the Government had resolved to resort to limp Cromwellianism with all the starch left out. Mr. John George M'Carthy, one of the Land Purchase Commissioners, had, in his evidence before Lord Cowper's Commission, stated that, in his experience, he had known rack-renting to "prevail to an extent simply shocking," and from other evidence it was clearly shown that rack-rent and outrages went hand-in-hand. Yet the Government had resolved on a policy of eviction and conviction. He denied that the agitation was confined to the South and West of Ireland; it was active in Ulster also; and in County Derry, upon the estates of the Salters' and Skinners' Companies, the Plan of Campaign had, under another name, been adopted. Reference had been made to the introduction of remedial measures; but he mistrusted any such measures which were introduced in the House of Lords; for that House, owing to its landlord prejudices, would not pass any measure which was of real benefit to the Irish tenant. English capital had never been employed in Ireland, except as a decoy duck; and no single penny of English capital had been employed in Ireland, except for the purpose of earning twopence. It was a well known fact that the voluntary reductions of rent in England and Ireland amounted to the sum total of the rent of Ireland. The reductions in rent effected by the Land Act in Ireland amounted only to £600,000, while the voluntary reductions in England exceeded £16,000,000. It should also be recollected that English farmers had good markets for their produce, while from places in the North of Ireland carriage to London was as dear as freight to New York. He would urge the Government to lay aside all Party considerations, and to try and treat the Irish Land Question in a broad and statesmanlike manner. They should treat leaseholders and the unfortunate tenants who held under judicial rents in a generous fashion, while if they proved to them that they must pay their rack-rents and receive no reward for their loyalty, they would be driving them into the arms of the Nationalist Party. Even remedial measures of that kind would not be able to check the growth of Nationalist sentiment in the North of Ireland. But, to give this policy a chance, a Bill should be introduced immediately for the benefit of leaseholders.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.) said, that they had been accused of aiding and abetting in outrages and with not having denounced them. This was not the case. He had himself denounced them, and other Members of the Irish Party had done the same. These outrages checked and hampered the cause which they had in hand, and they desired to dissociate themselves from them. He had been foolish enough to expect that in his statement the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) would have advanced some reason why this Motion should be carried, and that the right hon. Gentleman would have hurled at them quotations from their speeches; whereas he had simply quoted from two speeches, one of the hon. Member for East Galway (Mr. Harris) with reference to the abolition of rent, and the other of a gentleman who had formerly been a Member of that House (Mr. William O'Brien) with regard to Ireland having her own flag. He thought that that was a laudable ambition, and it had been no danger to England that in the time of Grattan Ireland had had her own flag, upon which there was no stain. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had endeavoured to hold up to the horror of this country the condition of Ireland if mistress of her own destinies, and the injustice which would take place to the British taxpayers when the Irish people would decline to fulfil its obligations. But no complaint has ever been made with regard to the repayment of money for purchase under the Church Disestablishment Act or the Bright clauses of the Land Act. They had other reasons for believing that the Irish people would fulfil their obligations, and that they did not deserve the aspersions which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had that night passed upon them. Was it not the fact that the Local Government Board advanced money to the Irish fisheries, and that there had been no complaint with regard to the return of principal and interest? The statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was not borne out by the facts of the case. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the same machinery would be employed for the repudiation of the debt to England as was now in existence. That was most inconsistent on the part of the right hon. Gentleman, because, if he thought so, why did he bring forward measures by which he would of necessity be obliged to trust to the Irish people? Then, again, they had been told that the international contract would not be respected. That might be the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman, but he (Mr. J. O'Connor) did not think that it was the opinion of the great English democracy. They had heard a great deal of abuse of the Irish National League; but, strange to say, all that abuse had not caused those Members of that House who belonged to that association to blush in the slightest degree. They looked upon it as the very salvation of the people of Ireland. General Redvers Buller had said so, and he was a good authority. It had stepped between the people and the evictor, and had saved them not only from evictions but from the outrages which generally followed in the wake of those evictions. The number of outrages depended very much upon that of evictions. In 1850, 104,163 persons had been evicted in Ireland, and the number of outrages of all kinds had been 136,200; in 1852, 32,495 persons were evicted, and the outrages numbered 913; in 1856, the number of evictions and outrages respectively were 5,714 and 283; in 1866, 3,571 and 86; in 1879, 4,515 and 870; and in 1881, 17,341 and 4,439. Looking at the present time, in the quarter ending in June last year, the evictions in Kerry alone had been 2,481, and it was there that Moonlighting was most frequent. These facts and figures ought to be taken into the serious consideration of the Government before they enacted coercion for Ireland, and before they pressed forward their Motion for Urgency for that Bill. The Irish Members supported the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) because they believed that it was conceived in the interests of peace, harmony, and contentment in Ireland. They believed that if the policy foreshadowed by the right hon. Gentleman were carried out it would also have an effect in sweeping away that nefarious system of landlordism which had so long prevailed in Ireland, and which had produced so much suffering among the Irish people.

Coercion would fail in Ireland again, as it had always failed before, because it had no terrors for the Irish people. What fear could the Irish people have of coercion when arrested priests were borne in triumph to the prison gates by an enthusiastic crowd? When people rejoiced in, rather than were dismayed by coercion, depend upon it the game was up. But as coercion of the Irish people had been the cause of disaster and defeat to the Conservative Government in the past, so their present attempt at it would result in their eventual and speedy discomfiture.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said, that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had characterized his statement of the remedial measures intended to be introduced as the barest and crudest outline, but not even that limited description could be applied to the information the right hon. Gentleman had given of his threatened Coercion Bill, for which he was now asking the whole time of the House. The right hon. Gentleman had given no details whatever of the Bill, and he had refused to give the House any explanation of its provisions. The Government were not following the precedent of 1881, when Mr. Forster introduced his Bill. Mr. Forster made out—or at all events attempted to make out—his case; and it was not until after the Coercion Bill of that year had been before the House for some days that the then Prime Minister had made a Motion of urgency and precedence for it. If the present Government had simply asked precedence for the Motion for bringing in the Bill, perhaps there might have been some justice in the Chief Secretary's criticisms; but the Motion on the Table was for precedence for all the stages of a Bill which was not even before the House. In the circumstances, he thought the House was entitled to some fuller and more complete information.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman has accused me of not having given an explanation of my Bill. At the present stage I could not have entered into a full explanation of the details of the Bill without being grossly out of Order.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER said, he was not blaming the right hon. Gentleman for not having entered more fully into the details of his Bill, but for making a Motion for precedence for all stages of a Bill that was not before the House. The present Motion was entirely without precedent. The right hon. Gentleman had criticized very trenchantly and acutely, as he always did, the Report of the Commission of his own Government with reference to the present state of things in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman had put the amount of the reduction in value in crops in Ireland at 16 per cent; but he did not think the right hon. Gentleman had had time to look at the Report of the Commission of his own Government. It was evident from the statistics upon which the Commission had founded their Report that the value of the crops in Ireland in 1855 was £63,000,000, that it was £46,000,000 in 1881, that it was £35,000,000 in 1885, and only £31,000,000 in 1886. The same fall equally applied to the value of cattle. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the average reduction of rents by the Land Commissioners was 19 per cent, but in the months of November and December last the gross value of the rents brought into Court was £7,931. The Commissioners reduced them to £5,583, a reduction of 30 per cent, which he thought was a very considerable indication of the enormous fall of the value of produce in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman had complained that the Irish tenants did not go into the Land Court. But did the right hon. Gentleman know that although the Land Court had dealt with 176,000 cases in five years, there still remained some 150,000 cases to be disposed of. It was, therefore, a physical impossibility that all the Irish tenants could go into the Land Courts for years to come. The right hon. Gentleman had, doubtless, indicated that two Land Bills were about to be introduced into Parliament; but he was afraid that one of them at least was to be introduced into the other House of Parliament. They had had already sufficient experience to know how the House of Lords would treat an Irish Land Bill. It would certainly be a delicious experience to have a tenants' compensation for disturbance Bill coming down from the Upper House. The Liberal Party had sent one up to them in 1880; but it had never come back again, and in

1881 the Land Act was emasculated in the other House. In 1882 the Arrears Act was all but destroyed; and, therefore, it was a matter of historic interest to find that a great measure of Land Reform, at the instance of the Conservative Party, was to be initiated in "another place." But the House of Commons was not left without one crumb of comfort; it was to have a Purchase Bill; and he could not imagine that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen, who so censured the late Government for their Purchase Bill, because it possibly involved some risk to the English taxpayer, would themselves propose a Bill tainted with the same heresy. But passing from the Land Bill, the right hon. Gentleman told the House of Commons that the prime necessity of a civilized State was the effective support of the law. He was not going to quarrel with the definition, though he thought he could add to it; he thought the prime necessity of a civilized State was not only an effective law, but its perfect and absolute justice. Justice as well as law was an essential element in the problem. The right hon. Gentleman drew rather a sad picture; he said society in Ireland was crumbling to its original atoms. If that was so, they wanted some very severe and drastic legislation to remedy that state of things; and that was why he was rather surprised the right hon. Gentleman did not give the House any figures. He remembered that when the late Mr. Forster introduced his Bill in 1881, he mentioned, as a most startling fact—on which, indeed, he based his proposal—that in 1880 the agrarian outrages in Ireland amounted to 2,590, of which threatening letters—which he himself regarded as somewhat insignificant—numbered 1,337, leaving the net outrages of the year 1880 at 1,253. Of these 719, or two-thirds of the whole, had been committed in the months of October, November, and December. Now, what was the number of outrages in 1886, exclusive of threatening letters? Only 607, and of these 94 were in October, November and December. He maintained that figures like these proved to a demonstration that there never was a case in the whole history of coercive legislation in Ireland where there was less ground to justify the application than existed at the present moment. In 1881, again, there were 5,300 persons committed for trial; while in 1885 the number was only 2,800; a fact which went to prove that the state of Ireland in regard to general crime was not unsatisfactory. Instead of an increase there was a decrease of ordinary crime, and the country in that respect compared most favourably with England and Scotland. That brought them at once to the land question, which was if not the only, at all events, the main question in any consideration of the Irish problem. In that connection the Government were bound to pay some little attention to the Report of the last Royal Commission, and to favour the House with some comment upon it. The Commission had found not only the fall in prices and the deterioration in the soil proved, but it had also found that the average fall in the last two years as compared with the average of the four preceding years in the value of the agricultural capital of Ireland amounted to 18½ per cent. And what was the conclusion the Commission gathered from those facts? It was—

> "The necessity of a further reduction in the judicial rents, and the absolute impossibility for the tenants to pay the present rents."

Therefore the rent which the law in the Act of 1881 fixed as "fair" was now found to be unfair. Was the House of Commons bound, then, to enforce a landlord's claim to an unfair rent? The tenants could not pay the present rents, and it was a monstrous injustice to enforce them and still more to confiscate their property by evicting them from their holdings. Why, then, should not the Government legislate? He ventured to say that there would be no objection to giving the right hon. Gentleman the whole time of the House for that purpose. Not only duty but justice and public policy combined to enforce that such a course should be taken before proceeding to a measure of coercion. What the Government were asking the House to do was to deprive Ireland of her Constitutional rights in order to enable the landlords to appropriate their tenants' property. One of the peculiar glories of the present Administration, was that there was to be perfect identity between the two countries—that they were to treat England and Ireland alike. Was the right hon. Gentleman prepared to extend this measure to England? He would recommend him to try the experiment. If he desired a speedy termination of the present state of affairs, he did not know anything which would more rapidly conduce to that result than to deprive the people of England of any of their Constitutional rights. But, said the right hon. Gentleman, "the Land League is a treasonable association."

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: What I said was that the right hon. Member for Derby had said so.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER said, he understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that he had put two propositions before the House—that the Land League was a treasonable association, and that it secured its treasonable ends by the spoliation of other people's property; but, whether it was said by the Chief Secretary, or by the right hon. Member for Derby, the point was whether the same measures could be applied to England as were proposed for Ireland. Was there no law against treason in Ireland? Any rising against the Queen could be dealt with as effectually in Ireland as in England. ["No, no!"] Hon. Gentlemen said "No"; but what did Lord Salisbury say at Newport? He showed how powerless the Crimes Act would be against the Land League, and he said that a thousand branches of the Land League had sprung up under shadow of the Crimes Act. What did Lord Salisbury say with reference to Boycotting? He said that the effect of the Crimes Act had been very much exaggerated; that Boycotting was a crime which legislation had great difficulty in reaching; that it was the act of persons proposing to do things which in themselves were legal, and which were only illegal because of the intention with which they were done. Lord Salisbury said that not long ago a Boycotted man went into a Roman Catholic Church and everyone left it. The priest said to the man, "I will go on with the service if you like and finish it for you alone—but I recommend you to go away;" and Lord Salisbury added, "What is the use of an Act of Parliament against a system of that kind." And now the right hon. Gentleman proposes to grapple with combinations of that kind. Why was it that the people of Ireland were outside of sympathy with the administration of the law? The right hon. Member for Derby had said that trial by jury was taking a sample of the whole mass of the population. The Government said they could not get verdicts in Ireland. Why so? Because the people were not in harmony with the law. Could not the law be altered? Let him remind the House of what Lord Russell said on a similar occasion. He said that Government in Ireland was a Government of force, and government in England was a government of represented opinion. Let them give Ireland the same Government as England and they would have the same result. Their own Commission had told the Government that the law in Ireland was unjust and its working unfair. His right hon, Friend had said that what Ireland had suffered from was moral wrong without any legal remedy. That was what their Blue Book was filled with. Where there was moral wrong and no legal remedy outrage was always the result. His right hon. Friend asked the House to go to the root of the matter. Let them do justice to the tenants of Ireland and not allow their property to be taken from them, and then they would get the people in harmony with the law. The problem of dealing with the present state of Ireland was the gravest which had come before the present generation, and it was worth while for the Government to settle it on the lines which were suggested by Lord Carnarvon, their own Lord Lieutenant, two years ago, when he said it was time to have done with the weary round of coercion and try something else. He hoped that that House would lend their ears to the just claims of the Irish tenant; that before making the law more stringent they would make it more just, and if they did there would be more hope of the dawn of a better state of things in the future of Ireland.

Mr. FINLAY (Inverness, &c.) said, that no one could have listened to the able speech of the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down without feeling that his support of this Amendment had been of a somewhat half-hearted character. That speech, he thought, showed that in supporting an Amendment of this character, the right hon. Gentleman felt himself somewhat in a false position, and he honoured him for that feeling. The only criticism the right hon. Gentleman had made on the proposal now before the House was this—he said that they ought to know something of the details of the measure for which the House was asked to grant precedence over other Business. He (Mr. Finlay) would like to know what, at this stage, they had to do with details. It was enough for him, at least, to know that this was a measure for restoring authority of law and order in Ireland. They knew that, and in his humble opinion that was a sufficient reason for granting precedence for this measure. If he believed that this measure could be properly described as one for the coercion of the people of Ireland, he would certainly pause long before he should support it in any shape or form; but he did not believe that that description—often as it had been repeated in various forms this evening—was a just description of the measure which Her Majesty's Government proposed to introduce. He believed that the measure might be more justly described as one for the deliverance and enfranchisement of the peaceful and law-abiding people of Ireland from the tyranny of secret societies. Would anyone who knew what was going on in Ireland rise in this House and say that it was not the case that tenants in Ireland, tradesmen, men of all sorts and conditions in Ireland, were not compelled to join illegal societies by the dread of outrage and violence. There was no tyranny on the face of the earth which was comparable to that of a secret society, and believing, as he did, that this measure was one the effect of which would be to deliver the peaceful and law-abiding people of Ireland from a tyranny of that sort, he should certainly vote for giving it precedence on the other Business of the House. They were told that there was no occasion for giving it precedence. He would like those who used such language to recollect what was said by one who had studied the Irish Question deeply, and who had the interests of the Irish people at heart—he meant the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright). That right hon. Gentleman had been the friend of Ireland long before many who now posed in that attitude had taken up the *rôle*; and what had the right hon. Gentleman said about Ireland? He had told them that the real difficulty in Ireland was an economic difficulty, and that what was wanted was employment for the people, encouragement to their industries, and the promotion of the physical well-being and prosperity of the people of Ireland. He should like to know how it was to be expected that capital would flow into Ireland, or how anyone could expect that the industries of Ireland would be developed if the law was not respected and obeyed. On what did the fabric of the industrial prosperity of this country rest, except on the supremacy of the law. But they were told there was other Business more pressing, and in the Amendment the right hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) said—

> "It is undesirable to set aside the Business of the nation in favour of a measure for increasing the stringency of the criminal law in Ireland."

He should like to know what the "Business of the nation" was to which the right hon. Member for Newcastle referred. On this subject he had preserved a most discreet silence. He had very great respect, as he ought to have, for the rights applicable to private Members, and he should not suggest that any of the time devoted to private Members was otherwise than most admirably spent. But he asked what were the measures which the right hon. Member for Newcastle thought would be passed in furtherance of the Business of the nation if the House declined to accede to the request of the Government for precedence to this measure? He ventured to say if they declined the request of the Government, they should not find that they had passed one measure, they should find that they had not given time for restoring the authority of the law in Ireland, but that, in other respects, the Business of the nation would not have been in one single point advanced. Another, and most formidable, indictment had been preferred against the measure which the Government proposed to bring in. The right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down said the measure might be characterized as one to deprive Ireland of her Constitutional rights in order that the landlords of Ireland might deprive the tenants of their property. [*Home Rule cheers.*] Those who seemed to be ready to believe anything of any measure of which they as yet knew nothing which Her Majesty's Government might propose, might applaud that statement. If he believed that were a just description, or anything like one, of the intended measure, he certainly should not only decline to support it, but would oppose it by every means in his power; and so, he believed, would the great majority of Members on both sides of the House. He believed that the Land Question lay at the bottom of all the difficulties of Ireland. He rejoiced that the Government intended to deal with that question. He rejoiced to hear that they meant to extend the benefits of the Land Act of 1881 to the leaseholders; and he would venture to submit for the consideration of Her Majesty's Government that if ever there was a class of men who deserved more gratitude than another, and some recognition of their behaviour under most trying circumstances, it had been the class composed of the leaseholders of Ulster. He rejoiced to know that the leaseholders of Ulster—and the leaseholders generally throughout Ireland—were to have remedial legislation for the purpose of admitting them to the privileges enjoyed by other tenants in Ireland. He rejoiced to know from the statement made by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, that provision would be made for relieving tenants, to some extent, who were unable, in consequence of the great fall in produce, to pay their rents from those liabilities which at present pressed upon them with a crushing weight; and he rejoiced to know that a scheme of purchase was in contemplation by which, it was to be hoped, the tenants of Ireland would, in time, to a great extent be converted into owners. He believed, if the Land Question in Ireland were solved, the back of the Irish difficulty would be broken; and he did not think anyone could have followed the movement for what was called Home Rule without realizing that all the motive power which that movement possessed was derived from the grievance under which the tenants of Ireland had suffered in respect of their land. He believed if those grievances were redressed, as he hoped they soon would be, by a comprehensive measure, the agitation for what was called Home Rule and a Parliament for Ireland would subside as completely as a sail when the mast was broken. But because they ardently and passionately desired such legislation for the tenants of Ireland, were they in the meantime to suspend the enforcement of law and order in Ireland? The late Lord Macaulay used words which had special application to the present situation; and he was one who, had he been alive, the Liberal Party would not have desired to draw out of their ranks. Lord Macaulay said—

> "The grievances of Ireland are doubtless great, so great that I never would have connected myself with a Government which I did not believe to be intent on redressing those grievances; but am I, because the grievances of Ireland are great and ought to be redressed, to abstain from redressing the worst grievance of all? Am I to look on quietly while the laws are being trampled on by a furious rabble, while houses are plundered and burnt, while my peaceable fellow-subjects are butchered?"

He should like to know now when it became the doctrine of the Liberal Party that the enforcement of law was to be stayed until all grievances under the law had been redressed. Had all things become new since the General Election of 1885? It used to be thought the duty of a Government to enforce the law, and they were proud to claim for the Liberal Government that, while it enforced it, it took steps to redress any grievances which existed under the law. But he never before heard the suggestion that the Liberal Party were to abstain from the enforcement of the law, because they felt that there were some things under the law which ought to be altered. They were told in the Amendment that it was inexpedient to postpone the Business of the country for such a measure, whilst no effectual security had been taken against the abuse of the law by the exaction of excessive rents. He should like to know from the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. John Morley) what he thought would happen if, instead of introducing this measure, the Government had brought forward a measure of land reform for Ireland? Would they not have been met—if not by the right hon. Gentleman, by some of his right hon. Friends near him—with an Amendment stating that it was no use their attempting to do anything with the Land Laws of Ireland, and that everything of that kind ought to be postponed until Home Rule had been established? He ventured to think that that was the course which events would have taken. He ventured to think that those very Members who were going into the Lobby in support of this Amendment would have been the Members who would have gone into the Lobby to oppose the Amendment if the Government had taken the course the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle had endeavoured to lure them into. Then they were told that this measure for restoring law and order in Ireland was not needed, and that many parts of Ireland were now in a peaceable and quiet condition. He was glad to hear that; but was it not true that in many parts of Ireland the people were peaceable and quiet from the fact that there was no disposition in these parts of the country to break the law? He would point out, however, that the absence of actual outrage did not always indicate a state of peacefulness. The absence of outrage sometimes meant that the authority of secret societies was so thoroughly established that they did not need the sanction of outrage to enforce their demands. Before he acquiesced in any argument drawn from the quietude of certain parts of Ireland, he should like to be satisfied that that was not the explanation of the absence of outrage. Reference had been made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler) to the difficulty, if not impossibility, of dealing with Boycotting, and he should like to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman as to whether to be effectual Boycotting must not be unanimous in a district; and he should like to ask him whether he thought that in every district there would not be found a minority to hold communion with a Boycotted man, and so render Boycotting ineffectual, if it were not for the knowledge that such communion would be visited by outrage or by death? He might be told of a congregation leaving a church when a Boycotted member entered. That might be so; but he should like to know how it was that the congregation became unanimous? The people of a district became unanimous because they knew that any minority who ventured to disobey the decree by which the offender was Boycotted would be subjected to consequences of the most unpleasant character. That was the simple explanation of the efficiency of Boycotting; and so long as the ultimate sanction of Boycotting, as was conveyed in most forcible terms by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), was the dread of outrage, or something worse, he said the law was capable of dealing with Boycotting, and that such measures as they hoped would be introduced by the Government might have the effect of putting an end to that which was a disgrace to any country. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) said that he would put off to the very last any proposal for increasing the efficiency of the Criminal Law in Ireland. He supposed the right hon. Gentleman would put it off until it was too late to be of any good. He always thought it was the duty of a Government to intervene at the earliest possible stage, and to suppress all disturbance before it had reached such a head that extreme measures were wanted. Would the right hon. Gentleman wait until it became necessary to proclaim martial law? Were they to refuse to pass measures of this kind, introducing changes into the machinery of the Criminal Law of Ireland for the purpose of enabling justice to be done, on the plea that they had better wait a little while, and yet a little while, until the evil had reached such dimensions that none but the most extreme and heroic remedies were appropriate? He submitted that that was not statesmanship, and he rejoiced to know that it was not the course which Her Majesty's Government intended to take. Did the right hon. Gentleman believe that the effect of this measure when it became law would be to convict innocent people in Ireland? [An hon. MEMBER: Yes, it will.] There were one or two cries in the affirmative, which emphasized the silence of the rest of the House. Everyone knew that the only effect of any measure such as they understood to be proposed would be to free the course of the law from those impediments which had prevented justice being done. Was it not a scandal that a man should be tried before a jury who were known to be under such influence that they dared not, however clear the evidence was, bring a verdict in against him? He believed that the people of England and Scotland were a law-abiding people. He believed that they desired to see the law enforced and obeyed in Ireland, as they desired to see it enforced and obeyed in England and Scotland; and he believed this—that those who consciously or unconsciously seemed to be endeavouring to make all law and all order in Ireland impossible would find that they had a heavy reckoning to settle with the people of England and with the people of Scotland.

Mr. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) said, he felt he must congratulate the Government upon their defenders, who came in the shape of Liberal Unionists from the camp of the enemy. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) said that the Law of Treason in Ireland was the same as the Law of Treason in England. That, however, was not so. The Law of Treason in Ireland was more stringent than the Law of Treason in England. In England 35 peremptory challenges were allowed to persons accused of treason, whereas in Ireland the number of challenges was limited to 20. He (Mr. Mac Neill) wished to support the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) for the following reasons:—He believed that Amendment embodied the great principle that you ought not to rob the poor for the benefit of the rich. He felt likewise that it involved this principle—that legislation should not be in the interest of one class, and against another class, but that legislation should be in the interest of the whole community at large. He likewise supported it for this reason—that it embodied this principle, that when the people were in opposition, and in conflict with their rulers, the chances were strongly in favour of the rectitude of the people's cause. There was such a thing as rack-renting in Ireland, and that rack-renting was legalized. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary spoke of the sacredness of contracts. Contracts ought to be sacred; but to be sacred contracts should be made by persons in equal positions and with equal rights. In Ireland those who had to submit to rack-renting were not in an equal position with the landlords who fixed them. The case of Ireland was peculiar; land there was the only means by which the people could subsist—their trade and manufactures having been purposely destroyed by England's oppressive legislation in their restraint for 200 years. The starving people competed with each other for the land, and promised to pay a rent for it which could not be produced. The Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman might almost be framed from a letter addressed about 15 months ago by Archbishop Walsh to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian—then Prime Minister—(Mr. W. E. Gladstone). In that letter the Archbishop made the following observation:—

> "In point of fact, every disturbance of social order which has appeared amongst our people has arisen from a sense of wrong entertained by a large majority of the occupiers of the soil, owing to the merciless exactions of unfeeling and extravagant landlords."

The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) might well say—"Save me from my friends." The speech of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman) recalled the recollection of Irish loyalty at the close of the last century, which was thus described by Lord Cornwallis, when Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—

> "The violence of our friends, and their folly in endeavouring to make it a religious war, added to the ferocity of our troops, who delight in murder, most powerfully counteracts all plans of conciliation."

Again—

> "The conversation of the principal persons of the country (Ireland) tends to encourage this system of blood; and the conversation even at my table, where you will suppose I do all I can to prevent it, always turns on hanging, shooting, burning, &c., &c., and if a priest has been put to death the greatest joy is expressed by the whole company."

The contention of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. Morley) that conciliation should be tried before coercion, is only an echo of the great argument of Mr. Burke, in his speech on "Conciliation with America," and in his "Thoughts on Present Discontents." It also reminds us very forcibly of the address of Henry Grattan, in 1797, to his constituents, on his temporary retirement from the Parliament of Ireland, when he found himself unable to stem the tide of coercion. Referring to the Irish Minister of that time, Mr. Grattan said—

> "This churl went forth—he destroyed liberty and property; he consumed the Press; he burned houses and villages; he murdered; and he failed. 'Recall your murderer,' we said, 'and in his place despatch our messenger—try conciliation. You have declared you wish the people should rebel, to which we answer, God forbid! Rather let them weary the Royal ear with petitions, and let the dove be again sent to the King; it may bring back the olive; and as to you, thou mad Minister, who pour regiment after regiment

to dragoon the Irish, because you have forfeited their affections, we beseech, we supplicate, we admonish—reconcile the people, combat revolution with reform; let blood be your last experiment.' "

The present Prime Minister had made many mistakes. The futile attempt to dragoon the Irish people would be his crowning error.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Colonel Hughes-Hallett,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

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### WAYS AND MEANS.

### CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 1) BILL.

Resolutions [March 21] *reported,* and *agreed to:*—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Courtney, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Jackson.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time.

House adjourned at twenty minutes after Eleven o'clock.

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## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Wednesday, 23rd March,* 1887.

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MINUTES.]—Public Bill—*Second Reading*—Quarries * [58].

Provisional Order Bill—*Second Reading*—Local Government (Ireland) (Carrick-on-Suir) * [200].

## *QUESTIONS.*

### LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE RIOTS AT YOUGHAL—CORONER'S WARRANT.

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What steps have been taken to obtain a legal opinion upon the alleged informality in the warrant, issued by Mr. Coroner Rice, to commit Constable Bulmer to gaol for contempt of Court; whether District Inspector Smith, immediately he received the said warrant from the Coroner, put it into his pocket and informed the Coroner that he would produce Constable Bulmer when necessary; whether District Inspector Smith on that occasion made any allegation that the warrant was illegal; when was such allegation made to Mr. Coroner Rice; and, what is the alleged illegality?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Holmes) (Dublin University) (who replied) said, after yesterday evening's Questions, he received a Report in reference to this matter, in reply to a message sent by the Government immediately their attention was called to it. The Report showed that the District Inspector——

Mr. CHANCE: Who sent the Report?

Mr. HOLMES: The District Inspector sent the Report. It appears that on receiving the warrant and on perusal of it he was of opinion that it was illegal. He spoke to a solicitor on the subject, and he was advised that the warrant was illegal. He determined to call the attention of the Coroner to an informality in the warrant. He did so on the first opportunity. The Coroner saw that it was illegal, and I need hardly say if he had executed it he would have had no protection. The new warrant has been executed.

Mr. CHANCE: When was it executed?

Mr. HOLMES: The new warrant was executed immediately after the Coroner gave the order, and when the Report was sent by telegraph the policeman was in custody. I see by this morning's papers that he was released at night.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) wanted to know whether the law in Ireland was different to what it was in England, where no objections were entertained as to the execution of criminal warrants?

Mr. HOLMES: The law of England and Ireland is the same; but I may tell the hon. Member that if a warrant is illegal in form, it affords no protection to the officers who execute it or the Judges who issue it, should the matter come before the Judges of a Superior Court.

### LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—ARREST OF FATHER KELLER—VALIDITY OF THE WARRANT.

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any legal opinion was taken by the police authorities as to the validity of the warrant issued by Judge Boyd for the arrest of

Father Keller, and since withdrawn because informal; and, whether it was to aid the attempted execution of the warrant so withdrawn, the police charged with the murder of Hanlon proceeded to Youghal?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University) (who replied) said, no such opinion was, or could have been, taken by the police in reference to Judge Boyd's warrant. Such warrant was not addressed or delivered to them, nor was any duty or responsibility in connection therewith imposed on them. Their duty was confined to protecting the person of the messenger of the Bankruptcy Court from attack or violence, and to preserve the public peace. It was for this purpose the police were sent to Youghal?

MR. CHANCE: May I ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman whether it is true, as stated in this morning's papers, that District Inspector Somerville, and Police Constable Ward have both had a verdict of wilful murder found against them by the Coroner's Jury at Youghal, and whether they are now in custody?

MR. HOLMES: I have no reason to doubt that what appears in the morning papers is perfectly true, as read by the hon. Member; but, naturally, I have not received any official information on the subject.

MR. CHANCE: I beg to give the right hon. and learned Gentleman Notice that on Friday I shall again raise this Question.

## *ORDER OF THE DAY.*

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### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT (IRELAND) BILL—MOTION FOR URGENCY.

RESOLUTION.

ADJOURNED DEBATE. [SECOND NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Amendment proposed to the Question [22nd March],

"That the introduction and several stages of the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motion, including the Rules of Procedure, whenever the Bill shall be set down for consideration by the Government as the first business of the day."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

And which Amendment was,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House declines to set aside the business of the nation in favour of a measure for increasing the stringency of the Criminal Law in Ireland, whilst no effectual security has been taken against the abuse of the Law by the exaction of excessive rents."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he could claim to be in an impartial position on this question. When the Liberal Government brought forward their first Coercion Bill in 1881 he opposed it, because he thought it a bad Bill. That measure was unfortunate, because it did not attain the objects for which it was intended, and he thanked God he was one of the few Liberals—in fact, perhaps the only Liberal—who consistently, and throughout, opposed that Bill. But when the Liberal Government introduced their second Coercion Bill in 1882 he supported it, because he thought the circumstances of Ireland at that time rendered the Bill necessary, the most serious crimes being then rampant in that country. He thought that Bill in the main a good Bill, and it seemed to him that the result of the wise administration of Lord Spencer under the power of that measure was that serious crimes were stamped out in Ireland. That Bill was a success. Therefore, while he was thankful that he opposed the first Bill, he was also thankful that he supported the second one. Then came the present Bill; and, taking the impartial view which he was able to take of it, it seemed to him that the circumstances of the country at the present moment were not such as to demand such a Bill. Therefore he could not support it, and he meant to give his determined support to the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle. He could conceive that there might be arguments brought forward in favour of subjecting Ireland to a despotic Government; but that course had not been taken by the Government. If they were to have a despotic Government, they ought to make it thoroughly despotic. On the other hand, if they were to have a free Government, they should make it thoroughly free; and they should not give with the one hand what they took away with the other. It seemed to be admitted that at the present moment there was no serious crime in Ireland, and the country did not suffer under that serious form of crime with which the Liberal Government had to deal in the time of Lord Spencer. The only question with which the present Government proposed to deal in their criminal legislation was the combinations of tenants against the landlords. In his opinion, a combination of tenants against landlords to protect their own rights was justifiable. They had, he said, been compelled to abandon the law against peaceable combinations in this country; and he maintained boldly that the combination in Ireland, known as the Plan of Campaign, was not properly criminal, any more than trade unionism was in this country. What the Government could not enforce against the trade unions of this country ought not to be enforced against the tenants of Ireland. This was not the first experience he had had of a tenants' Land League. Hon. Members from Ireland supposed they were the originators of the system. They were not. It was the ryots of India. When he was in Bengal he had to deal with a Land League, and combinations of tenants against landlords, quite as difficult to grapple with as that which existed in Ireland. The ryots of Eastern Bengal rose in combination against the exactions of the zemindars, and, refusing to pay what was asked, resolved that if the zemindars, who were a powerful class, would not accept reasonable offers, they should have no rent at all. But in India the sympathy of the Government was with the ryots, whose agitation, so long as it did not lead to crime outside the combination, was not discountenanced by the authorities. The zemindars of Bengal were powerful, like the Irish landlords; and they used every engine of force and litigation to break down and ruin the ryots, so as to make an example of them. The ryots, accordingly, combined against the landlords, and they said—"Fight one, fight all." The law against combination did not extend to India, and peaceable combination was not an offence then. Why should it be an offence in Ireland, unless, along with the combination, they had violence? A peaceable combination of poor tenants against powerful landlords ought to be legal. It was an abuse of the law to make it illegal; and he was not inclined to assist the Government to put down combination of that kind. If the Government, by the aid of the Criminal Law, succeeded in putting down fair combinations of poor tenants, oppression would follow, and the tenants would be deprived of the joint property in the land which the law had given them. Then, here was the question of Boycotting. It was, after all, doubtful whether Boycotting could be considered a criminal offence—that was to say, whether the refusal to deal with a man, or hold so-called intercourse with him, was criminal. Amongst the upper classes of this country there were such combinations against members who had offended against their class; they sent to Coventry those who did not conform to their standard and usages; and he had never heard that spoken of as a criminal offence. If they were to strengthen the Criminal Law at all, it ought not to be by giving summary and severe remedies against combinations of tenants and Boycotting, but against clear breaches of the peace and illegal acts of violence. Before strengthening the law in any respect, he thought it was incumbent upon Parliament to remedy the acknowledged grievances of the Irish people. On that point he was extremely disappointed with the speech of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. It was a new departure—a new and unexpected policy—entirely of the nature of "No surrender." The Chief Secretary rode the high horse of political economy and sanctity of contract. The right hon. Gentleman threw over the Commission appointed by the Government, and argued against their recommendations. So far as he could gather from the speech of the Chief Secretary, the immediate remedy for the grievances of Ireland was to be of a homœopathic nature—a remedy which the right hon. Gentleman himself seemed to admit would not meet the disease. Up to a certain point he had no fault to find with the Government. He thought they were right in appointing a Commission, and in using moral force to prevent the hard landlords exacting what was looked upon as unjust rent until the Commission had reported. But when he came to the present time, and when they had the

Report of a Commission by no means favourable to the tenants, he said it was madness on the part of the Government to refuse to carry out the recommendations of their own Commission. He admitted that rents judicially fixed ought not to be lightly set aside, provided there were only the ordinary ups and downs of prices to contend with; but here was a case in which there had been an extraordinary fall in regard to prices, and where the tenants were absolutely unable to pay the judicial rents. As the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Richard Temple) knew, there had been precisely similar experiences in India, and the Government stepped in and revised the settlements in the case of the ryots. In the same way he thought rents in Ireland ought to be revised, and that it was madness on the part of the Government to refuse to do so. The Government said they had behind their coercion proposals what they believed to be the only radical remedy for the grievances of the Irish tenants—a great purchase scheme. As a matter of economic doctrine, he confessed that he had doubts as to whether an out-and-out purchase scheme, as distinguished from a scheme of fixed rents, would be beneficial to Ireland, and whether they would not, under such a system, possibly constitute a new body of landlords. But of this he was sure—that the Irish tenants did not want an absolute ownership, which should only come into operation some 49 years hence. What the tenants of Ireland wanted was an immediate reduction of their rents. He was opposed to the Purchase Bill of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), because he proposed to use the credit of this country. Recently they had been told that the matter could be so settled as to avoid the loss of 6*d.* to the taxpayer. He should like very much to know how this end could be accomplished. In his judgment, the only way in which immediate relief could be afforded to the Irish tenants under the guise of a scheme of purchase was to pledge British credit, and to lend money at 3 per cent; otherwise they would leave the tenants to pay more than they did now in order to create a sinking fund to make good the loans. If the Government, however, adopted such a scheme, he defied them to bring forward a proposal which would satisfy either the Irish tenants or the landlords. He wholly disbelieved in the possibility of settling this matter by a mere purchase scheme. If an angel came down from heaven, with £200,000,000 for the purpose of buying out the Irish landlords he would be ready to accept the gift. But when Her Majesty's Government proposed that the British taxpayers should find the £200,000,000, he would oppose it to the very last. They must be told how the British taxpayer was to be freed from liability. He viewed the speech of the Chief Secretary with regret, not only for his own sake, but also for the sake of the Government. He did not think that the late Chief Secretary would have been a party to the "No surrender" policy on which the Government had embarked. He was sorry to see the right hon. Gentleman the champion of such a scheme. As a Scotchman, they were proud of him. They knew he was a clever man, although sometimes he thought the right hon. Gentleman was wanting in discretion. It seemed to him that the right hon. Gentleman was now leading the Government on to the rocks where they would inevitably suffer shipwreck. The right hon. Gentleman had a clear head, and he strongly recommended the Government to send him back to the Currency Commission, where he might do some good, and not to keep him at the Irish Office, where he could only do mischief. The Government were undoubtedly entering on a bad course. He regretted this, because he felt that the Liberals were not sufficiently united to be able to take their places. The House had been favoured the previous evening with an eloquent speech from a Liberal Unionist champion of the Government. But there were Liberal Unionists and Liberal Unionists; and he expressed the earnest hope that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) would consider his course in this matter. He was one of those who admired the right hon. Gentleman, and hoped to follow him. He wished again to see his great talents and his great power put at the service of the Liberal Party. He was not one of those who would ostracize Liberals because they did not agree with the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian in regard to Home Rule; but he could not, at the same time, refrain from saying that a great Liberal Leader like the right hon.

Member for West Birmingham, who was a thorough Radical, would imperil his position in the Party if he went too far in support of the coercive action of the Conservative Government, who had thrown over the Report of their own Commission, and who took their stand upon contract and political economy.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) said, that hon. Members found themselves placed in a very unjustifiable position owing to the action of the Government in taking the whole time of private Members for the furtherance of Government Business. The Government had prevented the possibility of any private Member raising a question of grievance, except in some form which was liable to be characterized as disorderly. It had by its action compelled private Members to raise questions in which their constituents were interested on the Estimates or by Motions for Adjournment; otherwise they found themselves gagged by the consumption of the whole time of the House by the Government. If the Government used the time it had taken wisely or providently there would, at least, be some little justification for the course on which they had entered; but he asserted that there had been many days on which the whole time of the House had been wasted because the Government had insisted, according to their lights, upon the adoption of a particular course, this course being subsequently altered in deference to the better counsels of their Friends on the Liberal Benches, leading the Government eventually to recall the whole of their previous speeches, and to modify the whole of their previous conduct. The measure for which the Government demanded urgency was intended, as everyone understood, to prevent a certain agitation by tongue and pen from being carried on in Ireland. That measure was not rendered necessary because the Irish people were in arms, or even because there were armed secret organizations which were resisting the authority of the Government. There was no pretext for saying that the Queen's writ would not run in Ireland. On the contrary, the Government told them that so much was the law obeyed that even an order of the Bankruptcy Court issued in Dublin was submitted to voluntarily, and a man who was much esteemed by his Church and his neighbonrhood was taken in procession to gaol, the people offering no resistance whatever. Therefore the Queen's writ did run; but the Government wanted more power to terrify tenants who were miserable and impoverished, so that they might not resort to what all men had a right to resort to—namely, the highest degree of passive resistance to the wrongful enforcement of a cruel contract. The Chief Secretary for Ireland complained that the right hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) had alleged that there were difficulties with respect to the payment of rents in Ireland. He did not think that the allegation rested upon the statement of the right hon. Member for Newcastle. It had been proved in evidence before the Commission issued by the Government; and in the famous Dartford speech which had been trumpeted forth on containing the thorough programme of the Party opposite those difficulties were admitted, and it was there stated that they could only be removed by changing dual ownership into single ownership, and that they could never have peace in Ireland until that question was dealt with. Although ample opportunity had been afforded there had been no attempt to introduce remedial measures for the wrongs which the Irish tenants suffered, and now they were threatened before any remedy was applied. Those difficulties had also been sworn to by a high official of the Government, Sir Redvers Buller, who declared that the men of Ireland were not so bad; that their badness came from misery; that they had appealed in vain to the law, and that they had found help only in the National League. The Government had leisure and a huge majority in the other House which would, no doubt, rapidly pass any Land Bill they chose to submit to it. Why, then, had they not before now introduced such a measure to that Assembly? Why must they threaten the people with coercion first? Why make their subsequent remedial legislation unpalatable to them by first giving them sword and fetter. He deeply regretted that the illness of the late Chief Secretary for Ireland had removed from the Cabinet an obstacle to the enforcement of bad laws. The present Chief Secretary had given no reason why the House should take away from private Members all the time which fairly belonged to them. He could not find a solitary passage in the whole speech bearing on that point. There was nothing to show that the time at the disposal of the Government would not be enough to carry the measure. With the new Closure Rule, if it were worth what the Government thought it was worth—although he had never thought it worth much himself—they had now a means of pressing this Bill through with the most extreme rapidity on the nights properly belonging to the Government; but he, as an English Member, protested against the indefinite postponement of all important questions affecting the welfare of the working classes of England and Scotland simply because the Government wanted to have a whip and a scorpion with which to lash and sting the unfortunate Irish people. The Government asked for the time of the House, because they believed they were in a position to take it; but they could not take it without the support of the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) and his followers. He would, however, remind those hon. Members on the Liberal side of the House who intended to support the Government in the attempt to close the mouth of every private Member until after Whitsuntide that their constituents would call them to account before re-electing them, if they ever re-elected them, for putting it in the power of a Conservative Ministry to retard the consideration of all legislation for ameliorating the condition of the industrial classes. The Chief Secretary for Ireland suggested that the Bill might be found to be limited in its application to only a small area in Ireland. But was that true? And if it was, did the Government intend to set aside the claims of every other part of the United Kingdom because there was a small portion of Ireland in which the law was incompetent? It was said that Irish juries were perverse; but were the Government themselves not acting perversely in their treatment of Ireland? At the present moment the state of that country was more orderly on the whole than it had been for years past. It was true that meetings were held there; but those meetings were not disorderly if the Government did not make them so. Why should not men agitate within the limits of the law? The Chief Secretary for Ireland said the fact that men paid too high rents was not a reason for a social revolution. It was, however, a reason for social resistance—it was a reason for such an agitation as should raise the feeling of the country to the highest pitch within the limits of the law. He (Mr. Bradlaugh) had taken part in many such agitations in his life —fortunately, not in Ireland. In this country the law was fair and its administrators were just in dealing with any agitator, however unpopular; and if only the same thing held good in regard to the administration of the law in Ireland, they would get rid of much of the present agitation. They could not prevent agitation by putting the gag in the mouths of the agitators and locking up their bodies. Bayonets and fetters, and the suppression of free discussion by tongue or pen, had never answered before, and they would not answer now. Force was the old brute remedy. Had it ever succeeded with Irishmen? There was a change in the fashion of Irish agitation. Was it a change for the worse? Compare the condition of Ireland now, when Irishmen had the right to elect their Representatives freely, with what it was before. They complained of 85 Obstructives. Well, he had experience of a larger body obstructing one Member. They complained of an Irish Member if he blocked their Business; but they thought nothing of blocking an Irish Bill. Bills which would have removed many an Irish grievance had been blocked by Members of that House. It was true the state of Ireland was a state which had often been characterized by events which they must all deplore; but take the state of things now and as they were. Boycotting and agrarian crime were not things of to-day; they had existed for generations. They and their fathers could have cured it if they would. Instead of doing so, they had tried 80 Coercion Acts. [An hon. MEMBER: 86.] Well, he should throw the Tory Government the six; it made little difference. He liked to be under the mark; but they had all failed, and this one would fail too. Well, the Conservative Party might desire to hold Office; but they surely had not fallen so low as to want to hold Office by keeping down an unfortunate people whose only crime was that they were born on the land on which they exercised no choice of birth, and on which they lived under conditions that rendered it impossible for them to live comfortably in order to maintain a spendthrift tenantry and an oppressive aristocracy. Compulsion in Ireland had always been sealed with blood. They had never legislated for Ireland except in fear. When they had made a gift, which might have been valued, and brought pleasure and sunshine into thousands of homes, it had always been rendered valueless by the rest of their actions. There was no need for the Chief Secretary for Ireland to tell them there were bad landlords in Ireland; their own witnesses told them that; and to carry out the evictions the British taxpayer was sometimes put to an expense 20 times the value of the wretched rent of the landlords. Troops of soldiers, hundreds of constables who were military, with rifles and bayonets, were required to turn the people out on a winter day, and this was to protect "the sanctity of contract." Did they call those men dishonest who came over here to earn their rent—men whose clothing was a bundle of rags? Irishmen always responded with gratitude to justice. The very men whom they sent to prison went out and fought England's battles for her. He thought they were foolish. When they complained of American gold, did they forget that it came from Irishmen? If evidence of the generosity of the Irish people was needed, all they had to do was to turn to the records of the Post Office. Their Irish brethern in Indiana sent home money to pay the rents in Kerry; and the landlords, taking all that came, asked for more, and sometimes seized the opportunity to raise the rent. The Chief Secretary talked about people being fools. Well, they would be fools and idiots if they continued to devote money thus received to such purposes. The Chief Secretary had been rather hasty in prophesying what the conduct of landlords might be by and by. In the past the landlords had exacted rents from the wretched tenants, rents that never belonged to them, and that had never accrued until the tenants reclaimed the land from the bog. The landlords had taken advantage of wretched contracts made with hungry, untrained men, and entered into in despair. What was wanted was to revoke the old legislation made when the landed aristocracy were omnipotent in both Houses of Parliament, and to give life and opportunity of asserting its sanctity. The Government knew all about land purchase last year. Why did they not introduce their Bill last Session? The land campaign had not then begun. Did the Government think they would get off without a land scheme, or were they disagreed about it in their own happy Cabinet? It was known that they began to disagree about the month of August, so acutely, indeed, that their own Leader was obliged to say in public that there was not one solitary Member amongst them upon whom he could rely. Happy, well-led Cabinet, who could not govern themselves, while claiming not only to govern the nation, but to take away all the time of the House! The Chief Secretary, after indulging in rhetoric, came to logic, and advanced several important propositions. The right hon. Gentleman said that the prime necessity in every society was that the law should be effective. Yes; that was true, but the primary necessity in every civilized society also was that the law should be just. The law was effective in Russia; it was effective, he believed, in Persia, where an inconvenient opponent might be bowstrung; it used to be effective in Egypt. But in a civilized community law could only be effective with the consent of the governed, and if it appealed to the best natures of the mass of the population. It could not be effective when the great majority of the people believed that it was chiefly directed against them and on behalf of a class who did not live among them, whom they never saw, with whose signatures only they were familiar. He was not making a general attack upon all landlords. There were many landlords who deplored the present state of things; but the class he was referring to were the class who had made all the mischief and whom the Government were now seeking to protect. The Chief Secretary put forward another proposition, that a primary necessity for society was that there should be a stable and acknowledged system of law. He admitted that at once; but he was in some incertitude as to the meaning of the word "stable." The meaning of the word as used by the head of the Government was consistent with a change every 20 minutes. That noble Lord had spoken of a stable and firm Government which was to last for 20 years before any kind of concession was made. But if the noble Lord meant that, what was the meaning of the Land Bill which the Government were about to introduce? But suppose the word "stable" was used in its dictionary sense, and it was admitted that Ireland wanted a "stable and acknowledged" system of law. Acknowledged by whom? Why, by the people who were called upon to obey it. In that sense he accepted the proposition. The Chief Secretary said that law ought to be stable. The Leader of the House said there was a law which was not acknowledged—which wanted amendment—which they were going to amend; but they would enforce this law before amending it. The Chief Secretary asked what chance there was of improving the state of Ireland if they put off this "Criminal Bill?" It was a Criminal Bill, and those who introduced it would hereafter be described in terms which he could not employ consistently with the Rules of Debate which were very properly enforced in the House. The Chief Secretary called his opponents madmen, and then substituted the words "singularly unwise," and then again returned to the word "madmen." The right hon. Gentleman was speaking under a condition of excitement which ill befitted the introducer of a Criminal Bill. He asked what chance there was of putting off this Bill when Ireland was going from bad to worse. But was it so; was Ireland as bad as she used to be? Speeches were made and writings published against the Government in Ireland. So they were in England. Why, then, did the Government not try to get an English jury to convict for such speeches or for such publications? What had been said against the rents now exacted in Ireland which was not fully borne out by the Commission which the Government itself had appointed? Then they were told that the Government wanted this Bill lest Ireland should go from bad to worse. Thus this utterly incapable Ministry, not content to rely on what the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) called its "crutch," wanted also the crutch of coercion. That was really too much. Then it was urged in justification that one speaker had said that the day would come when rent would be abolished altogether, and that they were working for the holy cause of nationality. Did the Government really mean to ask the House to give up the whole of its time because those speeches, even if they were rash, had been made? A man thought that rents should be abolished altogether. Well, he (Mr. Bradlaugh) would not be surprised if rent were some day abolished, and when political economists preached the doctrine that the holding and cultivation of land should go together, and that the rights of non-cultivating landlords should, with or without compensation, be destroyed by the same High Court of Parliament which had created them. He would not, if he held such opinions, have the smallest hesitation in expressing them in any part of England, Scotland, or Wales. Did they want to prevent the growth of such opinions as that by arresting men before they made their speeches? Then, was it so very wicked to talk about the nationality of Ireland? He was not great on nationalities. Greater follies and crimes had been committed for the cause of what were called nationalities than for any other cause. Foolish men of one nation were matched in ruinous wars against their fellow-workers of other nations. But it did not lie in the mouth of an English Government to denounce the doctrine of nationality after the encouragement which England had given to the nationalities of Poland and Italy, Greece and Bulgaria. We might have nationality without rebellion—without even separation. The Chief Secretary had called madmen those who followed the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. He was willing to support any well-considered scheme of Home Rule proposed by the Member for Mid Lothian. But he was not one of the followers of that right hon. Gentleman. He had preached the doctrine of Home Rule for 25 years. He preached it in New York in 1873, when he was attacked by Irishmen in a perfectly friendly spirit because, though he supported Home Rule, he declared that he would resist separation by force, if force were employed to bring it about. He was not defending or trying to prove the correctness of his opinions; he was only trying to show that he had been consistent. It was complained that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle had spoken of the tenants having acted spontaneously, and it was asserted that the tenants had been driven to combine by a species of terrorism. If hon. Gentlemen opposite would read the history of Ireland for the last 85 years. and particularly the trial of Daniel O'Connell and the other traversers, they would find the refutation of that argument. Men could not be terrified into joining any such movement. If they joined it, it was because they felt the fetter and believed they would thus obtain release. He would tell them how to break up the combination on the part of the tenants—it could be done by giving to Ireland the duty of finding remedies for its own wrongs. It would be no light duty for anyone to undertake, and it was one which he should not like to take up; because with the influence of crimes, which were the fruit of generation after generation of misgovernment, the probability was that many honest men of their own opinion, who accepted the duty of finding a remedy, would themselves be broken and crushed by the men they had most tried to serve. In conclusion, he contended the Government had made out no case why the House should give up its whole time for the purpose for which it had been asked.

Colonel **HUGHES-HALLETT** (Rochester) said, he begged to apologize to the House for not having been in his place to continue the debate. He was under the impression that the Orders of the Day would not be reached before half-past 12 o'clock, at which time he was in the House. After a careful study of this question generally, and of many speeches made upon it both in and outside the House, he found himself unable to recognize any reasonable ground for the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley). He (Colonel Hughes-Hallett) had been under the impression that hon. Members who represented the Irish Party in that House were anxious to see not only a satisfactory but a speedy settlement of that great question; and that they were desirous of seeing all classes in their country, except the landlords, brought into a contented state of mind. But when Her Majesty's Government offered to bring forward measures relating to Ireland and asked that they should be treated as urgent, hon. Members below the Gangway cheered the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle for bringing forward an Amendment suggesting delay! That Amendment deprecated setting aside the Business of the nation; but surely the first business of the nation was to endeavour to promote peace, security of property, and security of life in Ireland, and, consequent upon those, the contentment and prosperity of the Irish people. One would suppose that those who represented the Irish Party in that House were not anxious to see a speedy settlement of the Land Question and an early arrangement of the difficulties of the Irish people. Was that so, and, if so, why? Was it that they feared that if peace were restored in Ireland, if property and life were made secure, and if law and order were once more supreme in that country and the people contented, their whole occupation would be gone? Did they fear, too, that the contributions from the other side of the Atlantic would cease to flow? As a dispassionate observer that, and no other, was the conclusion he drew. He had failed to gather from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle that he was at all anxious to see a speedy and satisfactory settlement of that great question. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of a reduction of rent; but it was not for a mere reduction of rent that that agitation had been going on in and out of Ireland—that agitation favoured, not low rent but no rent. That was only the penultimate object of the agitation; its ultimate object was the separation of Ireland from this country. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] It was of no use for hon. Members opposite to deny that, unless they were also prepared to repudiate the speeches delivered by their Leader the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) and his able lieutenant the hon. and learned Member for Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy), not only in England and Ireland, but also in America—at Cincinnati, Chicago, and Castlebar. [An hon. Member: Read them.] They had, unfortunately, heard the speeches read too often. Those speeches made it impossible for the Parnellite Members to conceal what was their real object in Ireland.

With respect to the grievances of Ireland it seemed to him that the only hope of arriving at a satisfactory solution of them was by firmly suppressing, by every legal means in existence or which might come into existence, the power of those combinations, associations, and secret societies, whose object was to set class against class; by a settlement, also, of the questions between landlord and tenant through the intervention of an authority that knew how to respect the general principles of justice, and not of an authority self-elected, or elected by Irish farmers or labourers, whose main desire was to wage war against and to dispossess the Irish landlord. A great deal had been said about the fall in the prices of produce being the cause of the agrarian difficulty; but would hon. Members belonging to the Nationalist Party be content if produce went back to the prices of 1882? He (Colonel Hughes-Hallett) rather thought that if those prices were restored, if tenants were able to pay their rents and did pay them, and if life and property were made secure, those hon. Members would not be content, for the simple reason that the occupations of a great many political Othellos would be gone. It seemed to him that the root of the whole of the Irish evils lay, not in the fall of prices, but in the chronic poverty of that country. That had not arisen, as the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) seemed to suggest, from Tory misrule, because for the greater part of the last 40 years Ireland had been governed by the Liberal Party. Then it could not be said to be high rents, because rents in Ireland were lower than in France, Belgium, Holland, England, Wales, or Scotland. This was proved by statistics. It was not over-population in Ireland, because while the population in England per square mile was 369, in Ireland it was only 169. They heard a great deal about bad landlords and absentee landlords; but the latter certainly did not occasion the distress in Ireland, because, as a matter of fact, it was the properties of absentee landlords which showed the greatest prosperity. Then they heard a great deal about political coercion and political tyranny; but political liberty in Ireland was the same as it was in England, Scotland, and Wales, and that, therefore, could not be the cause of the present condition of Ireland. The real responsible cause was the removal of the protective duties on the produce of England and foreign countries. Up to the year 1800 these protective duties obtained; but after the Union they were reduced, and in 1821 they were swept away. The consequence was that in less than 20 years only one-tenth of the former number of men were employed in manufactures in Ireland. In addition to that America had gradually encroached and ruined the agricultural interest in Ireland. It was very well to say that a good political administration was required to establish the status of a nation; but good fiscal administration was necessary for maintaining the prosperity, happiness, and contentment of a country. It was clear, therefore, that it was not an unjust rental which was the cause of Ireland's present distress, but poverty; but, as he had before observed, that poverty arose from the abolition of the protective duties on foreign produce, when——

Mr. SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. and gallant Member that the question of Protection in Ireland does not seem relevant to the Question before the House.

Colonel HUGHES-HALLETT said, he had transgressed most unintentionally, and begged to express his regret for having done so. With regard to the measures the Government sought to introduce he hoped—wishing as he did that prosperity and contentment should be restored to Ireland—that there would be some indication of an intention to stimulate Irish industries, by which alone, in his opinion, those happy results would be produced.

Mr. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) said, as a new Member he was desirous to protest against this attempt to obtain urgency for a Bill to render the Criminal Law of Ireland more strict. If the terrible poverty of the people of Ireland was the key-note of the situation, surely they were wrong in putting in the forefront increased stringency of the Criminal Law rather than remedial measures. This question was a most serious one for the whole Empire. It was impossible for the opinions of Liberal Members to change again—as they had undoubtedly changed in the past—because the English people now knew more about Ireland than they had ever done before. The knowledge of the English people was now so complete that they would never again permit the burning down of the houses of evicted tenants, houses which they had themselves built; and the system of jury-packing, which for many years had been in vogue, was becoming a thing of the past. The onus of proof of the necessity to introduce such a measure lay upon Her Majesty's Government. It was a singularly unfortunate circumstance that in the Jubilee year of Her Gracious Majesty's Reign the first great measure which they were asked to put on the Statute Book should be one to draw a distinction between Ireland and England, and to inflict a specially stringent and severe Criminal Law upon the poorest parts of the population of these three Kingdoms. In every Colony of this great Empire there would be men who would look with sorrow and grief at the condition of things in this country this year, and who would feel that instead of the people of the Empire being brought nearer together, this measure, if ever it should come to be put on the Statute Book, would be a lasting stain and disgrace to the history of England. It was easy to say that the laws were broken in Ireland, and that juries could not be got to vindicate justice. But the laws were broken in England every day, and they knew that many of the greatest and most happy reforms in the English Criminal Law had been brought about by juries refusing to find convictions. It had been said not many weeks ago that the Legislature had built a triple wall of protection around the favoured Irish tenant. But the evidence given before the Commission showed that this triple wall did not extend round more than one-third of the Irish tenants. Farmers in the North of Ireland had passed resolutions declaring that the landlords, by a mischievous combination, were preventing the Land Courts from settling fair rents. It appeared, then, that there was a good deal of combination on both sides. Mr. Cunningham, of Tyrone, stated before the Commission that the reason tenants had not sought the relief of the Land Court was the disadvantages under which they would labour if they did. They would at once lose the right of cutting fuel, and they had always the fear of eviction before them as a reprisal on the part of the landlord. In a miserable cabin which the tenant had built 27 years ago, the wife told him that she and some of her neighbours had brought the clay; that they had cut off 2 feet of the bog; that there was still 6 feet of bog below; that they had been paying at the rate of £1 per acre for that bog for which the landlord had never done anything, and they were afraid to go into the Land Court lest they should be evicted. They had since, he was informed, been turned out on the roadside. He wished, when any Liberal Member spoke in support of the proposal of the Government, that he would not say that the Bill which the Government were about to introduce was not a measure of coercion, but was intended to make justice more rapid. That was what tyranny said over and over again in defence of such a policy as that which the Government were pursuing. But it was one of the greatest honours of those who had attempted to uphold Liberal principles that they were not satisfied with the cry of law and order. They said that law was tyranny unless founded on justice, and that order could not be permanent unless it was based upon the free will of the people. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay) had said that the Government measure would be a protection against secret societies. But it would be just as reasonable to call Liberal and Radical Associations secret societies as the National League. Its meetings were open. Anyone might go to them. The Resident Magistrate in the Bantry district said that there was no secrecy, and that everything was above board. Mr. Ponsonby, Resident Magistrate, said that for the last 12 months the Central League had done its best to put a stop to outrages, and General Buller had stated that you never could have peace in Ireland unless you created a central Court or some legal equivalent to arbitrate between landlord and tenant. Hon. Members who thought that secret societies were the greatest curse to a country were bound to vote for the Amendment. In many parts of Ireland there was a conflict between secret societies and the League. In Kerry there was a difficulty in inducing people to join the League, because they did not consider it powerful enough. They said that one man out on the hills did more good than all your Constitutional agitation. There were many other matters requiring urgency more than this. The right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) told his constituents at Bristol, when speaking on the Irish Question, that—

> "There was no greater foe to the rights of property than he who attempted harshly to exact its right and failed in its duties."

Then, why did not the Government deal with those foes of property before they came down on the poor peasants of Ireland? A more remarkable statement was never made by a Minister responsible for the Government of Ireland than that uttered by the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary when he said that the law was so greatly disobeyed among Irishmen because they had no confidence in the justice of its administration, and the reasons for that want of confidence were now growing stronger day by day. Cases of flagrant injustice were constantly occurring, and how could they expect the people of Ireland to respect the law when they were compelled to look upon it as the oppressor of innocence and not as the avenger of wrong? The hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Hughes-Hallett) and the hon. Gentleman who spoke before him (Mr. Bradlaugh) had said that the terrible state of poverty in Ireland was the great difficulty. Why, that had been stated again and again, and yet in this Session of the new Parliament they were asked first of all to give urgency for increasing the severity of the Criminal Law in that country so as to make it bear more heavily on those poor people. Turning to the Poor Law statistics of Ireland, he found that they were most appalling. There were 24,000 more people in the workhouses in Ireland last year than there were the year before, and the state of pauperism was worse now than at any time during the last 26 years, with the exception of 1879, 1880, and 1881, when special measures were taken. At the same time there was a vast increase in the number of persons receiving parish relief, and yet in the face of this they were asked, not to provide some relief for the Irish poor, but to increase the severity of the Criminal Law. The hon. and learned Member for Inverness, who spoke from those Benches the previous night, concluded his speech by saying that the people of England and Scotland were a law-abiding people. But the hon. and learned Member need not have drawn the line where he did. The House had heard a great deal about the failings of the Irish people; it was time now that they heard something of their good points, and one of them was that, however poor a cabin home might be, so long as there was a potato or a bit of food in the place they would never allow a member of the family to go the workhouse. The state of things in Ireland was becoming more like a general state of bankruptcy, and yet larceny, crime, and drunkenness did not increase. And the Commissioners appointed by the Government had come back after their full inquiry and reported that the Irish people were naturally honest, hard-working, and deeply attached to their native land. To that every hon. Member would, no doubt, be ready to add that they were as warm-hearted a people as any on the face of the earth. Yet there was this most sad and pitiable fact—that the Irish people had been the most wronged and sinned against of any civilized people in Europe. While, however, Members on his side of the House were compelled to be parties to giving up the whole time of the House to the purpose the Government had in view, they could, at any rate, go back to their constituents and say they had done their best against it.

Mr. MILVAIN (Durham) said, that most of what they had heard from the other side was of a partizan character. He agreed with the concluding words of the hon. Member for Scarborough (Mr. Rowntree) in his expression of sympathy with the Irish people, and deplored that Ireland and her grievances should continue to be made the sport of Party, and he earnestly wished that means could be found for agreeing upon some policy which would for ever settle the government of that country. In addressing himself to the Motion and the issue before the House he should not enter into the controversy whether rents were too high or too low, or whether the Irish people had a plausible grievance or not. It was his hope that this difficulty regarding Ireland might have been met by the existing law of the Constitution—by the law that was now applicable to conspiracy and to bankruptcy in Ireland. But recent events had proved that the present law in both respects was unworkable, and certain Members below the Gangway opposite had rejoiced in the fact that juries could not be got to convict in Ireland, and that witnesses could not be got to give evidence on which convictions ought to take place. It was not necessary for him to go further with regard to the condition of the law and its administration in Ireland than to quote a remark by Baron Dowse at the Kerry Assizes in 1886 when the prisoner asked the Judge for counsel to defend him. Baron Dowse said to the man—and he presumed the learned Judge would repeat it now—"You need have no fear; I know this country well, and the safest place for a man to be is in the criminal dock." In those circumstances he could not help thinking that something was necessary to be done in order to enforce obedience to social law and the laws of the Constitution in Ireland. But if it was now the intention of the Government to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act, to apprehend persons upon the mere suspicions of a policeman, to put them in gaol upon no charge and for an indefinite period, he would be one of the first to resist to the utmost of his power any such legislation. He would draw the attention of the Government to what was called "Palmer's Act," which had for its object the protection of the prisoner, and which provided for the removal of the venue from one place to another if the prisoner desired it. That Act had been not only in the interests of a prisoner, but also in the interests of the prosecution. If the measure of the Government were un-Constitutional, if it suspended the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland, he would resist it, unless for stronger cause than at present existed, as long as the Members for Ireland remained Members of the House. The proposition that Ireland was in a state of disorganization could be traversed, because Ireland was in a condition of complete organization in being subject to the authority of the National League, which set at naught law and order, despised Constitutional law, and deprived law-loving and law-abiding subjects of their privileges. In proof of this he might refer to the case of one Conway, who was cited before a Court of the League because he claimed the privilege of cutting peat on a reclaimed bog, and who attended the Court after Mass on Sunday, asserted his claim, denounced the League, and threw upon the table his ticket of membership.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.) said, the National League expressed its condemnation of what was done, and the hon. Member was entirely misinformed as to what occurred.

MR. MILVAIN said, he was glad the hon. and learned Member had supported him to the extent of not denying that the man was, at any rate, cited before the local branch of the League. And what followed? Within 10 days his house was attacked at night, he was pulled out of bed, and a bullet was shot through his leg. Between that occurrence and the following Sunday the outrage was denounced by the National League. That, he admitted, was plausible. That Sunday the outrage was denounced at Mass; but after Mass the man appeared before the same Court which had denounced him two Sundays previously, expressed regret for what he had done, declared that he had no intention to disregard the jurisdiction of the Court, and he was then exculpated by the Court. Did hon. Members think for one moment that this country would believe that they who exculpated the victim of that outrage were not parties to it?

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON rose to Order, and asked whether it was in Order to impute to hon. Members that they were parties to the shooting of a man in Ireland?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has not imputed outrage to a Member of the House; he was speaking constructively.

MR. MILVAIN said, he was obliged for the ruling. Experience showed that a man who was hard hit invariably made some apology for getting rid of his responsibility. He did not impute that the hon. Member was a party to this outrage; but he did make an imputation constructively. On the face of it, there was a connection between the League which condemned him and the League which afterwards received his submission. [MR. E. HARRINGTON: The League did not denounce him.] In that morning's paper there was an account of an outrage upon a man named Macnamara, who was knocked under the table, and whose life was threatened. No matter what the ulterior object might be, this was a condition of affairs which ought not to be allowed to continue in a civilized community. In answer to the question why Returns were not issued to show how the crimes perpetrated in 1881 compared with those of this year, he would refer to *The Irish World*, which had said—

> "The old method, which made the name of Tipperary a terror, has given place to the passive resistance that neither law nor authority can grapple with. The new system is a thousand times more effective than the blunderbuss. It has the great advantage of being safe and sinless."

This, he presumed, referred to Boycotting; and it showed that Ireland was in the condition of organization which he had described, in which, while outrages were fewer, the law was defied in a manner that was said to be safe and sinless. It was said that the object of the proposed Bill was to exact extortionate rents, and this statement was made on the authority of General Buller. Now, this passage occurred in the evidence of General Buller—

> "On the whole, have you found the landlords to be considerate? I think, on the whole, they have been considerate—indeed, I may say that most of them have made great sacrifices."

Why did the right hon. Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) omit to quote this answer when he quoted the statement that "nobody did anything for the people until the League was established?" It must be presumed that the right hon. Gentleman meant that it was the opinion of General Buller that nobody had done anything for the tenants until the League existed. He asked again whether the evidence of General Buller had escaped the right hon. Gentleman's memory? It had been said that General Buller was an important witness upon this question, and that there was no exceptional legislation required for Ireland to enforce the law. Did General Buller say so? He said—

> "I think the League would, if they could, prevent payment of rents, and are now endeavouring to the utmost to prevent rents being paid; but the improvement in the payment of rents is due to the tenants, who are getting reasonable allowances."

And again—

> "I believe that the great majority of those who have not paid are anxious to pay. They are anxious to pay?—Yes, I say they are anxious to pay. There are many who do not require an allowance to pay who would pay if they dared."

And he gave reasons why they did not—that it was partly owing to bad advice and to the teaching of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) and others. Upon the evidence of General Buller it must, then, be perfectly apparent that there was a system of terrorism throughout the whole of the Sister Isle which was deeply to be deplored, and which ought, if possible, to be removed. If he might venture to offer the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle a word of advice, he would ask him not to entrust himself too far upon the slippery path upon which he had proceeded. He would tell hon. Members opposite what his own experience had been. There had been, throughout the length and breadth of the land, certain parts of the United Kingdom held up to praise and adoration, such as "poor little Wales" and "dear old Scotland," and last, but not least, there was a portion of the United Kingdom which, for the purpose of the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, was called intelligent and civilized, but which, for the purpose of remedial and exceptional legislation, had been denounced as the most depraved and drunken—he referred to the North of England. He believed it to be intelligent and highly civilized, and it was for that reason he denounced exceptional legislation regarding it; but, at the same time, he would remind hon. Members who were venturing upon the slippery path he had alluded to of the experience of the hon. Member who preceded him in the representation of Durham. Mr. Thompson was a Member who allied himself with those who were then denounced by right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench as rebels and assassins, and that was the reason why he was refused re-election at the polling booths in 1885. He (Mr. Milvain) repudiated the name of "coercion" for the Government policy; it was not a policy of coercion. Ireland was at present suffering from coercion. She was now deprived of her Constitutional privileges by the action of the National League. It was to unfetter them, the loyal, law-abiding subjects of the Queen in Ireland, from the thraldom of the National League that he believed the Government wished to press forward their Bill, and for that reason he would support the Motion placed upon the Paper by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury.

Mr. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.) said, he desired to state why it was that he would oppose most strongly the Motion for urgency of the right hon. Gentleman. It was not the case that there was any sympathy or any toleration of outrage or violence among Members of the Liberal Party, whether they were the old Members or the newer Members of that Party. He believed it was the desire of the Liberal Party to put an end to outrage, violence, crime, and breaches of the law, where they found them to exist; but what, he should like to know, were the grounds or the facts for claiming priority for a Bill for which there did not appear to be any necessity whatever on the present occasion? He should like to remind the House that the Government had already occupied the whole time of the House so far as the Session had gone. It was, he believed, an absolutely unprecedented thing for a Government, during the first two months of a Session, to occupy the whole time, without allowing private Members any opportunity whatever, either by Motion or Bill, to bring before the House the different questions in which their constituents were interested. He could understand, and he admitted, that there might be circumstances so serious as to justify the Government in asking a still further extension of that indulgence. But before it was done, at least they ought to have some information as to what was the serious condition in Ireland demanding so heavy and so great a sacrifice. What was the cause for coercion? The hon. Gentleman referred to some newspaper paragraph. He should have thought the hon. Gentleman had a pretty good warning as to the value of newspaper statements. The other day there appeared in *The Times*—a newspaper that they all desired to treat with respect if they could—a statement about an attack upon a man's house in Ireland, with the additional aggravation that a woman had been outraged in the presence of her own father or one of her own family. That statement was actually made the subject of a Question in this House by the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), when it turned out that the thing was an absolute fabrication. Notwithstanding, he believed it was the case that in the weekly issue of that same paper, after the admission of the Government that it was false from beginning to end, the statement was repeated and reprinted without a word of qualification, still less of apology. It was therefore incumbent upon them to take the statements made by newspapers with the greatest caution. He did not for a moment impute corrupt motives to the newspapers, but a most deliberate bias and prejudice, a determination to see only one side of a case, and a perfect disregard of logic and of the statements of sensible men on the other side. Now, what were the figures with regard to this matter? There never had been since the Act of Union a proposal of the nature of coercion which had not had at least ten times as strong evidence in support of it as the present. He would not refer to the year 1833, when there were something like 170 or 180 murders actually undetected before the Liberal Government of the day moved for the purpose of bringing in a Coercion Bill. Their predecessors in that House were more jealous of the liberties of the subject than they, in these degenerate times, had become. He would confine himself to the last two occasions when Coercion Bills were brought in. In 1881, the late Mr. Forster brought in a Bill which seemed destined to show how little could be done by coercion for the repression of crime. Mr. Forster then presented a Report of all the outrages in Ireland from 1844 to 1881. Never, since 1845, said Mr. Forster, had there been so many outrages in any year as in 1880. The Report presented by Mr. Forster was, he believed, in many respects erroneous and misleading. During the year 1880, Mr. Forster said, there had been 2,590 outrages, and of those 1,696 had taken place in October, November, and December. More than that, he stated that in the month of December there were more outrages than there were in October and November put together. Thus there was an increased and an increasing amount of crime. Further, it was said that the area of crime was increasing—that crime was spreading to the East of Ireland. That was the case put forward in January, 1881, and it was accompanied by the promise that if the Bill passed no more coercion would be required. The result was that in 1882, when the whole of this country and, he believed, the whole of Ireland was saddened by the Phœnix Park tragedy, another Coercion Bill was introduced by the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt). Subsequently Sir George Trevelyan took office as Chief Secretary and explained the case for the Bill. It was that since 1844, in which period the highest amount of crime was 2,590, it had risen in 1881 to 4,439, or nearly four times as much as in 1844. Sir George Trevelyan went further, and stated that for the first four months of 1882 there were 1,879 instances of crime reported to the police. That was the case upon which the Coercion Act of 1882 was based. He was prepared, if necessary for the purpose of maintaining law and order—if there were outrages to any tremendous or alarming extent—to pass the necessary laws for either England, Ireland, or Scotland; but there never yet had been a Ministry who would have dared, on the facts he was now going to refer to as to the existing condition of Ireland, to come forward and ask for such powers for either England or Scotland as were now to be asked in the case of Ireland. What was the case for coercion now? The hon. Member for Durham (Mr. Milvain) had told the House of two outrages which, with an excess of zeal, he had endeavoured to associate with hon. Gentlemen opposite him. He believed that he (Mr. R. T. Reid) had often in former times done injustice to hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, although he had never said hard things of them either in or out of the House. The case for coercion now was that during the last three months of 1886—the worst months in the year, the winter months—there had been only 94 outrages, and, further, that there were not so many murders nor so much life lost during that time as there were in the Belfast riots. Yet no suggestion was ever made of bringing forward coercion because of the Belfast riots. He did not doubt that the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) must regret having to bring in coercion. He could not help wishing that the right hon. Gentleman, instead of yielding to the clamour, which he believed came more from his (Mr. R. T. Reid's) side of the House than from the Ministerial side, had had the courage to defy the Unionist Party, and to leave them to the fate which would inevitably come upon them, and which must come to men who would not take the side to which they really belonged, and who would not sit side by side with the men with whom they agreed. What was the condition of Ireland according to the opinion of the resident magistrates? Four Resident Magistrates were called before the Commission. It was impossible to read their evidence without being convinced that they were very strong partizans. Witnesses were not tendered to the Commission by the Nationalist Party, and only to a small degree by the tenant-right party. Yet all these four Resident Magistrates gave evidence which was perfectly inconsistent with there being any necessity for a Coercion Bill for Ireland. Mr. E. R. Warburton, Resident Magistrate at Bantry, a port not far removed from a district supposed to be the worst in Ireland, was asked, Question No. 1,088—

> "Have there been many outrages committed in your part of the country on people who have paid their rent?"

He answered—

> "There is a kind of system of Boycotting kept up; my district has not been very bad; there have not been many evicted in my part of the country."

Then he was asked, Question 1,090, "Those who have paid, have they been subject to actual annoyance?" The answer was, "I could not say they have; some few may, but not generally." There was not much encouragement for coercion from that gentleman. Another witness, Mr. A. Newton Brady, employed as Resident Magistrate in Connemara, had the following Question (1,169) put to him:—

> "I gather from the rents being pretty well paid that there is not much combination against their being paid in your district?"

His answer was—

> "There have been several instances within my experience; there was one recently."

And then he went on to refer to an instance where there were joint tenancies; but he gave no evidence to show that there was any such thing as combination; on the contrary, he said the state of his district was very much better than it was four years ago. Then Mr. Francis Blackburne Henn, Resident Magistrate at Ballina, County Mayo, being asked if the landlords were getting their rents without reduction, answered—

> "Yes, I think so, fairly well. Question.—That looks as if there was not much combination in the part of the county? Answer.—I consider that no combination exists at present against the payment of rent in the whole of my district."

Mr. H. F. Considine, Resident Magistrate at Kerry, on being asked a similar Question, said—

> "I do not know that he (the tenant) is subject to outrage at the present moment, but he is looked upon with disfavour by his fellow tenants—that is, if he pays at a reduction which they consider unfair. Insufficient?—Yes. He is subject to be Boycotted?—I would hardly say Boycotted; he is looked upon with disfavour."

Those were the four gentlemen occupying the position of Resident Magistrates, and the only four Resident Magistrates who were called before the Commission. Now, it seemed to be absolutely clear that this Bill was not levelled against outrage at all, because there was no outrage, but against the National League. They were asked, therefore, to sacrifice all the Bills they took an interest in for the purpose of declaring war against organized opinion. It was for the purpose of putting down, if possible, the National League. Now, he did not believe for a moment that it was desirable to put down the National League. If they could put down the National League he would not put it down, because he believed that the National League was the sole power strong enough to stand between the tenants and unjust evictions and unjust rents. At the same time, he would not hesitate to give the Government power to put down lawlessness if anything like general lawlessness prevailed. The Bill brought in by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) last autumn had been a warning to the Government to provide some remedy; for the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) had told them, with characteristic candour, that he and his Friends would stand by their people, so as to prevent tenants being driven from their farms for non-payment of rents which it was impossible for them to pay. He would have thought that the then Leader of the House (Lord Randolph Churchill) would have extended some consideration to the proposals of the hon. Member for Cork; but that noble Lord had been over-ruled, and the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) made a speech in which he denounced as Socialistic, Communistic, and lawless, the idea that a really fair rent ought to be ascertained and enforced, instead of a rent which, though supposed to be fair when fixed, had turned out not to be so; and the noble Lord asked them to have confidence that the landlords would not rigorously exercise their powers. He wondered whether the noble Lord, when he next spoke on the subject, would say so still. Whatever outrage there had been last winter might, he believed, have been averted if the Goverment had only seen their way to propose some remedy. He did not over-much blame the Government. They were more in the hands of others than in their own; but the alliance was one that could not last for very long. There were opposing forces in this. They would have, he hoped, the honesty of conduct to fight it out when they got rid of those Gentlemen who were neither on one side of the question nor the other; or when they had, as he hoped they might, succeeded in absorbing them on one side or the other, according to the tendencies of their minds. But he could not help thinking that, if the Government even now would endeavour to dispense—though he was afraid it was hopeless—with coercive laws, and would endeavour to bring in Bills for having a purely fair rent fixed, and for dealing with leaseholders, and if they would show some confidence in the people of Ireland, they would be far more likely to carry their point, and establish law and order, than they would be by any number of coercive Bills, however stringent they might be. He felt humiliated to think that, after 80 years, the country at large seemed to have shown itself not able to learn wisdom from experience. They had had Coercion Bills before; but, as he had tried to show, in all the instances of these Coercion Bills there had been proof put forward by the Government of strong disorder prevailing over large parts of the country. The Liberals of those days—many of them—resisted coercion; and he was sorry that, in 1881, he voted for it. If he had known then as much as he knew now he would not have done so; but, at all events, at that time there was a pretence of showing that there was necessity for coercion, and it was difficult for young Members like himself to resist, when it was said that 36 years had elapsed since anything like the crime then existing had been experienced. But it was admitted that Ireland had since been, and was now, comparatively tranquil; and in present circumstances it would be absurd to accuse as sympathizers with outrage those men who declined to place the freedom and Constitutional liberties of Her Majesty's subjects in Ireland in the hands of the Executive. He believed the effect of such a proceeding would be to irritate, exasperate, and drive into a temper of ferocity the people of Ireland. But he did not believe that this would take place, because there were a great many Englishmen and Scotsmen who would stand by the Irish Members; and because there was a large and increasing number of men throughout the country who were determined to see that the law in Ireland should be really the same as that in England and Scotland. If it were not for that he should be really afraid; but he could not help believing that hon. Gentlemen, looking forward to the early triumph of the opinions they held in common—that triumph as inevitable as it was near—would counsel their countrymen with all the authority they possessed, and would use all that authority to prevail upon their countrymen to maintain order, and to keep peaceful and quiet, in this, one of the most trying, but, he thought, almost the last, struggle they would have.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. Brodrick), (Surrey, Guildford), said, he felt sure no one would complain of the tone of the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down. It was not, however, very easy to reconcile the conflicting statements of the hon. and learned Gentleman, who, at one moment, told the House that he was ready to take whatever measures were necessary to maintain the law, and, in the next, regretted his votes in support of the preservation of the law in 1881 and 1882. He (Mr. Brodrick) could not help calling the hon. and learned Gentleman's attention to the fact, that the great number of outrages which occurred in 1881 and 1882 preceded, and did not follow, the measures of coercion, the introduction of which he now deprecated. In 1881 and the beginning of 1882, a variety of crimes and murders of the very worst description were committed which remained undetected until the measure of coercion had been brought in, and, in his opinion, would have remained undetected until this date, but for the measure which the right hon. Gentleman opposite carried into law. The hon. and learned Gentleman now told the House he regretted the vote he gave on that occasion—in other words, he regretted the vote by which the Phœnix Park murderers were convicted; he regretted the vote which restored order to Ireland under Lord Spencer as he was then, not Lord Spencer as he was now—who deprecated any measure which it was proposed now to introduce to restore order and law in Ireland. He (Mr. Brodrick) would call the hon. and learned Gentleman's attention to the fact that some of the quotations he had made as regards intimidation were not entirely borne out by other witnesses. But the case of the Government was not that the number of outrages which had lately taken place was so greatly in excess of those in other years, as alone to justify a measure of an exceptional character; but that there was a gigantic combination, boasted of by its promoters, and acknowledged by its members, which executed its own orders, sentences, and punishments, and which held, in a bond of terrorism, a large number of districts in Ireland. The hon. and learned Member had quoted various passages in order to prove that there was no such combination. The House had heard a great deal about General Buller's evidence before the Cowper Commission in the course of this debate; and the hon. and learned Member seemed to think that he was justified in quoting Sir Redvers Buller's evidence when his authority was found to be on his side, but in abstaining from quoting his remarks when, as Under Secretary, he gave his opinion as to the actual state of order in the country. He ventured to call the hon. and learned Member's attention to a statement in the evidence of Sir Redvers Buller—

> "Q. I understand you to say that there is a complete system of intimidation prevailing in this country?—A. There is."

Again, the question was asked by the President of the Commission—

"They are still in fear of the League?—A. They are coerced, and in fear of the intimidation that is rampant in this country."

MR. DILLON: Did he say "country" or "county?"

MR. BRODRICK said, the gallant General spoke of the country generally, and the word used was "country." Now he wished to know, in the face of these facts, whether the observation of the hon. Member for Scarborough (Mr. Rowntree), which was loudly cheered by hon. Members from Ireland and by those hon. Members who sat around him, to the effect that the National League was an organization for which he could find no word of reprobation, and which was every bit as legal and as proper as the organizations of the Liberal and Conservative Parties in this country, was not a comparison which reflected on the intelligence of the House? He asked the House whether they were to accept some portions of the Blue Book, and to ignore all the other portions which bore on the question? Her Majesty's Government had admitted that in the Report of the Commissioners reasons were found for introducing a measure with regard to the land; but, at the same time, he asked whether they were to ignore all those portions of the Commissioners' Report which clearly indicated the lawless state of the country. He called attention to the passage in the Commissioners' Report describing the effects of Boycotting. The Commissioners said—

"This unwritten law in some districts is supreme. We deem it right to call attention to the terrible ordeal that a Boycotted person has to undergo."

The hon. Member for Scarborough said, that he would not support a law which was the oppressor of innocence and not the avenger of crime and wrong. He (Mr. Brodrick) would ask the hon. Member whether, in the case of the Curtin family, the law had been the oppressor of innocence? Why, a more terrible case of oppression of an innocent family never disgraced the annals of the Irish people! Mr. Curtin was not a landlord; he was a member of the Land League. The evidence states—

"There was no antecedent animosity to him?—None that I am aware of. To what do you attribute the ill-feeling raised against this unfortunate family?—Because, in the first place, Curtin defended his house and shot this man Sullivan"——

[MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Who is the witness?]

"and because his family had the courage to come forward and give evidence against those concerned."

MR. T. M. HEALY: Who says that?

MR. BRODRICK said it was immaterial. It was well known that the statement was correct.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Who says so?

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): I rise to Order, Sir. I want to know whether the hon. Member is in Order in reading quotations, and in refusing to give the names?

MR. SPEAKER ignored the question, and called upon Mr. Brodrick.

MR. BRODRICK said, that as hon. Members were anxious to know the name of the witness, he had no objection to mention it to them; it was that of Mr. Heffernan Considine.

MR. T. M. HEALY: He is a Resident Magistrate.

MR. BRODRICK said, none the less the statement was true, and it was to this effect, that the Curtin family attempted to defend their father when attacked by Moonlighters; they were threatened with violence and treated with disrespect at church on Sundays; the police had to charge the people and disperse them when the Curtins attended mass, and they were molested and ill-treated by their neighbours in every possible way. The House would see, and everyone would also see, that the animosity in this particular case had not been directed against a landlord or a Protestant, but was a deliberate persecution of a family who had been deprived of their parent, and who, not even so, could escape the vengeance of the people. It would also see that there was at present no power in the law to protect these people; and, in these circumstances, and in face of such statements, he wished to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. R. T. Reid) whether he could say that there was no combination or terrorism, no difficulty in enforcing the law, and nothing which called for an effort to see that the law was administered as it was in this country? If they were to accept as true that there was no terrorism, because there were no outrages, they would have to ignore the statement made by hon. Members below the Gangway—that they would find a more formidable weapon than outrage, which it was impossible for the tenants to disobey. The hon. and learned Gentleman had read to the House one question with regard to outrages, leaving out the two preceding questions. He would read those omitted questions to the House. Mr. Warburton was asked—

> "With regard to combination to prevent the payment of rent, if a man does pay his rent, is he subject to annoyance?—Most certainly; I have known tenants' wives come at night to the agents and give money, and they would not even take a receipt for fear the receipt would be seen with them. What are they actually afraid of—being outraged or Boycotted?—Afraid of the National League hearing it—they think it undesirable."

Yet the hon. and learned Gentleman quoted the succeeding questions, in which something was said about Boycotting not being bad in the district, as proof that it was not a question of combination at all.

Mr. R. T. REID said, he had never suggested that. He was trying to show that there was no outrage according to the statements of the Resident Magistrates, and the question he quoted dealt with that charge. He had not denied that there was some combination. The National League was a combination, and he had spoken of it.

Mr. BRODRICK said, the hon. and learned Member had quoted evidence given on the 15th of October to show that there was no combination in the district, and argued from that that there was no combination now. He (Mr. Brodrick) would point out to the hon. and learned Member that the Plan of Campaign was published on the 23rd of October; and General Buller, in his evidence on the 11th of November, distinctly stated that, although there had been no combination in the district, yet, after the visit of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) and his Friends, the combination began and terrorism immediately ensued. He presumed that the learned Member would not get up and tell the House that terrorism should be allowed to prevail unchecked, so long as outrages did not mount to the requisite level. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), who moved the Amendment, had assumed that the main difficulty was to be found in the question of rents. Did the right hon. Gentleman attempt to present to the House any case as to the general harshness of the landlords on which his Amendment appeared to be founded? No; but he had taken a few isolated and individual instances, and his proposition appeared to be, that no matter how bad the seasons, no matter how broken the tenant, or how incapable, or how thriftless, or how unable he was to do his duty by the soil, or in any future year to pay his rent, supposing that he had not paid it at this moment, the landlord was bound to continue him in his holding. A proposition more disastrous for the interests of the country he (Mr. Brodrick) could not imagine. The House was told that owing to the existence of a species of terrorism the tenants had been prevented from going into the Land Court; but since 1881, 176,000 tenants had gone through the Land Court, and this number was largely in excess of those who might have taken advantage of the Act, but who had not done so. He never believed that the Land Act could possibly succeed in producing general contentment, because it perpetuated a dual ownership which had broken down, and made it worse by setting up the system of tenant-right—set up where it had not existed before. The contention put forward in 1881, by all who had studied the laws of political economy, was that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian was putting the landlord in a position which no man on earth ought to be asked to occupy, and that the advantage given to the tenant, though very substantial in the case of the present tenant, would be a heavy burden on the future tenant. The further you got from the Land Act of 1881 the heavier would be that burden as the present tenants died out. He might illustrate his argument by a reference to an estate with which he was intimately acquainted. The rent of the farm was £60, and the Commissioners refused to make a reduction, on the ground that this was a fair rent. At the same time, though the man had not had the holding more than two years, and proved no expenditure of any sort on improvements, the Commissioners gave him £300 for his tenant-right. [An hon. Member: They were bound by law to do so.] The succeeding tenant borrowed, and the interest on the purchase-money, added to the rent, making his rent £84, instead of £60, drove him to the landlord with a request for a reduction of 40 or 50 per cent in his rent. He (Mr. Brodrick) was not defending landlords who demanded rents which were paid in more prosperous years; but when rents had been fixed by the Courts, and the tenant had chosen to pay a large sum for nothing but the privilege of paying that fixed rent, then they had no right to make the landlord the only loser. There were good landlords and bad landlords; but no case whatever had been made out to show the universality of a system of exaction, on which the right hon. Member for Newcastle asked the Government for the time being to interfere with the due administration of the law; and that debate was not likely to improve the chance of arrangements being come to between landlords and tenants in Ireland. It might be a necessary debate, in order that the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian should establish his case against the landlords. But he would ask the House whether the hon. and learned Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay) did not strike the right chord last night, when he told them that, if the Government had undertaken to deal with the rent question as their first and only measure, they would have been met by the right hon. Gentleman opposite with an Amendment on the question of Home Rule. The Irish landlords were to bear the brunt of the battle, and it was just as well that they should know what they were to suffer. He knew of nothing that had occurred since 1881 which should have changed the opinion then expressed by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, when he said that the Irish landlords had stood their trial, and that, as a rule, they had been acquitted. He repeated that he knew of nothing which had occurred since 1881 to cause a change in the right hon. Gentleman's views. Was there anything in the evidence before the Royal Commission?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Yes, a great deal; in the whole of the judicial rents.

MR. BRODRICK said, there were no judicial rents in those days.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: But since.

MR. BRODRICK said, he must confess that he did not entirely follow the right hon. Gentleman in the distinction he made, because the judicial rents which were now said to be exacting were infinitely less, and the reductions voluntarily given by landlords, were infinitely greater than was the case before 1881. They had, however, gone to school again in morality since 1881, and they had got on to a fresh tack, in which they were told that if they only did justice Irishmen would meet them, and always would endeavour to meet them, halfway. Well, he would investigate for a moment the justice of that contention. Parliament, in 1881, made a great attempt to do justice to Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman opposite led the way. The Land Act was passed in August, and what was the answer? Why, in October they were met halfway, for they had a response in the shape of the No Rent Manifesto of the hon. Member for Cork, who immediately commenced marching through rapine to the disintegration of the Empire. In the face of that experience, he (Mr. Brodrick) was curious to learn whether the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian would get up in his place and ask the House to confide in the generous feeling of the Irish people, as a ground for putting off all measures for the maintenance of law and order, and to set themselves vigorously to work again to secure, as in 1881, the settlement of the Land Question, in the hope of a general pacification of Ireland. The question seemed to be whether, not having been able to carry the country with them, right hon. Gentlemen opposite thought they could persuade Parliament to govern Ireland as they wished to govern it, or that they would be allowed to make all government in Ireland impossible until they had attained the end at which they were aiming? They asked the Government not merely to make a compromise with crime, but to subordinate law to the conception of justice which was held by a minority in that House. He hoped that the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt)—to assist whom they had sat up so much at nights when he occupied the Treasury Bench—would explain to them how he was going to reconcile his present attitude with the contention he used to put forward, that remedial measures might follow, but that the law must first be maintained. How was that quandary now to be got rid of? Not that he would himself found any argument on such a moving monument of inconsistency as the right hon. Member for Derby; but that right hon. Member's declarations would remain fixed in the memory of the House, however often his opinions might be changed. And when the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) threatened them with the vengeance of their constituents if they took the course which the Government were determined to pursue, he (Mr. Brodrick) told the hon. Member, that if they neglected the primary duty of enforcing an equal observance of the law in all parts of the United Kingdom, they might then justly fear to face their constituents. The Government had no apology to make for the way in which they had presented that Resolution to the House; but they felt that they should have had to apologize, and would have failed in the performance of their duty, if they had not placed before the House the serious state of Ireland at this moment. He believed the grave facts which his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland would place before the House would be ample justification, to all who took an impartial view of the situation, for the Government asking for the whole time of the House. It was in that conviction that they would submit their proposals to the House, and would expect to earn, as he believed they would deserve, the confidence of the House and the country.

Mr. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said, he thought that it would not be right that the whole of the time of the House should be given to the Government, as now demanded, unless they first made out a very strong case of urgency. Such a strong case had not yet been made out, and, therefore, he and his hon. Friends felt bound to resist that demand. The hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Brodrick) had mistaken the contention of the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries (Mr. R. T. Reid). They did not deny that some combination existed in Ireland; they did not maintain that the law was everywhere perfectly enforced, or that the present state of that country was in all respects satisfactory; but they said — and it was proved by evidence in the Cowper Commission Blue Book as well as by facts known to them all from the ordinary public channels—that that state was not an exceptional one, but a state in which the elements of good and the tendencies to improvement were overcoming the effects of the evils which remained from a former time, and that it was certainly unlike any previous state of Ireland upon which had been grounded the application for a Coercion Bill. His right hon. Friends the Members for Wolverhampton and Newcastle (Mr. H. H. Fowler and Mr. John Morley), on the previous night, had shown how exorbitant rents were in Ireland, and how that Bill would not be so much a Bill for the repression of disorder as one for the better recovery of unjust rents. He would leave that part of the case where his right hon. Friends had left it; but he would invite attention to another aspect of the question. They must look at the proposal of the Government that the House should give all its time to a measure of coercion as part of a general scheme. It was part of a scheme, the essence of which was that the House should make its choice—its inevitable choice—between coercion and conciliation in favour of coercion. They stood now, as they had often done before, at the separation of two ways; they had now the choice between governing Ireland with the will of the people with them, and governing Ireland against the will of the people. The Government asked Parliament to choose the course of governing against the people. This was, he supposed, to be taken as the beginning of that 20 years of firm government which Lord Salisbury had announced as his specific for Ireland. He did not desire to indulge in any of the conventional recriminations of the Front Benches. The case was too serious, too melancholy. He would assume that the Government desired to do right, and believed that the course they proposed was the best. He agreed with them in attaching the highest importance to restoring law and order in Ireland. The basis of the proposals of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) last year was the restoration of social order in Ireland, which was one of the greatest needs in Ireland. But the question he desired to put was this—Would the Government policy of coercion restore law and order? Was there any probability of its achieving this or changing the minds of the Irish people? Would it, in the long run, work for peace and union? Let them answer these questions by the light of experience. Neither the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) nor the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) said one word last night as to any previous Coercion Bills, and an intelligent foreigner listening to them would have have supposed that they were proposing for the first time an exceptional measure of this kind. But since the Union in 1800 there had been 86 Coercion Bills, and this was the 87th which was being introduced in the year 1887. During those 86 years there had not been three consecutive years during which Ireland was free from exceptional repressive legislation. But it was admitted that this legislation had failed—the fact that another of these Bills—an unusually severe one—was being now introduced was proof of this. The condition of Ireland was now described by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in much the same terms as those used by the previous Chief Secretaries who introduced the previous Bills. It was not alleged by him that the Irish people had been rendered any better disposed to law and order now than at any time since the Union, or less averse to combination against the land laws. The case now put forward was that the tendency to combination was stronger than ever, which was tantamount to saying that the people were more united against the English Government than ever they were before. If all these Bills had failed, was there any ground for believing that this Bill would succeed any better than its predecessors? There were, at any rate, three requisites for any measure of this kind. In the first place, it ought to be a permanent and not a limited Bill. Nothing could be more ill-advised than the past system of alternate blows and caresses. He did not know whether it was the intention of the Government to make this Bill permanent or to limit its operations to a certain period, but even if it were made permanent in form, it could not be maintained permanently. There might be a General Election in a few months—there must be one before very long—and it was perfectly certain that the country would not keep a Conservative Government permanently in power for the purpose of keeping up coercion. The temporary majority of the Government would disappear, and the 86 Home Rule Members for Ireland might again hold the balance between Parties. What would happen in that case? The Conservative Party would act as they acted in June, 1885, when they stated that they had discovered that the time for Coercion Bills had passed, and when Lord Salisbury, in his speech at Newport a little later, pointed out that Coercion Bills were useless against illegal combinations and associations. On the other hand, if the Liberal Party came into power its course would be clear. They condemned this policy of coercion and could never return to it, and they had declared that the only policy in which they saw any hope was a policy of conciliation. They would, therefore, take the first opportunity that fortune and Providence threw into their hands of giving effect to that policy. Even if the English and Scottish people were as anxious to maintain the present form of the Union as the Tory Party believed, they would not give impunity to right hon. Gentlemen opposite for all the other mistakes in their home and foreign policy which they were likely to commit, and which every Government must commit. The day of power of the Conservative Party could not be very long, and when it came to an end so would coercion. It was impossible, therefore, to look forward to a sustained course of repression. It must also be borne in mind that it could not be said that at the present moment public opinion was in favour of coercion. That question was not before the electors at the last General Election in July last. Indeed, not a few of the Members sitting behind the Government then declared that they were opposed to coercion. Coercion required also to be unshrinkingly administered, and this it was not likely to be so long as it was liable to be impeached by hon. Members for Ireland sitting in that House. If they desired to make it thoroughly effective, why did they not propose to suspend Irish representation? It would be easier for them to work their will in Ireland if they were exposed to no questionings here. To enable repressive legislation to bring about any permanent improvement in the attitude of the Irish people, large discretionary powers should be given to the Executive Government, which they could use for the purpose of compelling landlords to act equitably and generally for mitigating the harshness of the law. Coercion such as this Bill proposed was really an exercise of despotic power, wholly inconsistent with the genius of the British Constitution. For its due administration there ought to be large discretionary powers in the hands of the Executive Government. In all despotic Governments the Executive was armed with discretionary powers against the rich as well as against the poor. Every Indian official would tell them that the Indian Government reserved to itself large discretionary powers in the application of the laws of that country. It did not allow the landlords to exercise with severity their legal powers against their tenants, but restrained them when it saw that the enforcement of the legal right was likely to work a moral wrong. That was essential to the proper action of a despotic Government; and in this case also the Executive must have a discretionary power to mitigate the harshness of the law. The revenues of the Roman Empire were largely derived from the land tax, and the Imperial Government when a bad year came remitted the Land Tax. The gravest charge made against a harsh Emperor was that he neglected to make these remissions. The right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) had tried to put in force a discretionary power, and he hoped the stern logical consistency of his right hon. Friend opposite would not prevent him from following so good an example. It might happen that this Bill would succeed better than previous Coercion Bills if the circumstances under which it was introduced were more favourable to coercive legislation than the circumstances of former times. Let them cast their eyes back to the year 1833, when the first Liberal Government, after a long Tory reign, introduced a Coercion Bill; or let them look at the year 1846, and ask whether the chances for the success of a measure of coercion were greater now than they were then. The circumstances differed in every point for the worse, that is, they were altogether against the prospects of a successful and permanently beneficial coercive measure. In 1833 and 1846 the people of Ireland were feeble and disheartened, whereas now they were strong and emboldened by the recollection of their recent successes. At the former periods they stood alone in the world; but now they appealed to the Irish people all the world over, and derived a moral as well as a pecuniary support, which was of the utmost importance in reference to this question. In 1833 and 1846 little was known in this country about the way in which the Irish Government was conducted; but now they knew that those about the Castle, and, to a large extent, those who conducted the Irish Government throughout the country, were discredited before England and distrusted by the Irish people. Again, in 1833 and 1846 the Irish Party in that House was small, whereas now it constituted five-sixths of the representation of the country. Then the two great English Parties were practically agreed in supporting coercive legislation; but now one of those Parties had condemned coercion, and chosen a policy of conciliation. He believed there never was a time when a Coercion Bill passed by a purely Party Vote. Again, in 1833 and 1846 the electoral power of this country was in the hands of the upper and middle classes, and the middle classes were accustomed to take their lead from above. Now, however, we lived in a very different time. Our electorate consisted of the great mass of the working people all over the country. It was in their hands that the ultimate power of this country lay, and they knew that those people regarded repressive legislation with the greatest dislike, and disapproved exceptional legislation for one part of the United Kingdom, because they thought the same laws ought to prevail in England, Scotland, and Ireland. In every point, therefore, the prospect of the success of coercion was worse than it was in 1833 and 1846. He might also add the experience of 1881 and 1882; but he would not do so, because that subject had been dealt with by his hon. Friend the Member for Dumfries. He might, however, remind the hon. Member who answered his hon. Friend's speech that the outrages in that year did not diminish under the operation of the Coercion Act. There could not be a man better fitted to work coercion than the late Mr. Forster, and there could not be a Government fitter than the Government of 1881 to see that the powers given to them should not be abused. Well, under Mr. Forster's administration, the number of arrests increased till at last 1,000 persons were imprisoned in Ireland without any trial.

MR. BRODRICK said, that he spoke of the Coercion Bill of 1882, which Mr. Forster had not to administer.

MR. BRYCE said, he could tell the hon. Member that, under Mr. Forster's administration of the Coercion Act, while 1,000 persons were imprisoned without trial, the outrages which numbered 200 in February 1881, had risen to 500 a-month in 1882. As to the Crimes Act of 1882, if the present Government thought so well of it, why did they refuse to renew it in 1885; why did they take credit that autumn for not having renewed it? If hon. Gentlemen opposite had so much regard for the Act of 1882 why did not they renew it in 1884? Cromwell succeeded in a resolute policy, but he looked among hon. Members opposite in vain for a Cromwell. Nor, if he turned to the other House, did he find a Cromwell in their fitful and impetuous Prime Minister. The difference between Cromwell and Lord Salisbury was this — Cromwell spoke badly and acted firmly, Lord Salisbury spoke brilliantly and acted weakly. There was none of the spirit of Cromwell in hon. Members opposite, and the less they attempted to wear the armour of that hero the better for themselves. He thought no case could be pointed out in which a democratic Government had succeeded in coercing into friendship and love another nationality which formed a part of the same democracy. The case of Switzerland and the Sonderbund war of 1846 could not fairly be cited as a case in point. When it ended in the victory of the Protestant Cantons, self-government was restored to the defeated cantons, and they again became responsible for law and order in their own territories. Perhaps the case of the United States would be quoted. But after the North had conquered the Southern States they set up governments of their own in every State. Those governments were supported by large armed forces, and under those governments and under those armed forces there broke out a series of horrible outrages far worse, far more frequent, and far more atrocious in their circumstances than any which had occurred in Ireland. Hon. Gentlemen would find if they read the American reports of that period that there were Southern States where outrages were more serious and more numerous than those which any Chief Secretary of Ireland had ever had to deal with. They were continued and carried out by secret associations similar to those which had frequently given trouble in Ireland. In one State—Tennessee—there had been within one period of six months an average of one murder for each day, and many of the other States were not much better. The Reports he had referred to read exactly like the speech of a Chief Secretary asking for a Coercion Bill. The Northern States perceived that secret combinations were more and more supported by the people, that juries would not convict, and, in short, that all the circumstances which characterized Irish disorder existed. They then, with the characteristic practical good sense of the American, at last changed their course, and in 1876 President Hayes withdrew the Northern Armies from the South, genuine self-government was restored, the outrages ceased, and from that time till now the Southern States had been a peaceably-governed country. He challenged hon. Members to look into this case of America, which had been so often quoted, and he believed that the more they looked the more they would find that one Democracy could not govern another except upon the principles of self-government. Never were the teachings of history more plain and simple than in the matter of Irish government, and the most curious point about it was that at all times the wisest men had pointed out the true course. He might give many an instance of the warnings given by those who knew Ireland and the wants of Ireland; but he would content himself with two only—Edmund Burke and Lord Wellesley. Burke spoke words as applicable to Ireland now as then. He said—

> "The people ought to look well about them, and that the physicians ought to take care not to irritate the patient. It was foolish to have the better of a patient in a dispute; the complaint and its cause ought to be removed and wise lenient arts ought to be employed; those lenient arts ought to be the primary object of the Government. . . Call the process what they pleased it would consist of cavalry, infantry, and artillery and nothing else."

The words of Lord Wellesley in 1834 were—

> "The truth is Ireland will never be quieted by these annual expedients of suspending the laws and constitution of the realm. We must endeavour, as soon as possible, to return to the ordinary laws and to be satisfied with a vigorous and pure administration of justice. Until we are fixed on that rock we shall never know genuine peace or security."

Those warnings from the men who knew Ireland best had been neglected. They might be renewed now. The Act of the Government would not have the effect of securing social order and a due observance of the law, any more than the Acts of previous Administrations. It would have some effect, no doubt. It would have the result of making things worse. It would drive discontent underground; it would substitute conspiracy for agitation; it would substitute midnight conclaves of desperate men for the free meeting on the open hillside; and it would embitter the feelings of the English and the Irish people against one another. The Government asked the House to look down a long vista, in which could be seen crime, outrage, hatred, revenge, and murder in many an abhorrent form; but there was one thing which could not be seen—no, not even at the end of it—and that was peace or order. If they wanted peace and order, the Government should see that the law—which they themselves confessed was not just—was made just. Let them begin by making it just, and enlist upon their side popular sympathy, confidence, and support—support which would never be given to an unjust law, and without which no law could ever strong.

Mr. SINCLAIR (Falkirk, &c.) said, that if he understood the object of the Government aright it was not so much to increase the stringency of the present Criminal Law as to increase its efficiency. It was the desire of the Government that the Criminal Law as at present existing should be more efficient in its working, so that the conviction of offenders should be obtained. He proposed to follow the Government in this Motion by voting for urgency, not so much on the ground of urgency in connection with the Criminal Law Amendment Bill which was to be introduced, as on the ground that it was the easiest and the simplest way of obtaining access to that remedial legislation without which it was impossible to see Ireland once more in a settled condition. What remedial legislation could be more necessary than to endeavour to make the law operative in Ireland? At the present moment it was not operative, and if the proposals of the Government tended in the direction of making the law operative, he thought that would be a distinct step towards remedial legislation—to be followed by remedial legislation in the shape of an improvement in the land laws, which was very much needed. If the proposed Bill of the Government, the details of which were as yet unknown to them, was coercive in the bad sense of the term, it would meet from him determined opposition. [*Laughter.*] Had hon. Members below the Gangway seen the inside of the Bill? If they had not, then what right had they to laugh? He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland on the statement he made to the House last night that he would introduce, either in that House or in the "other place," legislation of a remedial character in connection with the Land Question. He thought a firm administration of the existing and amended law, combined with a judicious removal of all admitted grievances, would be the best way, and the only effective way, of producing peace in that unhappy country. He was glad to find that amongst the grievances it was proposed to remedy was that in connection with the leaseholders, especially in the North of Ireland, to whom most of the happiness and prosperity of the country was owing. He hoped the remedial measures of the Government would include some assistance to those tenants who had purchased their holdings under the Bright clauses of the Land Act, and also to those tenants who had purchased their holdings under the Church Act. These measures were only alleviative, and he believed the real method of settling the Irish Land Question was to be found in the abolition of dual ownership. While, in the present condition of Public Business, it was difficult to introduce and pass a Bill dealing with that subject, he trusted that such a measure would at no distant date be introduced and pushed forward; and that they should see a fair and honest attempt made by the Government to put an end to the dual ownership of land in Ireland. There had been an attempt made by the Conservative Government in this direction by the Land Purchase Act of Lord Ashbourne; and he thought that was an Act the operation of which would be of advantage to the country in time to come. He said that, notwithstanding that he was opposed to the purchase scheme proposed by the late Prime Minister. One advantage of Lord Ashbourne's scheme was that it was on a small scale, and that purchase would be gradual over the entire country. He believed a larger system of purchase, such as was proposed by the late Prime Minister, was accompanied with difficulty connected with State ownership of land, which would vanish or become extremely small when land purchase was carried into effect by a series of smaller schemes. It was said that no purchase schemes would be carried out until rents were finally fixed at their proper level; but, where rents were too high, if the number of years' purchase was reduced, a fair price would thereby be obtained. The Party of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) did not appear very anxious to see the Land Question settled; but this was probably due to the fact that they recognized that if the Land Question was settled there would be an end to the agitation in the country. A Bill had been introduced by his hon. Friend one of the Members for Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), and that had met with but scant courtesy at their hands, though it dealt with the question of leaseholds in a way that would have assisted the House in deciding the question. If they could see the Land Question settled, he believed that the whole of the question of Home Rule would be settled along with it. [*A laugh.*] That did not seem to meet with the approval of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, but he thought they ought to give the matter a trial. It had frequently been said that the question they had to decide was justice to Ireland, but that was not altogether the case. The question was not alone justice to Ireland. It was almost impossible, from the circumstances of the case, to render justice. The circumstances under which they were surrounded were those created by past injustice, and when the past injustice had existed for a certain length of time, that length of time mellowed the injustice. No evil could ever be entirely undone. If we endeavoured to produce that state of things it would be sure to create a new state of things from which fresh injustice would arise, and he therefore asked hon. Members when they took up this question to consider it was not only to do justice to Ireland that they wanted, but to see how to do the greatest amount of justice with the least amount of injustice. The question they had before them in solving the Irish problem was how to do that which was best, and at the same time to do as little evil and wrong as they could. He hoped the Motion for urgency would be carried by a large majority, and that they would get a happier subject for discussion, and if that were so, then this Session of Parliament and this Jubilee year of Her Majesty would be signalized by an endeavour to redress some of the evils of the past, and would be a happy omen and augury for the future.

MR. LOCKWOOD (York) said, they had heard a good many reasons for passing a measure of coercion for Ireland; but the hon. Member who had just sat down was entitled to the credit of suggesting an entirely new one—namely, that as this was the Jubilee year, therefore it was a pity there should not be a Coercion Bill.

MR. SINCLAIR said, the ironical expression of the hon. and learned Member for York was not in any sense attributable to himself. He had merely suggested the occasion of the Jubilee year as a reason for passing remedial measures.

MR. LOCKWOOD said, he thought when the hon. Member referred to the Jubilee year, he referred to it in connection with some matter relevant to the subject of debate; but now it appeared that he was referring to it in connection with some matter not relevant to the debate, and he appeared to have concealed that fact from the Speaker, or he would have, no doubt, been called to Order. It was, to say the least, an unfortunate expression. The position of the hon. Member, however, was somewhat peculiar. The hon. Member was, as far as he (Mr. Lockwood) could understand, in a somewhat peculiar position. He was, he believed, a Scotch Unionist-Liberal. [An hon. MEMBER: Irish-Scotch.] Well, perhaps he (Mr. Lockwood) had better not inquire too closely what the hon. Member was; but, before leaving the hon. Member, he might say that his hon. Friend seemed not to be quite sure of his position in regard to the Government measure, and he (Mr. Lockwood) would advise hon. Gentlemen opposite not just yet to reckon on the hon. Member's support. He appeared to retain an "open mind." He had not seen the Bill; none of them had seen it; and he was not quite sure whether the Government were going to do an act of justice, or what he called mellowed injustice. His advice to the Government seemed to be—"Try justice; and if that does not do, try your old mellowed injustice." But with regard to the Bill not yet having been seen, he (Mr. Lockwood) wanted to know whose fault was that? If, when he was moving for urgency, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had laid the Bill upon the Table, hon. Members would have known what it was, and would have been able to make up their minds whether they would support it or not. But he ventured to say that, after all, when the hon. Member (Mr. Sinclair) saw the Bill, he would give his vote against it, and with the Party to which he had once the honour to belong. [Mr. Sinclair: And still belong.] The hon. Member made one other observation to which he must allude. He said that to vote for the Motion of urgency would be the easiest and quickest way of getting the Bill before them. But if the Government, and if the Chief Secretary for Ireland knew what the Bill was to be, why, in the name of all that was wonderful, could they not tell the House at once? If they had made up their minds, why could they not say so without any further beating about the bush? The Chief Secretary for Ireland, last night, reproached the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) for having criticized a Bill which he had not seen. Well, of course, he had not seen it, as the Government had not produced it; but he (Mr. Lockwood) ventured to say that the right hon. Gentleman had a much shrewder and more correct idea of what the Coercion Bill would be than the Chief Secretary for Ireland himself had of what was the nature of the remedial measure which the Government premised, and would be forthcoming some day. They had been told that, at the earliest possible moment, information would be placed before the House of the serious condition of Ireland which rendered coercion necessary. Why then, he asked, did not the Chief Secretary for Ireland last night place before the House the facts, if they were in the possession of the Government, to justify the course which the Government were taking? The Financial Secretary to the War Office sought to justify the course which the Government was taking by calling attention to the Curtin murder; but hon. Members had not yet forgotten the discussion in that House in reference to that unhappy murder, and how it was shown that, though the murder took place before the General Election, not a word was said about it till after the Election was over. If the Curtin murder justified a Coercion Bill, it justified it last November as much as it did now. Reference had also been made to the dispute between Conway and the National League; but he thought it was clear beyond dispute that the local branch of the National League passed a resolution of sympathy and condolence with Conway in respect to the outrage. ["Oh, oh!"] He considered that charges such as had been made against the National League should not be made when the foundation for them was so base as it was in this case. But to return to the question of urgency. He believed that what the Government asked them to do was practically to postpone all legislation in that House, for the purpose of enabling the Government to bring in a measure of coercion against Ireland. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had complained of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, not only for criticizing the unseen Bill, but for not making any suggestions himself for alternative legislation for Ireland. He (Mr. Lockwood) thought that if there was one Member in that House against whom such a charge should not have been made, it was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle, who was intimately associated with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian in the preparation of the Home Rule Bill, which would have given peace and contentment to Ireland by satisfying the national and natural aspirations of the people. There was one other subject to which he (Mr. Lockwood) wished to allude—it was to the speech of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Inverness Burghs (Mr. Finlay), which was delivered last night. The hon. and learned Member called the attention of the House to a statement made by Lord Macaulay; and he (Mr. Lockwood) was anxious to see under what circumstances Lord Macaulay had made the statement quoted. He knew his hon. and learned Friend sufficiently well to be certain that if he had known the circumstances under which those remarks of Lord Macaulay were made, he would have informed the House of them.

It being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

## *MOTION.*

—o—

### ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

### CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND) AMENDMENT BILL — DEBATE ON THE MOTION FOR URGENCY.

OBSERVATIONS.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): On the Motion for Adjournment, I wish to express a hope that there will be no undue delay, and that the House will come to a speedy conclusion on the preliminary debate on the Motion before it. The Government, as I stated, attach great importance to the measure which they propose to introduce. It is one upon which the existence of the Government is at stake; and, therefore, an early decision on so grave a question is one which we invite the House to take in the interests of the country at large. I have observed with regret that hon. Gentlemen representing, in a more prominent measure, the views of a large section of the Representatives of Ireland have not yet taken part in the debate. I hope they will not refrain from doing so, if it is a question in which they take an interest. I am sure my hon. Friends on this side of the House will refrain, if it be needful for them to do so, so as to afford an opportunity for hon. Members from Ireland taking their full share in the discussion which is now proceeding. At the same time, I am sure the House will admit that this preliminary discussion should be brought to an end without undue and protracted debate; and I believe it will be for the convenience of the House that that course should be taken. I had hoped, from the communication which had passed, it would be possible to have arrived at that conclusion to-morrow evening; but I understand that is not now the view at present held by right hon. Gentlemen opposite. I am most anxious to consult the convenience of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen, and the House generally; but the interests of the country are at stake. [*Laughter.*] Yes, I say the interests of the country are at stake, and, under the circumstances which I have stated to the House, I trust there will be no undue delay in arriving at a decision.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I cannot complain of the spirit in which the right hon. Gentleman has addressed the House; but I am sorry that he has thought it necessary to complain that many Gentlemen from Ireland——

MR. W. H. SMITH: I did not complain, but regret——

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Well, regret that they have not spoken in this debate. I must confess I think it would have been an unfortunate circumstance if the conduct of the debate had been mainly left in the hands of those who do not represent that country; and I also think there would be a great advantage in the intervention of Representatives from Ireland in the discussion. I certainly should have been very glad to see this debate brought to a close at an early period. But I do not feel that I can go now, without irregularity, into an explanation of the circumstances which, in my opinion, have led to its prolongation. I shall endeavour to do that in the course of the debate. I am afraid it is not possible to come to any understanding that the debate shall close to-morrow. While I hope there will be no disposition on this side of the House to undue prolongation of the debate; on the other hand, I hope right hon. Gentlemen will recollect that the Bill is important, and the fate of the Government is staked upon it; these are reasons why the discussion should not be unduly restricted, and why sufficient intervals should be allowed for the consideration of the Bill before the House is called upon to pronounce a definitive judgment upon it.

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith) has noticed that none of the more prominent Members from Ireland have spoken in the debate. They have not done so for three reasons. In the first place, my hon. Friends have been kept up all the night before the introduction of the Motion in order that money should be voted for the Government. They cannot be expected, therefore, to have spoken yesterday in the discussion after an All-night Sitting. Another reason is that with regard to this day it is not usual for prominent Members of any Party to speak on a Wednesday, unless a private Member's Bill is before the House. We do not desire, many of us, to speak on this Motion; but there are five or six of my hon. Friends, including myself, who desire to have something to say before the Question is put from the Chair. I make this statement on behalf of the Party.

## *QUESTION.*

### CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE DISTURBANCE AT YOUGHAL—THE INQUEST ON HANLON.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If he is aware whether the Coroner's Warrants, which had been issued yesterday for the arrest of Inspector Somerville and Sub-constable Garrett Ward for the wilful murder of Hanlon during the recent disturbances at Youghal have been executed?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Holmes) (Dublin University): My knowledge is confined to what I have seen in the newspapers. ["Oh, oh!"] Yes; it is not usual that these things should be communicated to the Attorney General. My right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary will get a report on the subject in due course.

Mr. SEXTON: Can any Member of the Irish Government assure us that the warrants will be executed?

Mr. HOLMES: Yes. I assure the hon. Member that the warrants will be executed.

Motion *agreed to.*

House adjourned at five minutes before Six oclock.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Thursday, 24th March,* 1887.

MINUTES.]—Public Bill—*Third Reading*—Pharmacy Acts Amendment * (28), and *passed.*

### AFRICA (SOUTH)—AFFAIRS OF SWAZILAND.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Viscount MIDLETON, in rising to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the attention of the Government has been called to the probability of a filibustering attack being made upon Swaziland; whether any communications have been made to the Transvaal Government on the subject, or what other steps the Government propose to take in the matter? said, he would briefly state the reasons which had induced him to place the Question on the Paper. It would be in the recollection of their Lordships, that, after the Convention of London, a line of frontier was traced by competent Commissioners with great accuracy, and marked out with large cairns of stones; and so it remained until about a year ago. Papers had since been placed in the hands of their Lordships which showed that a Boer, who was known only by his Caffre name, but whom there was no difficulty in identifying, had removed the boundary stones, and had substituted others at a very considerable distance from the true boundary; and a messenger from the Transvaal Government had demanded that the people within the altered boundary should admit the Suzerainty of the Transvaal Government. The reply was, that they relied on British protection. But they were reminded that the British Forces had been beaten not so long ago at Majuba Hill, and that there was not much to be expected from that quarter. The people of Swaziland then sent to the Acting Commissioner at Natal, stating their grievance, and asking for advice. A remonstrance was sent to the Transvaal Government, who took no notice of it. A telegram was then sent, and the reply was, that the matter was still under consideration, and that the facts had not yet been ascertained. A despatch had been sent from this country approving the action of the Natal Government; but he wished the despatch had gone further, and urged more energetic action on the part of those who had an opportunity of dealing with the subject, and that they should be enjoined to bring the matter to a conclusion at the earliest possible moment. The longer the question of this dispute with the Transvaal Government was allowed to go on, the greater would be the difficulty of dealing with it. It would have been much easier to settle the matter at first, because at that time the Transvaal Government were in financial difficulties; but since then it had transpired that Swaziland was very rich in gold, being probably the richest of all the Gold Fields discovered in South Africa, and the discovery of gold within this territory had made a considerable difference to them, and would explain the reason why the Boers had cast longing eyes upon it. The information which he had received was that there was a probability of a filibustering attack on Swaziland; and it was believed that the expedition would receive, if not the active encouragement, at least the tacit assent, of the Government in Pretoria. What was absolutely necessary now was, that we should send a British Resident to Swaziland, which the Swazi King seemed inclined to consider the best course; or, if we did not do that, we should notify very plainly to the Government of the South African Republic that we would not tolerate the invasion, whether on a large or small scale, of a territory which was virtually under our protection. We should further declare that if, in spite of our remonstrances, any Transvaal subjects were found fighting in the ranks of those who invaded Swaziland, a considerable fine would be imposed on everyone so found; and, if we should be driven to extreme measures, we should take possession of the Gold Fields on the frontier of the Transvaal, and retain them, as security, until a considerable indemnity was paid. Unless we spoke out clearly, distinctly, and in a manner which could not be mistaken on this subject, we might find ourselves landed in serious trouble. The information had reached him from a person on the spot, who had had many years' experience of these frontier troubles, to the effect that not only did very great anxiety exist on the subject within the borders of the Colony, but that the preparations which were being made in the Transvaal territory for the purpose of taking advantage of any weakness on our part were perfectly notorious and undenied, even by those engaged in them; and he asked whether the attention of the Government had been called to what was going on, and what steps they proposed to take in the matter?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (The Earl of Onslow), in reply, said, that Her Majesty's Government were fully alive to all that was going on in South Africa at the present moment. The description given by the noble Viscount as to the course of events, up to the publication of the latest Blue Book, was entirely accurate; but since that publication was issued the Government had received information that four Swaziland Chiefs had received a message from the Landrost of Wakkerstroom, stating he would march into and annex the country. A communication was immediately sent to the Transvaal Government, in reply to which they denied having given any such authority to the Landrost. Sir Hercules Robinson had since been asked to call the attention of the Transvaal Government again to the subject, and ask for an explanation, and to point out that, pending that explanation, any violation of the territory of Swaziland, except with the consent of the Swazi King, would be considered as an infraction of the Convention of London. The Transvaal Government again denied the truth of the statements which had been made with reference to a probable expedition against Swaziland, and had furnished proofs in support of their denial. They said that if encroachments were made they would be found to be acts of individual Boers, who were beyond the jurisdiction and control of the Transvaal Government. There could be no doubt that the discovery of gold in Swaziland had brought into it a very mixed and somewhat turbulent population, and that the state of the country was far from settled; but, as far as the action of this Government was concerned, it was entirely governed by the terms of the Convention of 1884, which echoed the provisions of the Convention of Pretoria, and stipulated that the independence of Swaziland, within the prescribed bounds, would be fully recognized. The annexation of Swaziland by this country had been proposed in some quarters. It had been said that, inasmuch as the settlement of Zululand had been accomplished without any cost to the British taxpayer, it might reasonably be hoped that a settlement of Swaziland might be accomplished on similar terms. That might be so; but such a proceeding would be in direct violation of the Treaty. No doubt, if any attempt were made to violate the independence of Swaziland, and a request were made by the Swazi King, Her Majesty's Government might be justified in affording him such assistance as might be necessary to protect the independence of his country. The King had himself, of his own accord, invited the assistance of Mr. Shepstone, a gentleman exceptionally well acquainted with the affairs of South Africa, who was now with the King, not as the Representative of Her Majesty's Government, or of the Colonial Government, but at the King's own request; and it was sincerely to be hoped that his presence in Swaziland would be of much use. The noble Viscount had said that, virtually, Swaziland was under the protection of England; but he (the Earl of Onslow) could not quite agree with that statement. The only authority for such a statement was contained in the Second Article of the Convention of London, which said that Her Majesty's Government might, if they deemed it necessary, appoint Commissioners in the Native territory outside the Eastern and Western Borders of the South African Republic to maintain order and prevent encroachment. It was perfectly clear, therefore, that power was possessed by Her Majesty's Government to go to that extent; and at the present time the question of appointing such Commissioners was receiving their very serious and anxious consideration. With regard to what fell from the noble Viscount, as to the possibility of any interference in the country between Natal and Delagoa Bay by any of the Great Powers of Europe, as far, at any rate, as Germany was concerned, to which Empire he presumed the noble Viscount alluded, his apprehensions might be safely set at rest by the exchange of communications which took place between Earl Granville, when Foreign Secretary, and Count Münster. In those communications Germany declared herself ready to withdraw her protest against the hoisting of the British Flag at St. Lucia Bay, and her intention not to establish any Protectorate over the territory between Delagoa Bay and Natal. But as to the apprehension of filibustering expeditions, there was, no doubt, considerable foundation for alarm, and Her Majesty's Government were considering the matter with very great care, especially with regard to the appointment of Commissioners under the Convention of London.

## ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—HELMETS FOR THE MILITIA REGIMENTS.

### QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Lord **FITZGERALD**, in rising to ask the Under Secretary of State for the War Department, Whether it is intended to supply helmets for the use of the privates of the several Militia regiments so as to enable them to take part in the training and celebrations of Her Most Gracious Majesty's Jubilee year in full and proper costume? said, that for some time the anomaly had been presented of the officers of Militia wearing helmets and of the non-commissioned officers and men wearing the Glengarry. When the present territorial system was instituted, and Militia regiments were constituted third and fourth battalions of Line regiments, there was an understanding that they should be placed as nearly as possible, so far as dress and accoutrements were concerned, on the same footing as soldiers of the Line. Notwithstanding this, the rank and file of the Militia had been kept for years without helmets, and with no other headdress than the ordinary Glengarry bonnet. That they had to wear in all weathers, and under all circumstances, although the Glengarry was very little protection from the rain, and none at all from the wind and sun. It was especially hard on men, usually in civil attire, to have their hair cut close, and to be compelled continuously to wear a cap which was no protection from the weather. Moreover, it was highly objectionable in a military point of view that on field days, when the troops had to be in review order, the Militia could not turn out properly dressed. While both the Line and the Volunteers appeared on such occasions in helmets, the

Militia, although they might be in the same brigade, could not wear the same headdress. There were plenty of helmets which could be served out, and he trusted that, at least on the occasion of Her Majesty's Jubilee, the 10,000 Militia who would take part in the Review would not be allowed to appear without helmets.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Lord HARRIS), in reply, said, that with regard to the supply of helmets to Militia regiments taking part in the Review to be held on July 9 the arrangements for that Review were not yet complete in detail; but in making the arrangements the point referred to by the noble and learned Lord should not be overlooked. With regard to the issue of helmets to Militia regiments during their training, it had been laid down by Lord Cardwell and Lord Cranbrook that, while disembodied, the Militia should wear undress uniform of the territorial regiments to which they were attached, and the Secretary of State was of opinion that to change this order would be inadvisable at the present moment.

THE EARL OF STRAFFORD said, that formerly the Militia wore the shako in full dress, and he could see no reason why they should not now wear the helmet.

LORD HARRIS said, that the question of the issue of helmets to the Militia had been gone into at full length by a Commission and decided in the manner he had stated.

## NORTH-EASTERN ASIA—THE COREA—FOREIGN OCCUPATION OF PORT HAMILTON.

### MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH, in rising to move for copy of any written pledges, should such pledges exist, on the part of the Empires of Russia and China with the Government of this country in reference to the occupation for military or naval purposes of the harbour of Port Hamilton or any portion of the territory of Corea, said, that their Lordships would remember that, although naval testimony was unanimous as to the insufficiency of the harbour, yet there was no doubt that it only required money to be spent at Port Hamilton to make it a very important naval and military position. Although this country might be unwilling to lay out the money for this purpose, yet other nations might not object to spend the money necessary to make Port Hamilton an impregnable fortress if they obtained the chance. He ventured to urge upon the Government, in view of the importance of the rapid development of China by way of the North Pacific, that they should apply themselves to discover some place which might be used as a great naval depôt and harbour in those seas. The noble Viscount concluded by moving for the Address of which he had given Notice.

*Moved*, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for copy of any written pledges, should such pledges exist, on the part of the Empires of Russia and China with the Government of this country in reference to the occupation for military or naval purposes of the harbour of Port Hamilton or any portion of the territory of Corea."—(*The Viscount Sidmouth.*)

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK), in reply, said, that the Papers to which his noble Friend referred contained a statement, and a very full written statement, on the part of the Chinese Government, giving the guarantee in question, which was not a mere verbal statement by the Chinese Government, but was a very deliberate Note. It was found that the Chinese had received from the Russian Government a guarantee that Russia would not interfere with Corean territory in future if the British did not; and the Chinese Government, on the faith of that guarantee, had given the British Government a written guarantee that neither China nor Russia would interfere with the territory in question. That was accepted by Sir John Walsham, who telegraphed home, and received the assent of my noble Friend (the Marquess of Salisbury) to the guarantee, as coming from the Chinese Government.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH asked, whether her Majesty's Government had a guarantee from the Russian Government?

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK said, the guarantee, as far as England was concerned, was from the Chinese Government, who had the Corea under its Suzerainty. They had received a guarantee from Russia; but with Russia Her Majesty's Government in this matter had no concern.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH said, that a war between Russia and China was not very impossible event, and that, therefore, the guarantee was worthless.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH asked, whether China had received a written guarantee from Russia?

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: I cannot tell that.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH: As there are no more Papers to be produced, I must ask leave to withdraw my Motion.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

House adjourned at Five o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter
past Ten o'clock.

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## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Thursday*, 24*th March*, 1887.

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MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—Divorce Bills, *nominated.*

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Considered as amended*—Kensington Vestry.

PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Union Assessment Committee Act (1862) Amendment * [204].

*First Reading*—Truro Bishopric and Chapter Acts Amendment * [205].

*Second Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 1)*; Accumulations [31].

*Committee*—Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) [1]—R.P.

### *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

—o—

### KENSINGTON VESTRY BILL [*Lords*] (*by Order*).

CONSIDERATION.

Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill, as amended, be now considered."—(*Mr. Dodds.*)

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): This Bill, as hon. Members will see, has passed through the House of Lords, and, having been read a second time in this House, has also passed through a Committee upstairs. It is, therefore, a somewhat strong measure to ask the House to reject the Bill under such circumstances, on what is practically the third reading; but I think I shall be able to show the House that in this case they ought to do so. I have no doubt that the Committee upstairs carefully examined the provisions of the measure, and that, under the Chairmanship of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), they have made their Report most conscientiously. But they only heard one side of the case. The other side was not heard at all, and, in point of fact, at the present moment, and since this Bill was brought into the House of Lords, the Kensington Vestry themselves have declared that they are opposed to it. We are, therefore, asked to pass a Kensington Vestry Bill against which the Kensington Vestry have pronounced. The Bill was brought in last Session, and came under the Resolution which provided that Bills which had passed through certain stages last Session should be carried forward to the present Session. I propose to state very briefly what is the opposition of the Kensington Vestry in regard to this Bill. The Bill originated with a Joint Committee of Works and Wharves of the Kensington Vestry, who were appointed to consider the best means of disposing of the refuse of the parish. The Report of the Joint Committee was agreed to in November, 1885, and on the same day a Motion was passed by the Vestry directing the present Bill to be prepared. The Bill was accordingly deposited, but at the election of Vestrymen in May, 1886, there were 26 vacant seats in this particular ward. I may explain that there are three wards in the district which are treated by this Bill; but there is only one particular ward in which it is proposed that this dust destructor should be erected. Out of 26 Vestrymen returned in the month of May, 19 were persons who were opposed to the Bill. In June last a Motion was made in the Vestry itself to rescind the Resolution which ordered that the Bill should be prepared. That Motion was supported by 42 votes against 30, or by a large majority against those who were in favour of the Bill in the Vestry itself. Nevertheless, the Resolution was not carried, because one of the bye-laws of the Vestry requires that there shall be a two-thirds majority in order to rescind any Motion previously passed. The consequence was that the Bill came before the Committee of the House of Commons. Having already passed the House of Lords it was also carried through the

Committee of the House of Commons, and it was called the Kensington Vestry Bill, although, in point of fact, the Kensington Vestry were opposed to it. I have just this moment presented a Petition against the Bill from the Kensington Vestry signed by 55 members. They state in that Petition that they and a large body of the parishioners object to the erection of a destructor as tending not only to destroy the value of property in the neighbourhood, but also to injure the health of the inhabitants. They further point out that it will seriously affect the trades and industries of the neighbourhood, and they submit that the ratepayers should be directly consulted before Parliament is asked to inflict such a serious and improper expenditure upon the district. This Petition is signed by 55 members of the Kensington Vestry who are supposed to be promoting the Bill, and they wind up their objections by the prayer—

> "That the Bill may not receive the sanction of your honourable House, and may not be passed into law."

The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Barnstaple Division of Devonshire (Mr. Pitt-Lewis) has placed an Amendment on the Paper which declares that no destructor shall be erected until the opinion of the owners and ratepayers of the parish of Kensington shall have been taken by means of a poll. Now, if the Bill is to pass at all I am certainly of opinion that it is desirable it should pass with the Amendment proposed by the hon. Gentleman; but I do think that, looking at the fact that the Kensington Vestry themselves are opposed to the Bill, and that the people of Kensington, and especially of this particular ward—Notting Hill—have declared themselves strongly opposed to the Bill, it would be a far more sensible course, instead of tinkering the measure and amending it, to throw it out altogether. I do not propose to go into the merits of the question. I am perfectly willing to admit that the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Chaplin) and the Committee carefully examined the matter, and received technical evidence as to the best means of destroying refuse of this kind. It is proposed to cart the dust and refuse from all parts of the parish of Kensington to a particular site in North Kensington, where the poorer portion of the population live. The area from which the dust is collected is a very large one, and it is contended by persons who have looked into the matter, and who live on the spot, that the health of the inhabitants will be destroyed if the Bill is allowed to pass, owing to the smoke and the fumes from the noxious gases which will be emitted. It is maintained that it would be far better to cart all this refuse away, as is done at present. I do not, however, so much dwell upon that point; and I own that there is always some difficulty in inducing the House of Commons, upon the third reading, to throw out a Bill which has already passed through a Committee. In asking the House to take that course, I will only dwell upon the special fact that a considerable time has elapsed since the Bill was brought in by the Kensington Vestry. It was ordered to be prepared at a very small meeting of that Vestry, and since that time not only have the people of the parish opposed the measure, but the Kensington Vestry themselves, in the Petition I have presented to-day, oppose it. I have already pointed out that the Vestry would themselves have rescinded the Resolution directing the preparation of the Bill if it had not been for the fact that to do so required a two-thirds vote. Nevertheless, at this moment, the House will find that 55 members of the Kensington Vestry are asking that the Bill shall not be proceeded with. Under these circumstances, I hope the House will consent to throw out the Bill; and I beg to move that the Bill be considered upon this day six months.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I beg to second the Amendment; and, in the first place, I would ask what are the proposals contained in this Bill? I think it is desirable that the House should understand that the parish of Kensington is a very large district of some three and a-half miles in length from North to South. Its widest part is in the South, where it is nearly two miles in width; and its narrowest part is in the North, where it is only half-a-mile wide. At the extreme northern, or the North Kensington part of the district, it is proposed that the whole of the refuse of the parish of Kensington should be collected and destroyed in a destructor by means of a huge furnace. Now, Sir, the refuse of the parish is of a very varied description.

It consists not only of road sweepings, but of such matters as dead cats, dead dogs, decayed fruit and vegetable matter, sardine tins, dead rats, brick bats, oyster shells, jam pots, dress improvers, crinolines, pails, broken bottles, and many other miscellaneous articles. On the other side of the River, where something of the same kind has already been attempted under the direction of the parish officers, the experience has been by no means satisfactory, although, in that case, there is the River Lea and other means for carrying away any of the refuse which is not absolutely got rid of in the destructor. Now, in Kensington, where it is proposed to put up this destructor, there is no such thing, and the Kensington Vestry have selected this point, although there were many other places which were much more suitable. There are wharves in the South of Kensington, near Warwick Road, which are easily accessible by railway, and there is also a canal wharf in another part of the northern district. Nevertheless, it is proposed to take this refuse away from all the well-to-do portions of the parish, and send to the poorest district this miserable tribute of the rich to the poor. Now, Sir, I would ask the House to consider what would be said if it were proposed to erect in the southern portion of Kensington any such structure. Suppose, for instance, it was proposed to take a portion of the Horticultural Gardens or a portion of Kensington Gardens, and devote them to the purpose of getting rid of the refuse of the parish of Kensington. We know very well what an outcry would be raised, and how the idea would at once be scouted, and yet at those places the erection of a destructor would do comparatively little harm. But what does it matter to some 100,000 or 200,000 well-to-do people if the poorer portion of the inhabitants are to be incommoded by smoke and noxious gases so long as they can find an easy means of getting rid of their refuse? What is now proposed is, that this hideous collection of all sorts of refuse is to be carried over an area of six square miles, trundled through the streets, and conveyed upon a point which is the narrowest in the district. But that is not all. The point selected is just on the borders of the parish of Hammersmith; and I, as an inhabitant of Hammersmith, object to the Kensington Vestry bringing their refuse to the borders of that parish. This parish contains a population of 106,000 persons, and the refuse of all the streets in the parish is to be carted away to this district of the North, principally occupied by the poor. A large number of the population are engaged in the smaller industries—chiefly in the industry of washing. For about a mile to the North, a mile to the South, and a mile to the West the laundry establishments are very numerous, and a large population have to depend entirely, for their means of livelihood, upon this particular industry. There can be no doubt that the whole of the immediate locality will suffer very much in times of foggy and heavy atmosphere from the soot which will be distributed around, and it is only when there is a strong wind that there can be any reasonable hope that the fumes and smoke arising from the furnace will be got rid of. It is perfectly clear, therefore, that to establish anything of this kind in this particular locality will destroy this washing industry. [Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Why?] The right hon. Gentleman is not acquainted, probably, with anything so low as a laundry business, or he would be aware that if the washing is dirtied by soot or dust of any kind it has to be re-washed, and that would be a very great loss to the poor people engaged in this industry. Clause 10 of the Bill provides that the Vestry shall not, under the powers of the Act, take more than a limited number of houses belonging to the labouring class; but what is the use of preserving their houses if you deprive the people themselves of the means by which they live? Then, again, we are told that the Vestry is to be required to lay out a certain portion of the land they take under the Bill for the purpose of forming a recreation ground. I expect that was an afterthought on the part of the promoters put in somewhat late; and I confess that on reading it it suggested to me very much the smile of a death's head on a coffin. What is the use of talking of a recreation ground when such ground must depend entirely upon the extent of the land required for the purposes of the Bill itself, and when the purposes of the Bill are satisfied? There would certainly be very little land left which could be devoted to the purposes of a recreation ground. Most of the poor people of the district live in squalid houses, and within 500 yards of this site there are board and other schools attended by 6,000 children. The nuisance arising from the offensive smells given off by this collection of refuse must be very great indeed. It is idle to say that there would be no offensive smell, and that the health and comfort of these children would not be very much interfered with. There are hundreds and thousands of carts constantly travelling through this locality, through narrow streets that are not particularly well drained, and the annoyance and nuisance arising from this objectionable addition to the traffic would be very serious indeed. It is pretended that all the refuse from Kensington can be got rid of in this way; but the pretence is an utterly false one, as experience has shown. I have here a tabulated list in regard to the destructors already in operation in different parts of the country. I will not trouble the House by going into the details supplied in this long and formidable document. I will only say that the result is this—that in very few places at all, and only such as are favourably situated, is it attempted to get rid of all the refuse. In Lambeth, at Betts's Yard, the official in charge states that the parish is obliged to incur very heavy expense—I believe at the rate of £4 per barge load—in order to get rid of the refuse they dare not keep on the premises and are unable to burn. So far as the destructor is concerned it has failed absolutely, owing to the slow burning of the furnace. Therefore, I think I am justified in saying that the Kensington Vestry would not be able to get rid of all the refuse of the parish when it comes in. It must also be borne in mind that the refuse does not come in regularly, and not in exact quantities, day by day; but in certain circumstances of the weather there is a larger deposit and delivery than at other times. Consequently there would be an accumulation of this abominable material for many days in the neighbourhood. The officers in charge of Betts's Yard have been good enough to allow a friend of mine to inspect the process, and while he was there there came in a large load of rotten oranges. He expected to see them put into the furnace at once, but the man in charge told him that it was impossible to get rid of that kind of refuse by burning. As a matter of fact, it is perfectly impossible to burn refuse of that kind; and yet from Kensington High Street and the streets in the neighbourhood there will be a large amount of refuse fruit thrown from time to timo on the hands of the Vestry which will have to be got rid of somehow. It is pretended that the ratepayers of Kensington will be able to save a large amount of money if this Bill is adopted. I think, however, that the figures are altogether illusory, because they do not take into account the expense of getting rid of the refuse which cannot be disposed of by the destructor alone. No doubt the saving to the ratepayers is a very reasonable and proper object to have in view; but, unfortunately for this plan of erecting a destructor, I may say that the difficulty has already been solved in another part of London with perfect success, without employing any destructor at all. The Newington Board have arranged for getting rid of their refuse by railway, and the system has been so thoroughly successful that, although the population has increased enormously, the expense to which the Board is now put is actually less than it was before the system was adopted. I am told that the Newington Board are in reality making a saving of money as compared with their expenditure years ago, when the population was much less, and as compared with what the expenditure would be if the old system had been continued. The saving is something very remarkable indeed. Under these circumstances, because I believe that the erection of a destructor at North Kensington would not be true economy; because I believe that the work of getting rid of the refuse of the parish can be better carried out by other means; and because the plan adopted is cruelly unjust to the poor and labouring population, and is only supported by those who have regard to the convenience of the richer portion of the parish, I hope the House will assent to the proposal of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), and decline to proceed further with the Bill. I beg to second the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," in order to add the words "this day six months."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.): It is under some physical difficulties that I rise for the purpose of supporting the Amendment of the hon. Member for Northampton for the rejection of the Bill; but I do so with all the earnestness in my power, fully recognizing the sense of the responsibility which attaches to myself as Member for North Kensington. I believe that the Bill, if it is allowed to pass, will act most prejudicially against the interests of a large portion of the parish and the most defenceless class in my constituency. I am aware that in coming to ask the House to reject this Bill at this late stage we are taking a most unusual course; but I would venture to submit that, so far as my opposition is concerned as a Representative of the district affected, I was seriously ill at the time of the second reading, and for some time before, and that I was actually ignorant of its being brought forward. Further than that, since the time the Bill was read a second time the whole conditions of the case have been altered in regard to the constitution of the Kensington Vestry. It has already been pointed out that the nominal promoters of the Bill are now really in a considerable minority, and that the majority of the Vestry are bitterly opposed to the measure. That state of things has been brought about by the result of the last Vestry elections in North Kensington. Those elections took place in May last, and the House will remember that the Bill was read a second time in March. That fact has entirely, I venture to submit to the House, altered the complexion of the case. Who now are the promoters of the Bill? They are only a small faction in the Kensington Vestry. It has been pointed out to the House that this very question has been brought before the Kensington Vestry since the last elections. I myself was present in the Vestry at the time the division took place, and I can confirm the statement of the hon. Member for Northampton that in that division 43 members voted against the Bill and only 30 were in favour of it. The hostility of those 43 members was complete. They objected to the Bill altogether; and, consequently, the House is now asked to pass a Bill against which its nominal promoters, or those who were its most active supporters, are now petitioning. It may be asked, of course, why the Bill has not been withdrawn; but it has already been explained to the House that the bye-laws which govern the Kensington Vestry, and, I believe, other Vestries also, are such that it is necessary, when any resolution of the Vestry has once been adopted, that a two-thirds majority should vote for its recision. Up to the present moment I am free to admit that such a very large majority as that of two-thirds has not shown itself in the Kensington Vestry, although, nevertheless, there is a large majority in the Vestry against the Bill. As a resident for some years in Kensington, and as one who is thoroughly acquainted with the opinion of the great bulk of the inhabitants, at least of North Kensington, and to a large extent of South Kensington, I am prepared to say that the whole feeling of North Kensington, the inhabitants of which district are the most nearly concerned, is dead against the Bill, and bitterly antagonistic to it. I believe that already the conscience of South Kensington has been touched in regard to the gross injustice which will be inflicted upon North Kensington if this Bill be passed. I gather that their conscience has been touched because the number of Vestrymen who have signed the Petition presented to-day by the hon. Member for Northampton actually exceeds the whole number of Vestrymen returned to the Vestry by North Kensington. Fifty-five members have signed the Petition, and in order to obtain so large a number it must have been necessary not only to include every member who represents North Kensington, but also a considerable number of those who represent the richer and more powerful Division of South Kensington. I hope the House will remember that North Kensington is essentially a working-man's constituency; but for parochial purposes it is tied up with the vastly richer and more powerful Division of South Kensington. That attachment has long been a source of serious grievance to my constituency in North Kensington. It may be within the knowledge of some hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench that repeated Petitions have been presented by the ratepayers of North Kensington praying that there may be a separation between the two Divisions of the parish for parochial purposes, principally on the ground that the material interests of the two Divisions very frequently clash. This Bill, I think, shows that the interests of the two Divisions do entirely clash on certain occasions. Now, what is proposed by this Bill is simply that the refuse of the entire parish—all the horrible filth produced throughout Kensington — should be carted away without any question as to the convenience of cartage, but should be carted away, not to an open district, but to the very centre of the most densely-populated and most crowded and poorest district that is to be found in the West of London. That circumstance, I think, shows that the interests of North Kensington are seriously affected by this measure; and I do, myself, earnestly hope that the House will take into consideration the points which have been laid before it this afternoon, and will reject the Bill. I do not propose to enter into any details with regard to the measure, because they have already been dealt with by the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. A. O'Connor), who seconded the Amendment. I should, however, like to mention one or two points in connection with a statement in support of the Bill which has been circulated, as I understand, to a large number of the Members of this House. It is there stated that the combustion in the proposed destructor, which is to be placed in the midst of this poor and densely-crowded population, will be so complete that the whole of the noxious gases will be destroyed in the furnace itself. Now, I do not pretend to be a great scientific authority; but I would ask any hon. Member whether it is possible that all the gases can be utterly destroyed? No doubt, they may be modified, and be made to take other forms, and possibly rendered innocuous; but I maintain that they cannot be altogether destroyed. It is further stated in this document that the Medical Officers of Health strongly recommend the destruction of refuse of this kind by fire. Yes; but their recommendation is that the destruction should be carried on by fire, not in densely-populated localities, but as far as possible in open spaces, where the fumes given off in the operation will hurt nobody. Lastly, this statement, put forward, I presume, by those who are promoting the Bill, asserts that the evidence given before the Select Committee shows that the site now selected is the only one that was available for the purpose. Now, I would venture to ask whether it is meant by that assertion that the site selected in this poor and densely-crowded part of the parish is the only site that can be had for money? No, Sir; I am afraid that the only reason why this site is called the only available site is this—that the people who live in close proximity to it are so poor as to be defenceless in the matter. Therefore, I call upon the House with the utmost confidence to show that it is prepared to act as the defender of the poor in this question, and that it will at once throw out the Bill.

Mr. PITT-LEWIS (Devon, Barnstaple): As I have placed an Amendment on the Paper in reference to this Bill, I think it is desirable that I should be allowed to say a few words. I have also the honour to be a resident in Kensington, and I may say that this Bill would have passed through this House on a former occasion if I had not interposed in order to prevent it. Having taken, therefore, some action in conjunction with several of my neighbours in Kensington in regard to the Bill, the promoters approached me in order to ascertain what my objections were; and they have undertaken, in the event of the Bill passing, without reservation, to accept the clause which stands in my name upon the Paper. I may point out that the clause I propose to move provides that the Bill, if it is passed into law, shall not be acted upon so far as the erection of a destructor is concerned, if a demand in writing, signed by not less than 30 members of the Vestry or not less than 300 of the owners and ratepayers of the parish of Kensington, be made that the question shall be decided by a poll of the owners and ratepayers of the parish, until such a poll shall have been determined in the same way as is determined by the Public Health Act of 1875. By that means the clause makes provision that, before the erection of a destructor is commenced, the opinion of the whole parish shall be taken on the subject. That is certainly a compromise, but it is a compromise which has been accepted by the promoters of the Bill. Therefore, opposed as I am to the erection of this destructor, I shall feel it a matter of honour to vote in favour of the Bill. I may be allowed to point out that, in arriving at this compromise, I bore one or two things in my mind. In the first place, there is nothing to prevent any person from purchasing this land, erecting a destructor upon it, and then making a contract with the parish for the use of it. In the next place, the site consists of some four acres, and if bought by the parish at least a portion of it will be appropriated for the purpose of a recreation ground. It seems to me that it would be better for the parish to have the land in its own hands than that it should fall into the hands of some speculator, who may use it in an objectionable way. There will be this further advantage—that if this Bill passes with the modification I have suggested, in the event of the provision relating to the erection of a destructor being refused by the owners and ratepayers on a poll, it will be in the power of the Vestry to secure the whole of the land for public purposes. I have thought it right to explain the part which I have taken in the matter. Although I regard the erection of a destructor as objectionable, I shall consider it my duty, under the circumstances, to vote for the consideration of the Bill, trusting to the good sense of the inhabitants of Kensington and the members of the Vestry to prevent the Bill from being converted into a nuisance.

MR. R. CHAMBERLAIN (Islington, W.): I was one of the Members of the Committee who inquired into the merits of this Bill, and I think I am able, not only from the evidence given to the Committee but from my own personal knowledge, to give a satisfactory answer to the fears which have been expressed by the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. A. O'Connor) in reference to the evils which are likely to arise from the erection of the proposed destructor. First of all, in reply to the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), let me point out that the Bill was brought in originally by the Kensington Vestry, and that if the additional provision proposed by the hon. Member for the Barnstaple Division of Devonshire (Mr. Pitt Lewis), and accepted by the promoters, is assented to, the Vestry will be precluded from erecting a destructor unless they obtain the consent not only of the Vestry, but of the owners and ratepayers. The hon. Member for East Donegal has told the House that the whole of the refuse of this large parish will be brought to the destructor, and that the inhabitants will be annoyed by the perpetual passing of carts conveying objectionable refuse through the district. The hon. Member has been misinformed. Only one-half of the refuse of the parish will be conveyed to this particular spot; the other half will continue to be conveyed to a more convenient site down the River, near the old Cremorne Gardens. It is idle to suppose that the works will be a nuisance when the products of combustion are to be carried away by a chimney 180 feet high. It is, therefore, impossible for the soot to settle down in the middle of the laundry yards adjoining; and, instead of affecting the comfort of this poor neighbourhood, I am inclined to think that it is rather a matter which may concern the wealthier portion of the inhabitants of the parish, who live a little further off, who will be within the radius of the influence of the destructor, and who will get the effluvia, if there is any effluvia, and most of the blacks that may be floating about. If the objectionable particles which are supposed to be given off when the destructor is in full force descend anywhere, it will be in the richer portion of the parish that they will find a settlement. Again, it has been said that after the erection of the destructor there will be no land left for the purpose of providing a recreation ground. The Committee foresaw that objection, and they took special care to provide that three-quarters of an acre of this ground shall be laid out for the purpose of a recreation ground. It is said that it is impossible to provide a recreation ground in similar circumstances; but the experiment has been tried in Birmingham with successful results. Reference has been made to the existence of schools in the locality, and it is said that the health of the school children will suffer. Nothing of the kind has occurred in Birmingham, and there are a large number of schools in the vicinity. No effluvia or noxious gases are given off either to the injury of schools or private residences. The hon. Member for East Donegal stated that it will be impossible to get rid of the whole of the refuse by means of a destructor. Again, I say that the hon. Member is misinformed. From my own personal knowledge, and from the evidence given before the Committee, I can assure him that there will be no difficulty whatever in dealing with the refuse. It might be so in the case of a small destructor, where you have vegetable matter to deal with; but with a destructor on the scale proposed in this Bill there would be no difficulty at all. With regard to the question of accumulation, the hon. Member for East Donegal must be unacquainted with the fact that the Committee dealt with that matter by inserting a clause that no accumulation shall be allowed, but that everything brought to the destructor shall be destroyed at once in the furnaces. The hon. Member denied, further, that there would be any saving to the parish. I believe that there will be a considerable saving; but I would ask the House not to look upon a question of this sort as a question of economy, or of the saving of money. As the member of an important Corporation which has dealt with the subject on a large scale, I feel that there are many things more important to be considered than the mere question of the money involved, and it is upon that ground that I ask the House to pass the Bill, and do all in its power to assist the Vestry of Kensington in getting rid of this refuse in a proper manner—namely, by combustion. The difficulty of getting rid of it is a growing evil in our great towns, especially in connection with small house property. In Birmingham we have no fewer than three separate destructors, and from neither of them is any nuisance whatever experienced. One of them is in the immediate neighbourhood of the general hospital of the town, and there would have been a loud complaint if it had been found in any way to interfere with health. It is quite possible that a destructor may be converted into a nuisance; but the Committee upstairs carefully considered that point, and inserted a clause in the Bill to prevent the possibility of a nuisance being created by requiring the plans to be approved by the Local Government Board. It is further provided that any destructor to be erected upon the lands taken under the Bill shall be constructed in accordance with drawings signed by the Chairman of the Committee and deposited in the offices of the Vestry, or on such other system or with such modifications or illustrations as shall be approved by an engineer or other fit person appointed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department. I believe it is impossible for any noxious gases to escape from the destructor, and any fumes which might otherwise escape from the burning of vegetable refuse will be deodorized and consumed in another way. In Birmingham, although much worse substances are passed through the destructor, there is found to be a total absence of offensive smell. I ask the House to pass the Bill, because it was carefully and honestly considered by the Committee, and because I am able to speak from my own knowledge of the beneficial effects of the working of similar destructors in my own district.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): As the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) has stated, it was my misfortune to preside over the Committee which sat upon this Bill, and it becomes my duty, therefore, as briefly as I can, to state the view at which the Committee arrived. The hon. Member has informed the House that, although the Bill was originally promoted by the Kensington Vestry, the majority of the members of that Vestry now dissent from it. Of course, I have no knowledge of that fact; but if the hon. Member be correct the matter rests entirely in the hands of the Vestry, because the Bill is purely permissive, and there are only three years allowed in which it can be put in force. If the Vestry are opposed to it, it is not necessary that they should take any further action in the matter, and the Bill will naturally drop. The hon. Gentleman says that the ratepayers have nobody to defend their interests. Now, what has happened? An Amendment has been moved by the hon. Member for the Barnstaple Division of Devonshire (Mr. Pitt-Lewis). [Mr. Labouchere: It has not been moved yet.] Well, an Amendment has been placed on the Paper, which the promoters have declared their readiness to accept, to the effect that if the Vestry propose to act on the power which the Bill confers upon them, a *plébiscite* of the owners and ratepayers shall be taken. I confess that I do not see how the wishes of the ratepayers could be better consulted. Perhaps I may be allowed to say what, in the view of the Committee, was the case which had to be dealt with. In some way or other this refuse must be disposed of; and it was admitted on all sides—even by those who gave evidence in opposition to the Bill—that the difficulty of doing that was increasing very much. At one time it was easy to dispose of, and the refuse itself was valuable; but the opposite is the case now. The hon. Member talked about the interests of the poor and the interests of the rich; but can he be seriously aware that under the proposals contained in the Bill it is estimated that, at least, £2,000 a-year will be saved to the ratepayers of North Kensington—the people whom, he says, are going to be so much injured by this Bill? What are the objections of which we have heard so much in the course of this debate, and in the course of the evidence which was given upstairs? The hon. Member who moved the rejection of the Bill carefully abstained from entering into details. I think he was wise in doing so. First of all, he said that the destructor it is proposed to erect must give out noxious gases. All I can say is that the scientific evidence, given by expert after expert, and never in any degree shaken, proved beyond the possibility of doubt that there would be no escape of noxious fumes or gases at all. The hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. A. O'Connor) told the House that it would destroy the laundry industry of the district. I asked him why? Question after question was put in the Committee on that point, but we failed to discover that there was any ground for the apprehension. He said the clothes must be injured by dust and the escape of smoke and noxious gases; but no such escape can occur, and the destructor, it must also be remembered, is to be placed in the centre of four acres of ground. The refuse, when taken there, will be immediately put under cover, and shot into a furnace; and how dust and gas are to escape it is difficult to understand. I have endeavoured to give the subject all the consideration in my power, and I have arrived at the conclusion that the opposition to the Bill, and the objections which have been urged against it, are baseless, and are founded either on prejudice or very imperfect information. Neither the hon. Member for Northampton nor any other hon. Member who has spoken against the Bill has gone into any details, or attempted to explain in what way the injuries they speak of are to follow; and I venture to submit to the House, in justification of the course taken by the Committee, that it is only by a careful study of the details of the question that a right appreciation of the matter can be arrived at. I do not think it is necessary to detain the House longer, although I might say a great deal more upon the subject if it were necessary. No evidence of any other site being available for the purpose was offered to the Committee; and it was proved that the proposed site would cost a great deal less than any other. It was further proved, beyond the possibility of doubt, by the evidence of experts, that no injury would result from the escape of gas, soot, or smoke. It was also shown that in the case of Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, and 20 other large towns which I could name, where these destructors are in work, they are found to answer admirably, and that no possible injury can be done. Under these circumstances, I hope the House will support the decision of the Committee.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I do not intend to enter into the question whether or not this Bill should be read a third time, as it is not a matter that comes under the Local Government Board at all, except that the Local Government Board have given their sanction to the erection of destructors in other parts of the country; and I am informed that, so far, they have been working admirably well, without creating any nuisance at all. It must also be borne in mind that Clause 22 of the Bill provides that—

> "Nothing in this Act shall exonerate the Vestry from any indictment, action, or other proceeding for nuisance in the event of any nuisance being caused by them."

What I desire to say has reference to the clause which the hon. Member for the Barnstaple Division of Devonshire (Mr. Pitt-Lewis) has placed on the Paper, to provide that after the Bill has been passed a poll of the owners and ratepayers shall be taken before it can be put in force. I would ask hon. Members seriously to consider what they are about to do before they vote with that intention in their minds. It is the introduction of an entirely new principle that powers should be conferred upon a Local Authority, and at the same time that it should be intended that the Local Authority should not put such powers in force until a vote of the inhabitants had been taken. I think that to pass such a clause would be to establish an exceedingly bad precedent. As far as I know, there is no more reason why a power of this kind should require the assent of the inhabitants than any other power conferred upon the Local Authority. I desire, therefore, to point out to the House that in my opinion it would be bad policy for the House to assent to a clause which says that in the event of certain powers being conferred upon the Local Authorities under certain circumstances they shall not be exercised.

MAJOR GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith): I would ask the indulgence of the House for a few minutes while I explain the reasons which induce me to oppose the Bill. My constituents will be greatly affected by it, for the locality in which it is proposed to erect this destructor is an exceedingly poor one. It is close to the parish of Hammersmith, near Latymer Road. During the Session before last I attended a large public meeting, at which it was decided to oppose this destructor, and an important Petition, very numerously signed, was got up and presented to this House by me. So poor, however, are the inhabitants of the district that they have not the same opportunity of bringing forward scientific evidence as the Kensington Vestry, and I regret to say that, in consequence of my having been obliged to obtain leave from this House, I was prevented from attending before the Committee and giving evidence on behalf of my constituents. I had hoped, however, that the Committee would have taken into consideration the feeling among the poorer inhabitants of Hammersmith and North Kensington, and the fact that they were being imposed upon by the richer people of South Kensington. A Report has been presented by the promoters of the Bill in which they state that the refuse will be destroyed at a distance of half-a-mile from the parish of Hammersmith. On receiving that Report, I went down to the Sanitary Inspector and he told me distinctly that he preferred the present system, as far as Hammersmith is concerned, to the system that is now proposed to be substituted for it. He told me that it is all nonsense to say that you can get rid of these gases; and, therefore, on behalf of Hammersmith, and also on behalf of that part of North Kensington which is affected by the Bill, I earnestly implore the House to throw out the measure. I regret that we have not been able to put forward the scientific evidence which would have satisfied the right hon. Member for Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin); but I may say that an hon. Member of this House (Mr. Isaacs) to whom the House is much indebted for what has been done in regard to its sanitary improvement, and who is a resident of North Kensington, has kindly told me that, in his opinion, the effect of having this destructor will be most injurious to the neighbourhood. I will leave my hon. Friend to speak for himself, for he is fully qualified to inform the House on the subject. I believe, however, that I may safely leave the matter in the hands of the House in the conviction that they will not permit the poor of North Kensington and Hammersmith to appeal to them in vain. We have been asked what is to be done with the refuse. I see no reason why it should not be put in barges and sent down the River.

MR. ISAACS (Newington, Walworth): I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board if he can inform the House whether, in the event of the clause proposed by the hon. Member for the Barnstaple Division of Devonshire (Mr. Pitt-Lewis) being adopted, the Local Government Board will allow it to form part and parcel of the Bill, because I gathered from his remarks that it would be imprudent on the part of the Government to allow an innovation of that kind? I do not think it necessary to avail myself of the invitation which has been thrown out by the hon. and gallant Member for Hammersmith (Major General Goldsworthy) to state my views on this Bill, because they have already been ably expressed by the Mover and Seconder of the Amendment.

Although I may have considerable knowledge as an expert in this matter, it is unnecessary to detain the House with a statement of those views. I will only say that I fully support the view which has been taken by the hon. and gallant Member for Hammersmith, because I believe that the parish of Kensington, in which I reside, has acted in a most selfish manner in regard to the selection of a site for the destructor. I should not have objected had it been proposed to put up this objectionable machinery in the centre of the parish itself, but to select the confines of the parish, and the poorest part of it, where numerous industries are being carried on, which are sure to suffer from this structure, appears to me to be the most selfish principle any rich parish could adopt. I trust the House will take this view of the case, and will say that the rich parish of Kensington shall confine its operations to its own parish, and shall not seek to impose a nuisance on the adjoining parish of Hammersmith. I shall heartily give my vote for the rejection of the Bill.

SIR ALGERNON BORTHWICK (Kensington, S.): Perhaps I may be allowed to say a word in consequence of the remarks which have been made in regard to the question of the treatment of the poor by the rich. Now there is no such question involved in this Bill. The fact is that the whole of the refuse of South Kensington at present finds its way into the Thames by Chelsea, and will continue to do so. North Kensington, however, does invade a neighbouring borough, and as a matter of fact sends the whole of its refuse to Wood Green, where at present it is burned in the open. The hon. and gallant Member for Hammersmith (Major General Goldsworthy) seems to infer that the operation of the destructor must necessarily be a nuisance in the neighbourhood in which it is erected. I can only say that I have been down to Whitechapel to see the destructor there. I had some difficulty in finding it, and it certainly did not seem to be a very great nuisance, seeing that so very few people knew where it was. When I succeeded in finding it, I made it my business to visit the small shops in the district. I also saw a score of children playing about the streets close by, and in answer to my questions I could not find that any one complained of a nuisance or hardship arising from the existence of this destructor. I hope at South Kensington when the time comes we may have a destructor of our own. At the same time, I may say with regard to North Kensington that the site which has been selected is at present a brick-field—a place certainly not full of the most savoury odours, and I consider that if the Vestry are permitted to put up its destructor it will not be a nuisance, but, on the contrary, will prove a great benefit to the ratepayers and the poor of the district.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. COURTNEY) (Cornwall, Bodmin): I do not propose to detain the House for more than a few minutes, because the subject has been practically threshed out. The hon. Member for Newington (Mr. Isaacs), when appealed to to give his opinion as to the scientific aspect of the question, very wisely declined to do so. The hon. Member gave his evidence before the Committee, and it would have been a very bad precedent to appeal from those who heard him and the other side upstairs to the House below. This is a Bill which was originally promoted by the Vestry of Kensington, and it has passed through Committees of both Houses. It has come down now for the consideration of the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons, and the proposal made by the hon. Member for Northampton is that it should be rejected on what is practically the third reading. Now, I confess that I have heard nothing to lead me to reject the opinion of a Select Committee of this House. No doubt there is a fact which to some extent is material, and that is that the majority of the Vestry which originally promoted the Bill are at present opposed to it; but it must be borne in mind that the Bill only gives power to the Vestry to do certain things permissively, and if hereafter a majority of the Vestry should object to carry into effect the provisions of the Bill it would be impossible to put it into operation at all. There will be a further guarantee in the clause which is suggested by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Barnstaple Division of Devonshire (Mr. Pitt-Lewis), which has been accepted by the promoters of the Bill—namely, that, even if there should be in future a majority of the Vestry in favour of putting the scheme into operation, the owners and ratepayers may be appealed to by a demand, in writing, signed by 30 members of the Vestry or by 300 owners and ratepayers of Kensington, and it will then be necessary to take a poll of the inhabitants. Now, that appears to me to be a complete and efficacious power to place in the hands of the inhabitants in order to prevent any abuse. As the Bill has passed through the ordeal not only of a Committee of this House, but of the House of Lords, I have no hesitation in voting for it.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): The right hon. Member for Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) has relied very strongly upon the evidence of expert witnesses. I wish to say that, in my opinion, expert witnesses are the most unreliable that can be obtained. I believe that if it were necessary I could obtain the evidence of experts upon every side of an abstruse question. Of course the counsel for the promoters know exactly what kind of expert evidence it is desirable to call on their own side of the question, and they take care that no other experts are submitted for examination. I may say that I know nothing of this Bill; but from the knowledge I have of the neighbourhood in which it is proposed to erect this destructor, I think the Kensington Vestry have selected the very worst site that could possibly be obtained. The brick-field they have proposed to take is situated in a complete swamp, and the lowest site which could have been found in the whole district has been pitched upon. I am afraid the result will be that, if this destructor is erected, the entire district will be affected by the fumes of the noxious gases thrown out. I am told that the original promotion of the Bill was carried in the Vestry by a snap-division at a small meeting, but that at the present moment there is a very large majority of the Vestry entirely opposed to the project.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 190; Noes 170: Majority 20,—(Div. List, No. 81.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill *considered*.

MR. PITT-LEWIS (Devon, Barnstaple) moved to insert the following clause:—

Clause 4B.

"No buildings or machinery for the destruction by combustion of the refuse or other materials from streets or houses, which are mentioned in section four hereof, shall be erected on the land taken under this Act, unless and until a resolution that buildings and machinery for the destruction by combustion of such refuse and materials be erected on the said land shall have been passed by the Vestry, at a special meeting convened for that purpose, in the manner provided by the Metropolis Management Acts, which meeting shall not be held before the first day of June, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-seven, and shall not in any year be held at any time between the fifteenth day of July and the twenty-fourth day of October. Provided that, if within fourteen days after the passing of such resolution, a demand in writing, signed either by not less than thirty members of the Vestry or by not less than three hundred of the owners and ratepayers of the parish of Kensington, that the question shall be decided by a poll of the owners and ratepayers of the parish of Kensington, shall be served on the Clerk to the Vestry, then the question whether or not such resolution shall have effect shall be decided by a poll of owners and ratepayers of the said parish of Kensington, such poll shall be taken by voting papers, with the same incidents and conditions (so far as applicable) as to the qualifications of voters and scale of voting, as to notice to be given by the summoning officer, delivery, filling up, and collection of voting papers, as to the counting of votes, and as to penalties for neglect or refusal to comply with the provisions herein incorporated, as are contained in and in all other respects so far as practicable in the same way as is provided by the Third Schedule to 'The Public Health Act, 1875,' with respect to the taking of a poll of owners and ratepayers. The summoning officer for the purposes of taking such poll shall be the Clerk to the Vestry. The expenses of any poll taken under this section shall be deemed to be, within the meaning of section twenty-four hereof, expenses in relation to this Act."

New Clause (Consent of Vestry to erection of destructors,)—(*Mr. Pitt-Lewis,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) moved the adjournment of the debate.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Chance,*)—put, and *negatived*.

Original Question again proposed.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's):

I really must protest, notwithstanding what the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees has stated in reference to this clause, that it is an absolutely new thing to confer by special enactment power upon a Local Authority, and at the same time to say that that power is not to be exercised until there has been an opportunity afforded to the inhabitants for deciding whether it is to be exercised or not. There are many cases in which the Local Authorities cannot avail themselves of the benefit of certain Statutes — as, for example, the Free Libraries Act—without first consulting the ratepayers; but, so far as I know, there is not a single instance in which a Local Authority dealing with powers which have been conferred on them by Statute have had imposed on them the duty of going to the ratepayers and asking them for a vote as to whether or not those powers shall be exercised. In my opinion, that change is most undesirable, and therefore I oppose the Motion.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): The circumstances of the case are somewhat peculiar, and I must say I cannot but feel that the right hon. Gentleman opposite has touched a matter of great importance. It is one of those matters which, perhaps, the House is necessarily exposed to have raised in connection with Private Bills, but which really involves public principles. Now to me the proposal of the hon. Member has all the appearance of a startling novelty, that the House, in granting powers to a Local Authority, should likewise insert a condition that the Local Authority should go before its constituents before it can be allowed to exercise those powers. [Mr. Courtney: That is not accurate.] If that is so, I am glad to hear it. Perhaps my hon. Friend the Chairman of Committees will have the goodness to explain afterwards the exact position; but I must say, if the case were as I have represented it, I think it would be a very dangerous precedent, and would go far to make the House of Commons responsible for all the abuse of power, or misuse of power, by Local Authorities. However, I am glad to find from my hon. Friend that the case is not as I had put it. At the same time, I think there should be a clear understanding on the subject.

The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES (Mr. Courtney) (Cornwall, Bodmin): The state of the case is this. The duty imposed upon the Vestry of consulting their constituents is not imperative, but only in the event of a certain proportion of the Vestry objecting to the exercise of the powers. In that case it is proposed that a vote of ratepayers shall be taken. I think that is a material alteration, and I cannot discover the grave objections which the right hon. Gentleman opposite has raised against that limitation, more especially as there is an analogous provision in the Borough Funds Act, which requires, under certain circumstances, the sanction of the constituency to be given by a poll. If there were a matter of doubt it might deserve arguing; but I do not feel that there can be the slightest doubt in the matter, and, therefore, I fail to see why the right hon. Gentleman opposite should oppose the clause.

Mr. PITT-LEWIS (Devon, Barnstaple): As I drafted the Amendment, perhaps I may be allowed to explain the peculiar circumstances of the case. Of course, I was aware that no Vestry has a right to ask from Parliament anything beyond the statutory powers it is entitled to have. I have already stated that the residents of the parish were utterly unaware of what the Vestry of Kensington were doing. Happening myself to observe on the Papers of the House this innocent-looking Bill, called the "Kensington Vestry Bill," I obtained a copy of it at the Private Bill Office, and found, to my amazement, what it was. I had never heard of it before, and I immediately took action, and the result was that as soon as the constituents found out what the Vestry were doing the public opinion of the parish was organized, and a strong Committee formed to oppose the Bill. By their exertions they succeeded in turning out every member of the Vestry who came forward to support the Bill; 19 members who went out had been supporting the Bill, but the 20th was retained because he had behaved properly and had opposed it. That shows that the constituency do not want the Bill. It is not quite accurate to say that no precedent can be found for a clause of this kind. There was a precedent in the case of the St. Helen's Improvement Bill, in which exactly the same thing I now propose was done. In that case power was given which was only to be exercised in a certain contingency. If the expenditure was likely to be exceeded, the Local Authorities were to go back to the constituency and obtain their consent. The effect of the compromise which is suggested by the present clause is that the Vestry will be enabled to buy the land, and if it cannot be utilized for the erection of a destructor, they will have power to lay it out as a recreation ground, or to devote it to other parochial purposes. Now, the erection of a destructor is a new thing, and I think it is not too much to ask that the Vestry, before proceeding with such an erection, should ascertain whether they have the consent of the inhabitants, and whether the majority of the owners and ratepayers are desirous of exercising the power with this Bill sanctions. I think that the analogy of the St. Helen's case is perfect, and that when it is proposed to go beyond ordinary matters it should be necessary to consult the constituents. I believe that this House has again and again adopted the principle. For instance, there is a clause in the Public Health Act under which fairs and markets can only be established by means of a proceeding something like this; and there is a common instance in the case of the application of the Free Libraries Act. That Act cannot be adopted without previously obtaining the consent of the parish. So also in regard to the Borough Funds Act, which Act indicates the mode in which the opinion of the constituency shall be obtained—namely, by voting papers. I have adopted the machinery of the Borough Funds Act in this clause. I appeal to the House to accept the clause, because it has been accepted by the promoters of the Bill, and is, in fact, the result of the withdrawal of a considerable amount of opposition. Therefore, under the very peculiar circumstances of the case, I hope the House and the right hon. Gentleman opposite will allow the clause to pass. Until the President of the Local Government Board rose a few minutes ago and expressed the disapproval of the Government, I had received no intimation that it was intended to throw any opposition in the way of the clause.

COLONEL MAKINS (Essex, S.E.): I think it is a very inconvenient proceeding, to introduce into a Private Bill any new principle affecting our local legislation. I was glad to hear the remark which fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) in deprecation of this clause. I can perfectly well understand why the clause has received the support of the hon. Gentleman the Chairman of Committees (Mr. Courtney). It is because it is the introduction of the thin end of the wedge of that scheme of proportional representation in which the right hon. Member takes so great an interest. I think that if we are going to deal with questions of this kind which are questions of great principle, it should be done by means of a Public Act and not by a clause dragged into a Private Bill. I hope the House will reject this clause.

SIR ROPER LETHBRIDGE (Kensington, N.): I wish to support the Amendment, and in doing so I should like to point out that a considerable number of Members have probably been induced to vote in the majority in the recent Division on the supposition that this Amendment would probably be accepted by the House. Such an inducement was certainly held out to hon. Members. The right hon. Member for the Liskeard Division of Cornwall (Mr. Courtney), and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin)—to whose powerful and clear speeches I have no doubt the success of the Bill has been due—distinctly alleged that this clause had been put down, and stated that when it came on it would remove a large number of the objections which had been raised to the Bill. I think that the fact of this clause being on the Paper, together with the speech of the right hon. Gentlemen, induced many hon. Members to vote as they did just now, and to constitute the majority of 20 by which the Amendment was rejected. This clause is one which does not in every respect meet all the objections which are felt in North Kensington to the Bill itself. That has been pointed out, and is, I think, admitted even by the hon. Member who proposes the clause. I think the House ought certainly to give the Vestry of Kensington and the ratepayers of Kensington a chance of reconsidering their position. Whether they will exercise the option given to them will depend very largely on the amount of conscience that may be developed on the part of the ratepayers of South Kensington in regard to their treatment of their poorer neighbours in North Kensington. For my own part, I trust that their consciences will be touched, and, therefore, I urge the House to accept the clause.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): If this clause introduced any new principle I should regard it as very serious, and a matter that would require further and careful consideration; but I do not understand that that is the case, although I am unable to state the fact of my own knowledge. I am informed, however, that the same principle has already been embodied in other Acts. It is quite true that I did hold out this clause as an inducement to the House to vote for the Bill, and I did so on the ground that the promoters had agreed to accept it. Under such circumstances, I shall feel bound to accept it myself. It may have the effect of inducing the Vestry to make up their minds more clearly than they have hitherto done.

Major-General GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith): The clause does not remove my objection to the Bill, seeing that it proposes that the question shall be decided solely by the vote of the ratepayers of the parish of Kensington. Now, I am interested for the parish of Hammersmith—which has no voice in the matter—and therefore I feel obliged to vote against the clause.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I am the representative of humanity. We lost the last Division because the hon. Member for the Barnstaple Division of Devon (Mr. Pitt-Lewis) said that, although he disapproved of the Bill, he should vote in favour of it, so that he might put in this clause. Now, I am entirely opposed to the Bill itself, and also to the clause of the hon. Gentleman; and I am opposed to the clause because a right hon. Gentleman of the highest experience—the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone)—says that it raises an objectionable principle. It seems to me, therefore, that we ought, as practical persons, to vote against the clause of the hon. Gentleman, and the clause having been defeated, then take a Division on the Main Question. The hon. Gentleman will then vote for us, because he said he would if he did not get this clause, and then we shall do all we can to throw out the Bill.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I regard the elections for Vestrymen which occurred in May last as decisive of the question locally, so far as North Kensington is concerned; but the clause of the hon. Member for Devonshire enables the whole of the people of the parish of Kensington, including North, South, East, and West, to vote. That is not, I think, a fair issue to raise, seeing that the people who are locally concerned are those who are outside South Kensington. I am an inhabitant of a neighbouring parish, and I shall certainly object, whatever other people may do. I am satisfied that if it had not been for the interposition of the hon. Member for Devonshire, who, of course, is in love with his own clause, the House would never have been induced to give the vote they did a short time ago. His proposition is a perfectly inadmissible proposition, and it will be necessary to take another Division even if the hon. Member persists in dividing upon the clause.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Motion made, and Question, "That the Clause be added to the Bill," put, and *negatived.*

An Amendment made.

Bill to be read the third time.

## *QUESTIONS.*

—o—

### ACCOMMODATION FOR PRISONERS AWAITING TRIAL—SCOTLAND AND IRELAND.

Sir JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in view of the recent revelations respecting the very unsatisfactory condition of the accommodation for prisoners awaiting trial in many of the Court Houses of England and Wales, the Government will institute a similar official investigation in reference to the Court Houses in Scotland and Ireland?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E): I have consulted the Lord Advocate and the Irish Government on this subject, and I am informed by them that, while they are not aware of any deficiencies in the accommodation for prisoners awaiting trial in Scotland and Ireland, yet, in order that any public anxiety on the subject may be allayed, inquiry will, nevertheless, be made, and I will communicate the results to the hon. Baronet as soon as they are received.

## EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS—NEWPORT PAGNELL.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether his attention has been called to the recent inquest, at Newport Pagnell, on a boy named Harry Pack, and to the following facts:—That it was found that Harry Pack had died from inflammation of the membrane of the brain; that evidence was given that the assistant master of the National School had struck Harry Pack on the back of the head with a ruler; that, although the assistant master stated that "he was certain he did not strike one of the lads with a ruler," he admitted that "he had touched them with his hands;" that the jury appended to their verdict the rider—

> "That, though there is not sufficient evidence to prove to the jury that a blow had been struck, they wish to record their opinion that corporal punishment in schools should not in any case be inflicted by any other than the head master;"

and, whether he will, in view of such cases, further strengthen the Revised Instructions to Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools on the subject of corporal punishment, and take any further steps necessary to prevent corporal punishment being inflicted by assistant masters, and especially to prevent punishment in the form of blows on the heads of children?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): My attention has been called to the case referred to, and I desire to point out to the hon. Member that the present Instructions to Her Majesty's Inspectors contain an expression of opinion preisely similar to that placed on record by the jury. Where such a rule is not observed, it would be the duty of the Inspector to take it into consideration in assessing the "merit" grant; and in gross cases it would be competent for the Department to suspend the certificate, or refuse all recognition of the teacher.

## INLAND REVENUE—INCOME TAX IN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If it is a fact that Chambers of Commerce are being assessed for duty upon their income, which is provided by voluntary contributions, in the interests of the trade and commerce of the country; and if, having regard to section 11, sub-section 6, of "The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1885," this is a legal or proper assessment?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Under the Customs and Inland Revenue Act of 1885 a duty is levied—with certain exceptions—in respect of all real and personal property belonging to any body, corporate or incorporate; but it is not leviable if such property be acquired out of funds voluntarily contributed. It is held that annual subscriptions to Chambers of Commerce do not constitute property, real or personal, within the meaning of the Act; and, therefore, no duty is levied on Chambers of Commerce in respect of their income derived from such subscriptions. On the other hand, the subscriptions are not regarded as voluntary in the sense in which the word is used in the Act; and, consequently, in the few cases where the subscriptions have been invested in real or personal property, the income derived from such investment has been brought into assessment. A case involving the legal interpretation of the term "voluntary" is now pending in the Court of Queen's Bench, and a decision is shortly expected.

## CIVIL ESTABLISHMENTS—THE COMMISSIONERS, SCOTLAND.

MR FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Commissioners on Civil Establishments are to hold sittings in Scotland; and, if so, how soon they may be expected in Edinburgh?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I am unable to give a definite answer to the hon. Member's Question. As he is aware, a visit to Scotland does not rest with the Treasury, but with the Royal Commission itself; but I am informed that the Civil Establishments Commissioners may, probably, before concluding their inquiry, find it necessary to visit Scotland, but the date of such visit, if it is eventually made, cannot be fixed at present.

## SCOTLAND—SASINE OFFICE, EDINBURGH.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire) asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If there be no separate Account showing a surplus of revenue in the Sasine Office, Edinburgh, as recently stated by him, upon what data did the Treasury authorize the reduction, in 1885, of the fees of searching in the General Register of Sasines; whether such reduction of fees has not caused a deficit against the Office; and, out of what funds is that deficit met?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The data upon which the Treasury reduced, in 1885, the fees for searching in the General Register of Sasines had no direct reference to the amounts previously collected. The chief reasons for the reduction in 1885 were that the high rates previously charged operated to some extent as an impediment against using searches, and that a considerable reduction in the rates would bring searches for incumbrances into more general use, and operate as a security and convenience to the public. The amount of fees received for searches has been less since the reduction than previously; but the orders for searches are now increasing in number, and it is anticipated that the annual amounts received at the reduced rate will ultimately exceed the amounts previously drawn at the higher rates. The fees received are paid over to the Exchequer, and no fund is charged with the deficiency. The whole charges applicable to the Registrar House are defrayed from Votes of Parliament.

## SCOTLAND—GENERAL REGISTER HOUSE, EDINBURGH.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the reduction fees for Searchers in the General Register House, Edinburgh, gazetted 6th October, 1885, was laid before The Lord President, Lord Clerk Register, Lord Advocate, and Lord Justice Clerk, in terms of Section 25 of the Act 31 & 32 *Vict. c.* 64.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities): This document was laid before these officials. As regards the Lord President, the Lord Justice Clerk, and the Lord Advocate, their attention was not called to any special matter contained in the document, which was simply transmitted to them for signature in ordinary course.

## SCOTLAND—SASINE OFFICE, EDINBURGH.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH (Inverness-shire) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he is aware that there is no separate account kept of the Revenue and Expenditure of the Sasine Office, Edinburgh; if he will state from what source did the Crown Agent for Scotland prepare the Return of Revenue and Expenditure of the Sasine Office, presented to Parliament in August, 1877, and are the same means still in existence; if they are, will he cause the Return of 1877 to be brought down to 1886-7; and, what means he possesses of ascertaining that the fees drawn are not greater than may reasonably be held sufficient for defraying the expenses of the Department, as provided for by Section 25 of "The Land Register (Scotland) Act, 1868?"

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: Separate sub-heads of Votes and accounts for each of the several offices of the Register House have been discontinued since 1882-3, in accordance with the Report of a Departmental Committee on the Register House. The Return presented in 1877 of the Crown Agent was prepared by the Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer from information received partly from other Departments and partly through the books of his own Department, which then contained separate accounts for the Sasine Office. I am informed that, though the separate accounts are no longer kept, yet from memoranda as to the amount of stamps cancelled in each Department, a similar Return brought down to 1886-7 can be prepared with approximate accuracy; and if the hon. Member will move for it after the 31st instant, there will be no objection on the part of the Government to giving it. The Treasury believe that the fees are not more than sufficient to cover the whole cost of the Department.

### RAILWAYS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—TOTON SIDINGS ON THE MIDLAND RAILWAY.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether the attention of the Board of Trade has been given to the mode of working at Toton sidings on the Midland Railway; and, whether it is true that at the north end there are nine roads without fixed signals, and that the only signals given are given by hand or by lamp; and, if so, whether any communication has been, or will be, made by the Board of Trade to the Company on the subject?

The SECRETARY (Baron Henry De Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The connections between the sidings and the main line at Toton on the Midland Railway were inspected and authorized to be opened in 1882. There are nine sidings at the north end; but the inspection made by the Board of Trade only related to the connections between them and the passenger lines. It is not necessary, under the Regulation of Railways Acts, nor is it usual, that an inspection should be made of the arrangements in the yards for working or signalling such sidings. It is, however, usual and preferable to work such sidings in the yards from a separate box, and not by hand signalling.

### FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—WORKS AT GREYSTONES.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) (for Mr. W. J. Corbet) (Wicklow, E.) asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he is aware that little or nothing is being done towards the completion of the harbour works at Greystones; whether it is a fact that the term of the contract expired on 1st November last, and that it was then stated the work would be finished by May next; whether he is aware that the fishermen have no shelter for their boats; and, whether he will take any steps with a view to the completion of the harbour in a reasonable time?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): I am informed that—(1) The present contractor is actively engaged in preparations for this season's work. (2) The original contract expired on the first of November; the present one will expire on the 1st of May next, but no statement was made that the works would be finished on that day. (3) The works do not interfere with the shelter previously existing, and the hon. Member is aware that, so far as the funds available allow, the additional shelter asked for by the fishermen will be provided. (4) I am informed that every effort is being, and will be, made to hasten the completion not only of the works originally designed, but of the additional shelter to which I have just referred.

### LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS, 1885-6—RETURN.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) (for Mr. W. J. Corbet) (Wicklow, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, as President of the Irish Local Government Board, If he will give a Return showing the working of the Labourers (Ireland) Acts 1885-6, from the commencement up to the present time, giving the number of cottages erected, and the expenses connected therewith?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): Returns giving the information as to the working of the Labourers (Ireland) Acts up to the end of last March are already before the House in the Annual Report of the Local Government Board, and they will be continued to the end of the present month in the Board's next Annual Report, which is in course of preparation. Under these circumstances, the hon. Member will probably agree with me that nothing would be gained by laying a special Return on the Table.

### ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—MILLTOWN.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway. N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If a large force of Constabulary, accompanied by the County and District Inspector, was drafted into Milltown on the 6th and 7th instant; if such a large force was necessary; and, if its presence there will entail any expenditure on the barony or on the County of Galway?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): Reference to the locality mentioned has been made with the view of obtaining the information asked for; but there has not been time for the receipt of a reply.

### ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—MR. J. M'NULTY, OF LOUGHGLYNN.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, inasmuch as the prosecution of Mr. J. M'Nulty, of Loughglynn, has been abandoned by the Government, the money taken forcibly and without warrant from his person by Sergeant Wharton, of the Royal Irish Constabulary, has been restored to M'Nulty; and, if not, how soon this will be done?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I understand that, the Crown having decided not to proceed with the prosecution, and the Assizes for the County of Roscommon being over, the money will be returned to the person from whose custody it was taken.

### ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—HEAD CONSTABLE O'HALLORAN, OF ENNIS.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the case of Head Constable O'Halloran, of Ennis, Whether the present Inspector General of Irish Constabulary, when a Divisional Magistrate, forbade the Head Constable to visit the district of Teakle (where he had been stationed), on the ground that his visits there were succeeded by crime and outrage; whether the late County Inspector of Clare made a like order for an identical reason; whether, during the time when Head Constable O'Halloran was quartered in the district of Teakle, disorder and crime prevailed there; and, whether the district had been peaceable and free from crime before his arrival, and again became so after his departure; whether the Irish Government have had brought to their notice the dying deposition of a man named Slattery, accusing Head Constable O'Halloran of having induced him to procure a witness to give false evidence against the brothers Delahunty, now suffering penal servitude for life; whether inquiry has been made of Patrick Loughrey, as to his declaration that Head Constable O'Halloran gave him £10 to induce him to procure the commission of crime; whether inquiry has been made, or will be made, into the charge that Head Constable O'Halloran forged a letter, in the name of the Member for East Clare, enclosing the £10 note; and, whether the £10 note given by Head Constable O'Halloran to Patrick Loughrey had been supplied to the Head Constable, or was repaid to him, out of any public fund; and, if so, out of what fund, and to what official the money may be returned?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I am informed that there is no ground for the allegations in the first three paragraphs of the Question. The declaration made by Slattery was under the consideration both of Earl Spencer and the Earl of Carnarvon when holding the Office of Viceroy of Ireland. They both fully investigated the statements made therein, and neither of them saw any reason to take any action in consequence of them. No such inquiry has been made, or will be made, as is suggested in the fifth and sixth paragraphs of the Question. The circumstances under which the Head Constable used an assumed name do not in any way support the construction attempted to be put upon them. I cannot make any statement as to what source the money came from. It is open to Loughrey to return it to the Head Constable if, as is probable, he thinks he has no right to keep it.

Mr. SEXTON: As the money was abstracted from the public purse, and as I have the £10 note here, will the right hon. Gentleman name the official to whom it should be returned?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I shall be very happy to receive it from the hon. Gentleman.

### EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—REFUNDING THE FIVE PER CENT. COUPON TAX.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that the Egyptian Government has instructed the Caisse of the debt to commence refunding the Five per Cent Coupon Tax; and, if so, how soon he can undertake to lay before the House Papers containing the facts on which this decision was arrived at?

The UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government have been informed by telegraph that instructions have been given by the Egyptian Government to the Caisse to refund the Five per Cent Coupon Tax. A despatch on this subject will be included in the Papers now about to be presented to Parliament, and further statements of the accounts will be added when received. I may, in the meantime, state that it has been known for some time that the funds in the hands of the Caisse to be applied to this purpose, according to Article 21 of the Decree of July, 27, 1885, were more than sufficient.

### METEOROLOGICAL OFFICIAL REPORT —WEATHER FORECASTS.

MR. LLEWELLYN (Somerset, N.) asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether, considering the advantage such information would prove to farmers and others, he will cause the latest available weather forecast to be daily exhibited at all post offices throughout the country?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I have been requested by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster to reply to the Question of the hon. Member. I believe that the desired object can be secured, inasmuch as the Meteorological Office is willing to supply the forecasts at a nominal charge to anyone who is willing to pay the expense of telegraphing, which need rarely be more than 6*d*. for each message. If the persons interested in forecasts in each town or district jointly subscribed, the expense to each would be inconsiderable; and there will be no objection to the exhibition of forecasts at the local post offices, provided space is available, if the persons to whom the telegrams were addressed desire them to be so exhibited, instead of being delivered.

### FUNDS IN CHANCERY.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, with reference to the recently published list of Chancery and other funds which have not been dealt with for 15 years, Whether he can state the total amount of the balances standing to the credit of the accounts; whether the whole of this money has been unclaimed during the period mentioned; and, whether, having regard to the prevailing misconception as to the amount of these funds, he will consider the propriety of publishing additional information, showing the balance on each account, the order of Court affecting the account, and such other particulars as it may be practicable to publish?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The total amount of the balances referred to by the hon. Gentleman is about £1,000,000; and the number of the separate accounts to which these balances relate is about 3,000, showing an average balance of between £300 and £400. The whole amount represented has been unclaimed not less than 15 years. There have, however, been constant applications during the period for information in regard to many of these accounts; but no claims have been substantiated resulting in any order of the Court for the disposal of any part of the funds. In the recent publication of the list additional information of a general nature has been given for the purpose of removing a large amount of misconception which appears to prevail with regard to the magnitude of these unclaimed funds. Thus, as stated in *The Gazette*, out of the whole of the accounts cited in the list only 1-19th of the balances exceed £1,000, and only one-third exceed £100. The Treasury is of opinion that the extended information given to the public with the list just published is sufficient for the object in view, and that it is not desirable to give further details.

### EVICTIONS (IRELAND) — LIFFORD ASSIZES—HANNAH O'DONNELL.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the information before, and the evidence at, the trial of Hannah O'Donnell, at Lifford Assizes, for alleged forcible entry, and the informations in several similar cases, disclose the fact that the police entered the houses of the defendants, interrogated the inmates, asked them to quit, and that, for over a month, they had been watching the houses from which these defendants had been evicted; whether the houses were for most of that time lying open; whether any bailiff or other person, on behalf of the landlord, was in possession, or watching the houses; whether anything was done from the day of the eviction by the landlord to secure the possession; whether the houses were built by the tenants; whether their time for redemption, after eviction, had expired; whether the police receive any remuneration for their services from the landlord in such cases; whether Sergeant Mahony was directed by the Lord Chief Baron to say if he had a Circular of Instructions for doing as above, and whether he claimed privilege for not producing it through claiming that he acted under a Circular issued several years before; and, whether he will call for further explanations as to this case?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Answers to these several details as to alleged matters of fact cannot be given without reference to the locality, for which the hon. Member has allowed no opportunity.

MR. O'DOHERTY: Is not the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Question appeared substantially in another form nearly a week ago?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Question appeared in so substantially another form that no part of it resembled the Question now on the Paper. I did answer, as a matter of fact, the former Question.

## LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—PROTRACTION OF ASSIZES —QUARTER SESSIONS.

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the great waste of judicial time, the undue protraction of the Assizes in populous places, and the heavy expenses thrown upon the country by a practice introduced of recent years, whereby the Judges of Assize try prisoners committed by the magistrates to take their trial at Quarter or Adjourned Sessions of the Peace; whether he is aware that the ancient form of the Commission of Assize for the County of Lancaster was altered a few years ago, to enable this change to be effected, and that Grand Juries in Lancashire have made presentments against the new system; and, whether Her Majesty's Government are prepared, by legislation or otherwise, to procure that prisoners committed to take their trial at Quarter or Adjourned Sessions of the Peace should (unless otherwise specially ordered) be tried there, and not elsewhere?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The whole of this subject, including not only the times and places of holding the Criminal Assizes, but also the times for holding Sessions, has been for some time under the consideration of a Committee of the Judges, at the request of the Lord Chancellor and the Council of the Supreme Court. Their Report is very soon expected, and will receive immediate attention.

## ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—DISCREPANCY IN AMOUNTS OF EXPENDITURE.

MR. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can explain the discrepancy between the sum of £1,411,539, given in Return 28, printed 11th February, 1887, as the total expenditure on the Royal Irish Constabulary for the year ended 31st March, 1886, and the sum of £1,387,169, given in the Appropriation Accounts, Civil Service Estimates, Class 3, Vote 29, p. 342, as the total expenditure on the Royal Irish Constabulary for the same period; and, if the sum in the Return is incorrect, whether he will cause a fresh one to be made?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): There is no real discrepancy between these Returns. The difference falls almost entirely under the head of the cost of barracks, and is caused by the fact that in the Appropriation Accounts credit is given for the sums repaid by members of the Force for lodging accommodation; while in the special Return prepared last August the gross rent of barracks is included, as the Inspector General believed that to be in conformity with the intention of the Return. There are also some smaller items, chiefly under the head of pensions paid in the Colonies, as to which the necessary documents had not been received from abroad when the Return was prepared. I shall be happy to give the hon. Member the detailed figures, if he wishes to see them.

## POST OFFICE—THE POSTAL UNION—THE AUSTRALIAN COLONIES.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, in reference to his recommendation to the Australian Colonies to join the Postal Union, Is he aware that the postage to India, which is only half way to Australia, is 5*d.*, though it is in the Postal Union; what guarantee have we that, if the Australian Colonies joined the Postal Union, the charges would be reduced, and better rates obtained than now exists to India; and, is it a fact that nine-tenths of the British Countries and Colonies which have joined the Union are charged for postage 5*d.* or 4*d.* from Great Britain, and 2½*d.* from France, Germany, or Italy?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): The postage of a letter to India is 5*d.*, and if the Australian Colonies joined the Postal Union they would probably adopt the same charge for their letters to Europe. To most of the British Colonies which are members of the Postal Union the charge for a letter from England is 4*d.* or 5*d*; because beyond the fundamental union rate of 2½*d.*, the British Post Office charges an extra rate for sea or foreign transit. Italy charges, as we do, a surtax of 1½*d.*, in addition to the fundamental union rate, for all letters sent to places beyond sea. But France and Germany, in the exercise of their right to levy or not to levy the sea surtax, limit their charge to the rate of 2½*d.* to all countries of the Union. The French and German Governments pay much higher subsidies relatively for their Packet Services than the British Government do. The considerable loss in point of postal revenue consequent thereon must be thrown on the taxpayers of each country, an arrangement which I apprehend would not be a generally welcome innovation in our fiscal system.

## EGYPT (THE MILITARY EXPEDITION)—R. A. CATHIE, GUNNER OF THE "SPHYNX."

Sir SAMUEL WILSON (Portsmouth) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, If Mr. Richard Cathie, Gunner in the Royal Navy, has been in any way rewarded for his conduct in the field at the Battles of El Teb and Tamai in the Soudan; and, if not, if it be intended to confer any special reward on him for his services, as shown in the following extract from *The Royal Navy List*, p. 309:—

> "R. A. Cathie, Gunner of *Sphynx*, served during the operations in the Eastern Soudan, 1884. Landed with Naval Brigade and present at Battles of El Teb and Tamai, mentioned in despatches; during the engagement of El Teb he had more than one hand-to-hand encounter with the enemy; for the gallantry he displayed both in bringing his gun into action, and for his bravery in his personal encounters with the enemy, he was strongly recommended by General Buller, and was also thanked on the Field by Commander Rolfe the next morning; on his returning afloat he was specially thanked by Admiral Hewett for his bravery at El Teb. At the Battle of Tamai he was recommended by General Graham for his bravery. (Egyptian Medal, Khedive Bronze Star, El Teb and Tamai Clasps.)"

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): The Admiralty are not responsible for the services recorded in *The Royal Navy List*, the information there given being supplied by the officers themselves. Mr. Cathie's recommendations from official sources are good; and, as in the case of all officers who are specially mentioned, are duly recorded in his favour. As to any "special reward," I can only refer to the reply given by the hon. Member for Barrow (Mr. Caine) on the same subject, when Civil Lord of the Admiralty, on March 9, 1885.

## IRELAND—THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE, GALWAY.

Mr. PINKERTON (Galway) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that the President, Members of Council, and Office-bearers of Queen's College, Galway, are, without a single exception, Protestant; whether appointments in the Royal University, with which the College is connected, are regulated by the principle of securing a Catholic element to the extent of at least one-half in all offices and Examinerships; and, if the Government is prepared to make such appointments and changes in the College Statutes as will insure the presence of Catholics on the Governing Body and Staff of a College intended for the higher education of a Province containing 783,000 Catholics and 35,000 Protestants of all denominations?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I have no official information on the subject of the first paragraph of the Question. The hon. Member is, I think, under a misapprehension as to the connection which he suggests between the Royal University and the Queen's Colleges, although, no doubt, the officers of the former are, to some extent, selected from among the College Professors. The Government are not prepared to make such a change in the College statutes as is proposed; such a change would be contrary to the spirit of the Act under which the Colleges were founded.

### COMMISSIONERS OF IRISH LIGHTS—LIGHTHOUSE KEEPERS AND CHILDREN.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, What arrangement has been made, since last year, to provide for the better education of the children of lighthouse keepers in Ireland, and to enable the lighthouse keepers to attend Divine Service on Sundays; and, what rock stations have been, or are to be, made relieving stations?

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Since the hon. Member raised this question last year the Board of Trade have collected from the General Lighthouse Authorities of England, Scotland, and Ireland certain detailed information upon the subject referred to in the Question. If the hon. Member desires to move for a Return of the questions put by the Board of Trade to these Lighthouse Authorities, and a synopsis of their replies, there will be no objection to give it. But as the matter is of no general public interest, perhaps the hon. Gentleman will be content with obtaining the information he requires from me at the Board of Trade Office.

### THE WRECK COMMISSION—RETURN OF INQUIRIES, 1885.

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether he can lay before the House a Return giving the number of inquiries held, during the financial year 1885-6, under the Wreck Commission, specifying where each inquiry was held, and whether before the Wreck Commissioner or a magistrate?

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The information as to inquiries under the Wreck Commission will be included in the Wreck Abstract for 1885-6, which will be presented as soon as it is completed.

### MERCHANT SHIPPING—PILOT CERTIFICATES TO FOREIGN SUBJECTS.

MR. C. H. WILSON (Hull, W.) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, How many certificates as Pilots in British waters granted to foreign subjects are now in force.

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): There are now in force five pilotage certificates granted to masters or mates of foreign vessels, all in the Hull district. In 30 other cases the annual renewal of similar certificates has been suspended, pending the decision of Parliament on the Bill introduced by the hon. Member's Colleague (Mr. King); 28 of these are within the jurisdiction of the London Trinity House, and two within that of the Hull Trinity House.

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS (IRELAND)—MOUNTMELLICK UNION.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the following 10 ratepayers in the townland of Derrygrule, in Mountmellick Union, have for years voted in all the elections in the electoral division of Mountmellick until 1885, namely, John Quigley, Mary Meehan, James Brien, James Quigley, Edward Jones, William Tanner, John Conroy, Richard Dickenson, Bridget Bergin, and John Walsh; whether the newly appointed clerk, acting as Returning Officer, has disallowed the votes of the ratepayers mentioned, although they have paid the rates assessed on their holdings; and, whether the Local Government Board will take steps to protect the rights of the persons in question at the present election?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Local Government Board have communicated with the Returning Officer, and have ascertained that he has issued voting papers for the present election to all the persons mentioned, except two, who are not rated.

## THE MAURITIUS—CONSTITUTION OF THE LATE COMMISSION.

Mr. O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.) (for Mr. Cox) (Clare, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, If he has received a Memorial, signed by certain Catholics of the Mauritius on behalf of the Catholic population of the island, protesting against the constitution and mode of procedure of the late Commission, sent to report on the affairs of the Mauritius, and sit in judgment on the Governor of the Colony; whether the Catholic population numbers 108,000, against 8,000 Protestants; whether Sir John Pope Hennessy was the first Catholic Governor sent there by Her Majesty's Government since the conquest of the Seychelles; whether the Head of the Commission, the Secretary, the Law Adviser, and the two other Members of the Commission were all Protestants; whether the Members of the Commission were unable, or unwilling, to make use of the French language, and refused to take the evidence of several of the Mauritians because they could only speak French; whether French is the language of the Catholics of the Colony; and, if the use of it was guaranteed to them as their chief National custom by the terms of the Treaty of Capitulation of 1810; whether Sir John Pope Hennessy was condemned unheard; whether, a few days before, General Hawley (the officer at present administering the Government) was called upon to take up the reins of office, he presided at a meeting of the members of the Bible Association, at which proselytism by the Protestant clergy amongst the Catholic children of the community was referred to in terms of congratulation; whether he has any information to show that the proceedings of the Commission, the suspension of Sir John Pope Hennessy, and the appointment of General Hawley, have caused much anger and resentment on the part of the Colonists towards England; and, what action Her Majesty's Government intend taking in the matter?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Sir Henry Holland) (Hampstead): I have received such Memorial, signed by 10 inhabitants of Mauritius, who appear to be Roman Catholics, but do not profess to have signed it on behalf of the Roman Catholics of Mauritius. The numbers stated are substantially correct, according to the Census of 1881; but it may be added that two-thirds of the population are neither Roman Catholics nor Protestants. I cannot say positively; but probably Sir John Pope Hennessy was the first Roman Catholic Governor of Mauritius. Sir Hercules Robinson, who was the sole Commissioner, the Secretary to the Commission, and the Legal Adviser to the Commissioner, were Protestants. The persons referred to as the two other members of the staff are probably Sir Hercules Robinson's private secretary, and the shorthand writer employed to take down notes of the evidence. The former is a Protestant; as to the latter, I cannot answer. The proceedings of the Commission were conducted in the English language, which is the language used in the Law Courts of Mauritius. The witnesses who gave parole evidence were examined in English; but witnesses who preferred to make written depositions in French were allowed to do so. French is the language spoken by the bulk of the Christian inhabitants of the island. The Treaty of Capitulation provided that the inhabitants should preserve their customs, including, no doubt, the custom of using the French language, which they have ever since retained. Sir John Pope Hennessy has not been condemned unheard. He was temporarily suspended by Sir Hercules Robinson, because Sir Hercules Robinson considered that, even if the result of the inquiry should be to clear him from blame, he could not remain in the administration of the Government without danger to public interests; but no final decision will be taken without giving him the fullest opportunity of explanation, for which purpose he has been summoned to England. General Hawley did preside at the annual meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society, shortly before he was appointed Administrator. I have no authentic report of the proceedings of that meeting. It has been the custom, for many years past, for the Governor, or the officer commanding the troops, to preside at the annual meetings of the Society; and it has always been understood that it was not intended thereby to express, on the part of the officer so presiding, any political or religious bias. Some of the newspapers published in the Colony have expressed resentment, on account of the suspension of Sir John

Pope Hennessy. Lastly, the matter is under consideration.

Mr. O'KELLY asked, would Her Majesty's Government take into consideration the desirability of requesting officers not to preside at these meetings?

Sir HENRY HOLLAND said, Her Majesty's Government would not do so.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked, was the right hon. Gentleman aware that several witnesses were unable to give parole evidence, because the Commissioners would not, or could not, use the French language; and that the intending witnesses had to put their evidence in writing?

Sir HENRY HOLLAND said, he believed that to be inaccurate.

## LICENSING ACT—DOGS.

Mr. MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to a case reported in *Lloyd's Weekly London News* of 13th March, of a fine having been inflicted by a magistrate at Westminster Police Court, because a dog was kept without a licence to lead a blind girl about; and, whether there is an exemption in the Licensing Act in respect of dogs kept to lead blind persons?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Commissioner of Inland Revenue that if the case of H. Sullivan is the one referred to he was fined 2*s.* by the magistrate at Westminster Police Court on March 12 for keeping a dog without a licence. It was alleged by Sullivan that the dog was given to him to train to lead his blind sister; but it transpired that she was quite capable of going about the streets without being led. No licence need be taken out for any dog kept and used solely by a blind person for guidance.

## ADMIRALTY—THE INDIAN TROOPSHIP "JUMNA."

Sir WILLIAM CROSSMAN (Portsmouth) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether all work on the Indian troopship *Jumna*, in preparation for next trooping season, is to be stopped; whether the other Indian troopships *Euphrates*, *Serapis*, *Malabar*, and *Crocodile* are to be still employed on the trooping service, or are to be sold as reported in *The Times* of the 22nd instant; and, whether it is the intention of the Government to make any change in the port at which troops for and from India now embark and disembark?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): It has been decided not to incur the very large expense that would be necessary to put the *Jumna* into a fit state to take her turn in the relief duties of the next trooping season. The other four Indian troopships—*Euphrates*, *Serapis*, *Malabar*, and *Crocodile*—are sufficient to carry out the relief service of the next season, and they will be used for this duty. The Admiralty are not aware that there is any intention to change the present ports for embarking and disembarking the troops.

## SEED SUPPLY (IRELAND) ACT—REPAYMENT OF ADVANCES.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What percentage of the money advanced for seed in Ireland has been repaid; if the balance is due by unions situated in the poorer districts, and with a large population; if he would institute an inquiry to ascertain if such balances were chiefly uncollectable from causes arising from hurry in issuing the seed; and, if an inquiry would also be made as to the possibility of remitting a portion of the said balances?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I have already answered so much of this Question as relates to the amount of the outstanding debt—namely, that it is about 7 per cent of the entire loan. I doubt if, at this distance of time, any advantage would be gained by the suggested inquiry as to alleged mistakes in the issuing of the seed seven years ago. With regard to the outstanding balance, I understand that a considerable portion, though collected, has not been paid over to the Board of Works; and until this is done, the Irish Government cannot further approach the Treasury on the subject of remission.

Colonel NOLAN asked, if it were a fact the late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Lord Randolph Churchill) had promised such an inquiry; and, whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chief

Secretary would inquire why the inquiry had not been held?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, the hon. and gallant Member was aware he could not make any inquiry on the subject now, as the noble Lord the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer was not there.

## IMPERIAL AND COLONIAL DEFENCES —HONG KONG.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the War Office has been in communication with the Admiralty, in reference to the fulfilment of the arrangement come to by the Government of this Country with the Colonial Government, in relation to the defences of Hong Kong?

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE (Mr. H. S. NORTHCOTE) (Exeter) (who replied) said: As all the remaining guns for the armament of Hong Kong are expected to be supplied during the ensuing financial year, it has not been considered necessary to make any communication to the Admiralty on the subject.

## LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE RIOTS AT YOUGHAL — CORONER'S WARRANT.

SIR JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown, the Coroner's warrant lately issued by Mr. Coroner Rice to commit Constable Bulmer, of Royal Irish Constabulary, is legal or illegal?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am informed that the attention of the Coroner having been drawn to the irregularities in the warrant, an amended warrant, which was duly executed, was substituted by him. There seems, therefore, to be no necessity for taking the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown on a matter which is now of no practical importance.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to intimate that the constable in this matter was committed to gaol?

[No reply.]

MR. E. HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the alleged irregularity consisted of printed words forming part of the usual formality of the warrant being allowed to remain on the face of the document; and that when the Coroner's attention was called to the matter he simply drew his pen across the printed words, and not across anything that had been written?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The fact that the Coroner issued a new warrant appears to indicate that, in his opinion, the old warrant was irregular.

Several Irish MEMBERS: He did not issue a new warrant.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): I wish to ask the Attorney General for Ireland, whether we are to understand that if a policeman is of opinion that a warrant is irregular he has a right to refuse to execute it for a week, and to take that time to inquire whether the warrant is irregular or not? For future guidance it is desirable that we should know.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University): By a regulation that was given to the police long before the present Government came into Office, the District Inspectors were directed not to execute a warrant they had reason to believe was irregular. When such a warrant is issued they are expected to call the attention of the persons issuing it to the irregularity. In pursuance of that order the District Inspector, seeing certain matters in this warrant which were not in accordance with the fact, sought for the Coroner, in order to call his attention to it. But the Coroner was unable to be found until the next sitting of the Court, when the District Inspector called the attention of the Coroner to the irregularity, which was then corrected, and a new warrant issued. The first person to be consulted in such a case was the person issuing the warrant; and this was necessary not only for the protection of the Constabulary, but also for the protection of the Magistrate or Coroner who issued it.

SIR CHARLES RUSSELL (Hackney, S.): Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman tell us what the alleged irregularities were?

MR. HOLMES: I can do so. It was stated upon the face of the warrant that the grounds on which it was issued were, first of all, that it was sworn in open Court that a summons had been served on the constable; and, secondly, that he had declined to attend. As a matter of fact it was not sworn in open Court that the summons had been served; and, in the second place, the constable had attended. The contempt was a refusal to answer a particular question. These were the matters to which the District Inspector desired to call the attention of the Coroner. This course was perfectly reasonable, and the Coroner agreed to issue a new warrant.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): May I ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman whether these two informalities were not on the printed form of the warrant; and, whether the error was that the real cause of the order of committal was not filled in the ordinary warrant?

MR. LANE (Cork Co. E.): May I also ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman whether the Coroner did not leave the town on the following day, so that the District Inspector could have approached him and have corrected the warrant did he choose to do so?

MR. HOLMES: I cannot say what was printed on the warrant; but everyone knows that a warrant must be irregular if it does not state the reason for which it was issued. In reference to the other Question, I am informed that the District Inspector on the very earliest opportunity went to look for the Coroner, but did not find him.

## LAW AND JUSTICE—RIOTS AT YOUGHAL—DISTRICT INSPECTOR SOMERVILLE AND CONSTABLE WARD.

MR. LANE (Cork Co., E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, as the inquest at Youghal terminated in a verdict of wilful murder against District Inspector Somerville and Constable Ward, he will take measures to have those prisoners brought to trial at the next Cork Assizes?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am advised by my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General for Ireland that the case of the prisoners referred to will be dealt with in the ordinary and usual course.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) asked if the Inspector and the constable were out on bail; and, if so, on what security?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: They are both in custody.

Subsequently,

MR. LANE: I wish to ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland a Question of which I have given him private Notice. If he has received any communication from the Inspector General of Constabulary in Ireland as to admitting to bail District Inspector Somerville and Constable Ward, now in gaol on a charge of murder; and, with a view to such an application being made to Mr. Justice O'Brien at the Cork Assizes, whether the authorities are prepared to agree to such an application; and, whether it is unusual for a Judge of Assize to entertain an application of the kind?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University): I did not receive any communication from the Inspector General of Constabulary; but before coming down to the House I received a telegram from the Under Secretary, which had been sent to him from Cork by the County Inspector of Constabulary, stating that District Inspector Somerville and Constable Ward had been advised that they might make such an application to the Judge of Assize. If I should get Notice, I shall certainly oppose such an application until I have an opportunity of reading the informations in the case and the affidavits on which the application is to be made.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): Arising out of that answer, I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary whether he will give an undertaking that these two prisoners will be suspended from active duty until their case has been finally disposed of by a jury?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know what the ordinary rule in such a case is; but I have no doubt it will be followed.

MR. MAC NEILL: I wish to ask the Attorney General, whether it is usual for a Judge of Assize to admit to bail prisoners committed for wilful murder?

MR. HOLMES: It would be exceedingly improper for me to give an opinion on the matter. It is entirely outside my duty.

## WAR OFFICE — MOBILIZATION OF FIRST AND SECOND ARMY CORPS.

**GENERAL FRASER** (Lambeth, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the reduction in the Horse Artillery being proposed, in view of effecting economies to enable the Government to have everything ready for the First Army Corps to be increased to the War Establishment to take the field at once on the orders being given, and for the mobilization of the Second Army Corps, arrangements have been made in the Estimates for equipment, stores, transport, waggons; and also for store accommodation at the several stations where troops are to be mobilized for the embarkation of even one Army Corps?

**THE SECRETARY OF STATE** (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The conversion of the batteries of Horse Artillery is being made, not for the object stated by my hon. and gallant Friend, with the view of effecting economies; but, as I have on previous occasions explained, because they were in excess of our requirements, while it was necessary to increase our Field and Garrison Artillery. It is, however, the fact that steps have been, and are being, taken to enable the First Army Corps to take the field, when necessary, without any delay; and I shall be glad of the assistance of my hon. and gallant Friend in pushing forward these very necessary measures as much as possible.

## IMPERIAL AND COLONIAL DEFENCES —SINGAPORE.

**MR. DE LISLE** (Leicestershire, Mid) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the War Office has been in communication with the Admiralty, in order to arrange for the provision of adequate and localized naval defences at Singapore, until the armaments, agreed upon in 1884 with the Colony to be completed in 1887, are provided; and, whether, if this be impossible, the Government are prepared to hand back to the Colony some part of the capital, together with a fair rate of interest on the £81,000 spent by the Colony, for the years intervening between 1884 and 1889, or such further periods during which the obligations of the Imperial Government shall remain unfulfilled?

**THE SURVEYOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE** (Mr. NORTHCOTE) (Exeter) (who replied) said: As it is not admitted that there is any very serious deficiency in the defences of Singapore, the contingency stated in the Question of my hon. Friend does not arise. But, in any case, it would not be desirable for me to explain the nature of the precautions which the Admiralty may think it right to take. With the permission of the House, I will take this opportunity of correcting an error in my reply of the 18th instant on the same subject. I stated then that the two guns which would not be ready for Singapore in 1887-8 were in course of manufacture at Elswick. It appears now that I was inadvertently misinformed, and that though guns for Hong Kong and Aden are being made at Elswick, the two for Singapore are in hand at the Royal Gun Factory.

## THE RIVER THAMES (THE OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE BOAT RACE)—THE POLICE.

**MR. W. REDMOND** (Fermanagh, N.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the publication of a placard with reference to certain steamboats on the river on the occasion of the University Boat Race, which states that, in certain contingencies, the police will "chuck overboard" from the steamers any person who, in their opinion, is not behaving himself; whether he is aware that this placard is published by Unwin and Company; and whether the police have orders to carry the same into effect?

**THE SECRETARY OF STATE** (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have no information as to the publication of the placard referred to; but I am informed by the Chief Commissioner of Police that certain Steamboat Companies have applied to him for police to go on board their boats, and he has in all cases declined.

**MR. W. REDMOND**: May I ask, whether it is not a fact that the First Lord of the Treasury is a member of the firm of Unwin and Company, which published the placard; and, if so, what steps the Government will take to prevent Ministers publishing such documents?

[No reply.]

## ARMY—CONTRACTS.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, Whether the Government will consent to the issue of an annual Return showing what contracts were during the past year thrown open to public competition, and what contracts were offered to only a limited number of firms—namely, those on the selected lists of the Director of Contracts; whether, in such Return, he will also publish the names of the firms in each of such lists, and state which of such firms received contracts, which tendered and did not receive contracts, and which sent in no tender during the year included in the Return; and, whether he will take care that no firm shall continue upon any such list who have for some time ceased to tender, and who may use the fact of being on such list as contractors to the British Army mainly as an advertisement for procuring other contracts elsewhere?

The SURVEYOR GENERAL (Mr. Northcote) (Exeter): The detailed Return asked for would involve great labour, and, so far as can be seen, would answer no correspondingly useful purpose. The average number of tenders issued yearly from the War Office during the last five years has been 15,667, to which 9,313 returns with quotations of prices have been received, or 59 per cent. As regards the range of competition, Commissariat and Engineer contracts, and the more important contracts for stores and clothing, are, as a rule, given by public or advertised competition. As regards contracts which are offered to a restricted list of firms, care is taken that those firms who cease to tender are, after a year, removed from the list. The list is constantly under revision, and each failure to tender in reply to an invitation is noted against the manufacturer.

## WAR OFFICE (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—CONTRACT FOR CARTRIDGES—MESSRS. LATIMER CLARK, MUIRHEAD, AND CO.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, Whether the contract entered into by Messrs. Latimer Clark, Muirhead, and Co., for the manufacture of 500,000 cartridges, the date of delivery for the last of the four instalments being 18th March, has been duly carried out; whether the first instalment, due 25th February, has yet been delivered; and, if so, what portions of it were manufactured at the Millwall works of the contractors, or were supplied from some other source; and, if so, by whom; whether a portion of the delay in this instance is excused, on the ground of the omission by the Ordnance Department of an important portion of the specification, that relating to guage; and, whether, and to what extent, the Penalty Clause, or other such safeguard, in this and similar contracts, is rendered nugatory by the fact that the Ordnance Department accepts a tender without supplying an adequate specification of the article required?

The SURVEYOR GENERAL (Mr. Northcote) (Exeter): The contract has not been carried out. The sample delivery has been rejected, principally because of the failure of the caps, which it is understood were of English make, and were purchased by Messrs. Latimer Clark, Muirhead, and Co. The cartridge cases and bullets are good, though the cases are rather light, and both were made at Millwall. The cartridges were filled by Messrs. Dyer and Robson, of Greenwich, gunpowder being supplied by this Department. The target was satisfactory. A complete specification and drawing accompanied the acceptance of this firm's tender. The non-issue of guages to govern manufacture caused a delay of 16 days. Allowing for this delay, two instalments are overdue; and as it is evident that some further time must elapse before perfect cartridges can be produced, the contract has been reduced by 300,000 rounds, and the execution of the balance will enable Messrs. Latimer Clark, Muirhead, and Co. to show that the defects in the sample delivery can be overcome by them.

## EDUCATION (SCOTLAND)—BI-LINGUAL INSTRUCTION—THE WELSH LANGUAGE.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether the population of districts of Scotland and Ireland, where the Government makes provision for bi-lingual instruction, and for the utilization of the home language of the children, is comparatively small; whether his attention has been drawn to the Report of the Departmental Committee on Welsh Education, in which is stated that,

> "out of a population of 1,426,514 in Wales and Monmouthshire, no less than 1,006,100 habitually speak Welsh;"

and, whether he can state to the House the reasons why he should refuse to the million Welsh-speaking population of Wales the educational rights and advantages which are accorded to the small Gaelic-speaking population of Scotland?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford), in reply, said, that, assuming the facts stated in the Question to be accurate, the inference suggested in the latter part of it involved matter of argument which, he thought, it would be more convenient to deal with on the Estimates.

## UNIVERSITY EDUCATION (WALES)—WELSH TRAINING COLLEGES.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether his attention has been called to the following paragraph of the Scotch Education Report for 1886:—

> "The system of combining attendance at University classes with the efficient course of practical professional training provided by the Colleges under our inspection was first introduced by the Code of 1873, and is now producing very satisfactory results. In 1884, 119 students took advantage of this arrangement, many of whom passed with great credit the examination for certificates held last Christmas. All the Training Colleges for masters are now availing themselves of this provision of the Code;"

and, whether he will make similar provision for the students of the Bangor Training College to avail themselves of the classes and courses of lectures at the University College of North Wales at Bangor?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): The expediency of connecting the existing Training Colleges with the University Colleges now found throughout the country by means of out-students on the Scotch system is a subject of great importance, upon which the Royal Commission is now collecting evidence, and I can assure the hon. Member it shall receive the careful attention of the Department.

## EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—SENIOR INSPECTORS OF SCHOOLS.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked the Lord Advocate, The amount payable during the past year to each of the three senior Inspectors of Schools in Scotland as salary, as allowance for personal expenses when travelling, and as re-imbursement of actual cost of travelling and incidental expenses?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The salary of the Chief Inspectors are, as stated in the Estimates, £950, with £9 9*s.* in the case of Dr. Kerr for the inspection of evening schools. The amounts paid for the year ended December 31, 1886, as personal allowance and re-imbursement of travelling expenses respectively were:—To Dr. Wilson, £51 9*s.* and £54 9*s.* 1*d.*; to Dr. Kerr, £58 16*s.* and £91 8*s.* 7*d.*; to Mr. Ogilvie, £68 5*s.* and £55 0*s.* 10*d.* These items are regulated entirely by the amount of absence from home, and by the nature and amount of travelling required by the Department.

## LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—OMAGH WINTER ASSIZES.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Is it the fact that he went down special to the Omagh Winter Assizes to prosecute the two Walkers for the murder of the soldier and policeman at Belfast; is it intended to send any special counsel to prosecute them in Belfast at the forthcoming trials; was the report correct that Judge Lawson, on the trial of one of the prisoners, refused to accept a verdict of manslaughter which the jury brought in; and, as he specially prosecuted in this case himself at Omagh, has he given any special instructions with regard to the course of the prosecution in Belfast? I desire also to ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman, was it by his directions that an additional bill was sent up in the case to the Grand Jury of Antrim at the present Assizes, although a bill had been found by the Tyrone Grand Jury; and, if it is the practice, when a bill is found at the Winter Assizes, and the jury disagree, to send up another bill to the Grand Jury when the prisoner comes to be tried at the County Assizes?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University): It is a fact that I conducted the prosecution of the two Walkers at the Omagh Winter Assizes. Pressure of other business prevents my Colleague and myself attending at Belfast and Derry; but I have directed that one of the leading counsel of the circuit, who is intimately acquainted with that case, and with whom I have had two or three consultations, should assist the regular Crown Counsel. As to the third paragraph in the Question, the information at my disposal prevents me from accepting as accurate the report mentioned; and, while the case is still undecided, it would be obviously undesirable that I should make any statement. With regard to the hon. and learned Gentleman's latter Question, the matter was brought under my notice not at all in reference to this particular case, but to a large number of cases similarly circumstanced, in which the juries disagreed at the Winter Assizes; and I thought it right to advise that fresh bills should be sent up to the Grand Juries at the County Assizes, and that course has been taken in this case.

MR. T. M. HEALY: If the right hon. and learned Gentleman is of opinion that this is necessary, why was it not done at the Cork Assizes on this present occasion?

MR. HOLMES: I can only say that in several cases my attention was directed to it, and I ordered the course mentioned to be taken. I can assure the hon. and learned Gentleman that it had no reference to this case.

## NAVAL ESTIMATES — RE-ORGANIZATION, &c. OF THE ACCOUNTANT GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the Order of the House, made early last Session, on the Motion of the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt), for a Return showing the Re-organization, &c. of the Accountant General's Department of the Admiralty Office, is being carried into effect; and, if so, when the Return will be ready for distribution among Members, before Vote 3 of the Naval Estimates is taken?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. FORWOOD) (Lancashire, Ormskirk), in reply, said, that the Return was presented on the 17th of February, and ordered to be printed on the 4th of March. Changes were in progress in the Department. He was informed by the printers that the Return would be out in a few days.

## POST OFFICE—TRANSIT RATES FROM ENGLAND TO INDIA.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, When was the present arrangement made whereby a payment of 1½*d.* per letter is made to France and Italy for transit rates for every letter from England to India and the East; under what conditions does the contract exist, and when can it be terminated; what steps are being taken to obtain more satisfactory conditions and terms; and, does Germany pay any sum to France or Italy for transit rates?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The arrangement referred to was made in 1879 by correspondence between the British Post Office and the Post Offices of France and Italy, and can be terminated at any time. Three years ago steps were taken to obtain more favourable terms; but the result was not satisfactory, and it is intended to make further efforts in this direction as soon as the new service for the Australian Mails is settled. Until it is certain that those mails will use the same accelerated train service as the Indian Mails, negotiations with the French and Italian Post Offices cannot be opened advantageously. On the last point raised by the hon. Member I have no official information. But I understand that the German Mails for India and the East do not pass through the French territory at all, but join the Indian Mail Train at Bologna. In that case, they would incur only the Italian transit charge, amounting to a fraction over ½*d.* a letter.

## CAPITAL PUNISHMENT—REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

MR. BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can state when the Report of the Royal Commission on Capital Punishment is likely to be published?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): There is no Royal Commission now sitting on

Capital Punishment; but a Departmental Committee was appointed last year to consider the best mode of carrying out the sentence of death. The Chairman of this Committee, Lord Aberdare, has unhappily been incapacitated by an accident from attending to business. He is now abroad, and for the present the proceedings of the Committee are in abeyance.

### POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—POST OFFICE AT GRANGEGEITH.

Mr. O'HANLON (Cavan, E.) asked the Postmaster General, When he intends to establish the post office at Grangegeith; and, whether for nine months the people have paid for post office and letter carrier?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): In reply to the Question of the hon. Member, I beg to say that I shall be pleased to establish a post office at Grangegeith, if the letters turn out to be sufficiently numerous. I expect to receive definite information on this point within a day or two. As previously stated by me, it is, I believe, the case that a private messenger is employed to bring the letters for Gangegeith from the Slane Post Office.

Mr. O'HANLON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the guarantee had been offered to cover any additional expenditure the post office may entail?

Mr. RAIKES: I am not aware. I telegraphed to-day to the surveyor for full information on the subject.

### CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS — TRANSIT OF INFECTED CATTLE RFOM IRELAND TO LIVERPOOL.

Mr. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention had been called to the fact that on the 14th of last month a large number of cattle were shipped from Northwall to Liverpool, although three of their number were discovered on inspection to be suffering from pleuro-pneumonia, and were ordered to be slaughtered; and, if the Irish Government proposes to institute any immediate inquiry into cattle disease with a view to give further powers to guardians and Privy Council authorities; and also to provide more qualified Veterinary Inspectors at the different ports to prevent the debarkation of cattle to Great Britain which have been in contact with infected animals although showing no signs of disease themselves?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): In answer to my hon. Friend, I have to say that my attention has been called to the circumstances referred to. The subject of giving some further powers with a view to prevent the exportation of diseased animals has been considered. The Inspectors engaged at the ports of inspection are all qualified veterinary surgeons; and I am not inclined at present to promise that there shall be any increase in their number.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Would the right hon. Gentleman say if the further powers to prevent the exportation of these diseased animals could be introduced into the Coercion Bill?

[No reply.]

### CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—RETURNS—CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT (IRELAND) BILL.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it intended, as was done by Mr. Forster on introducing the Coercion Bill of 1881, to immediately circulate a Blue Book, giving particulars of the alleged outrages on which the Government rely as the justication of their proposed measure?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): It is not my intention to lay any special Returns of outrages on the Table.

### ADMIRALTY—VACANCIES—CIRCULARS.

Mr. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the following statement made by Mr. Field at a meeting of the Civil Service Supply Association held at Cannon Street Hotel on 24th February:—

> "There is one thing I ought to call the attention of the meeting to, because it is a very grave subject. I believe that in reference to the candidature for the Admiralty vacancy, Circulars have been sent out in envelopes marked 'On Her Majesty's Service,' and at the expense of the country;"

and, if so, what steps he proposes to take in regard to the matter?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): If the statement alluded to is correct, the proceeding was most improper and entirely unauthorized. A full and immediate inquiry will be made on the subject.

### ROMAN CATHOLIC RELIEF ACT, 1829—ROMAN CATHOLIC MISSION AT POPLAR.

**Mr. JOHNSTON** (Belfast, W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been called to a statement in *The Weekly Register* of 19th March, concerning a Roman Catholic Mission at Poplar—

> "The Mission was opened on the last Sunday of February with a procession through the principal streets of the parish. The Guards of the League of the Cross and the members of the different confraternities left the church preceded by a large Mission Cross and accompanied by the parochial clergy. Father Lawless, M.R., clothed in cassock, cloak, and biretta, intoned the Rosary, in which all joined. In due course the East India Dock was reached. Here Father Lawless recited the Litany of our Blessed Mother, delivered an address, and exacted the following promise, which was made with one voice by the kneeling crowd:—'I promise, by the grace of God, to attend regularly this Holy Mission even to the end, and to go to my Confession and Communion.' Father Lawless then gave the blessing with the Mission Cross, and the procession moved on by way of Robin Hood Lane, increasing in numbers, until it reached High Street, Poplar;"

whether these proceedings constitute a distinct violation of the Roman Catholic Relief Act, 10 *Geo.* 4, c. 7, s. 26; and, what course the Government propose to take in this case and similar ones?

**Mr. M'CARTAN** (Down, S.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question, I wish to ask him whether the Statute referred to provides that any person who becomes a Jesuit, or a member of any Religious Order, in these countries shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanour and subject to the penalty of being ordered to be banished from the Kingdom for his natural life; and, whether the penalty provided under the 26th section of the Act can be given to the person who informed on those guilty of thus exercising religious liberty?

**The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith)** (Strand, Westminster): In answer to the Question last addressed to me, I am sorry to say I have no personal knowledge of the provision of the Statute in question, and therefore I am unable to give the information which the hon. Gentleman asks for. In answer to the Question of my hon. Friend (Mr. Johnston), I have to state that my attention has been called to the statement by the Question of the hon. Member. I have not seen the paper in question; but, assuming the statement is correct, I am advised that there is a strong reason to doubt whether there has been any violation of the penal provisions of the Act. I am not aware that proceedings have ever been taken under that particular section.

### SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND BILL—LEGISLATION.

**Mr. ANDERSON** (Elgin and Nairn) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Are the Government able to state if the Bill relating to the Office of Secretary for Scotland is drafted, and whether it will be introduced before Easter; and, whether the Government will remove the block they have put on Scotch Bills, especially that on the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act Amendment (No. 2) Bill?

**The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith)** (Strand, Westminster): The Secretary for Scotland Bill has been drafted, and will be introduced as soon after the Easter Recess as possible. I am unable to give any hope that the block which has been placed by the Government on the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment (No. 2) Bill, and other Scotch Bills, will be removed.

**Dr. CLARK** (Caithness) asked whether, considering the condition of the Highlands, and the decision of the Court of Session regarding the Crofters' Act, the Government themselves would bring in a measure amending the Bill of the late Lord Advocate?

**Mr. W. H. SMITH** asked for Notice of the Question.

## *ORDER OF THE DAY.*

### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT (IRELAND) BILL—MOTION FOR URGENCY.

RESOLUTION.

ADJOURNED DEBATE. [THIRD NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Amendment proposed to the Question [22nd March],

> "That the introduction and several stages of the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill have precedence of all Orders of the Day and

Notices of Motion, including the Rules of Procedure, whenever the Bill shall be set down for consideration by the Government as the first business of the day."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

And which Amendment was,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House declines to set aside the business of the Nation in favour of a measure for increasing the stringency of the Criminal Law in Ireland, whilst no effectual security has been taken against the abuse of the Law by the exaction of excessive rents."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): Mr. Speaker, I wish, in the first instance, to thank my hon. and learned Friend the Member for York (Mr. Lockwood) for his kindness in waiving his claim to address the House on the present occasion, and for enabling me, subject to your approval, to state what I have to say to the House on a Motion which seems to me to be of great importance. I am the more desirous to do so, because I wish to say a few words on a portion of the subject which has yet attracted but little attention. No doubt, this Motion opens important parts of the great question relating to Ireland; and the field, so far as concerns that question, has been widened by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), who acquainted us with the leading particulars of a Bill which Her Majesty's Government are about to introduce with respect to land in Ireland. My first desire is to call attention to what I think I must describe as the unprecedented position of the House itself, both as it stands at the moment, and still more as it will be affected by the adoption of this Motion. The House has been sitting for two months, and for two months the independent initiative of the House of Commons has been altogether suppressed. Not a single day has been allowed to hon. Members for the purpose of bringing forward subjects in which they take an interest—not a single day even for the consideration of questions, like that touching the crofters, which concern social order in the country. We are now invited again to surrender entirely the time of the House, and that Vote, I suppose, is to be carried by a majority. And Gentlemen opposite exult in the prospect of that further suppression of the independent action of the House. But such things may happen in the revolution of years as to cause hon. Members to take a somewhat different view of a question of this kind. We are now, Sir, asked to make another absolute surrender of the whole time of the House until a Bill, not yet introduced, but reported to be of an extreme and severe character, has received the attention of the House. Well, Sir, we recollect that questions of this kind have on former occasions been deemed to require protracted discussion. The Bill relating to the Habeas Corpus Act—or the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act—although it was proposed in a tenfold more formidable state of things than the present, and although it consisted of, I think, only a single clause, occupied 20 nights of the time of the House. I may be told that a revolution is now to be brought about in the modes of our Procedure by the frequent application of the Closure Rule. Sir, I can conceive no greater calamity to this House than the frequent application of the Closure Rule; and the very first—perhaps the most formidable—of all the effects I should anticipate from that frequent application of the Rule would be that it would sap the foundations of that Chair which you, Sir, so worthily occupy, and the authority so absolutely necessary to be maintained unaffected, intact, and unimpaired. Nor is that all; because it is within the pleasure of the Government—if they think fit under the powers they have obtained—to take any day of their choice for the purpose of resuming the question of Procedure, and the very first subject they would bring under the attention of the House would be to alter fundamentally the sole remaining weapon which is now given to independent Members, not of a full initiative for Parliamentary purposes, but at any rate of raising a discussion upon a Motion for Adjournment. Such is the position in which we are placed when a demand is made which aims at obtaining for Her Majesty's Government the disposal of the entire time of the House upon a Bill which must occupy weeks, which may occupy months, if we judge from former experience from reports in circulation, and from the nature of the case. I may say, for my own part, having seen more of Parliamentary practice than anyone who hears me, that I have never known such a similar position of affairs. I think it grave; I think it menacing; I think it unprecedented. I think it an extreme use of the powers of the majority, and one which, if it is persisted in, and driven to the uttermost, will leave behind it a sense of wrong—I may say, of intolerable wrong—not favourable to the future conduct of the Business of this House. I may say that it appears to me that the right hon. Gentleman would not at all impede the progress of the measure, and would adopt a wise and salutary change, if he were to introduce some relaxation into the Motion he has made. He might do that with great facility. He might exempt some day of the week—Friday, for example—from the operation of the Rule. At any rate, I think it right to utter a warning that the yoke which it is endeavoured to lay on our necks is a yoke which, perhaps, may not be patiently borne for an unlimited period of time. I need not, however, go into details on that subject, and I will touch the question of this Motion as it affects the great case of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) will, perhaps, allow me to pay him this compliment—that he has, I will not say acquired, because I think Nature has given it to him, the happy faculty of making extreme and astonishing propositions in the blandest and most gentle way. Had the right hon. Gentleman been discussing the clause on which we were occupied for some minutes this evening of a Private Bill he could not have done it in a manner more entirely apart from a sense of deep gravity, or from an expression of those feelings, which are usually connected with the discussion of great political subjects in this House. I am very sorry to be compelled to assail *in toto*—I am afraid not with equal blandness but at the same time, I hope, with temper and fairness—the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman, and the ground upon which he supported it. He supported it entirely by a reference to the case of 1881, doing me the honour to quote from speeches of my own, and resting the whole justification of the Government upon what had then occurred. Now, Sir, if that case of 1881 will not stand the right hon. Gentleman in stead, I may apprehend he must look for some new justification. And how, Sir, does it stand? We have now a proposition made to the House to abandon its whole time for the purpose of a measure as to which no Parliamentary Papers have been laid. No Parliamentary Papers — as we know from an answer to the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) just made—are intended to be laid; no statement by the Government has been laid before the House which can convey to us the slightest indication of the nature and contents of the proposed measure. Now, Sir, I want to ask the right hon. Gentleman is he borne out in this capital respect by the proposal and proceedings of 1881? On the contrary, he must know that the case of the Government—the presumptive case of the Government — was laid with the utmost fulness before the House by the official statement of Mr. Forster before any demand whatever was made upon the House for the surrender of its time and privileges. [*Cheers.*] I heard cheering on the other side of the House when I stated that this was a very different state of things from what prevailed in 1881. I know not whether the hon. Gentlemen who cheered had made themselves acquainted in any way with the history of the case, but I think I am correct in saying that it is a very different state of things indeed. The first difference I shall note is this. The right hon. Gentleman—I cannot blame him for it—had not read the speech from which he quoted. He founded his case upon my speech—he had not read that speech. Silence in this case means consent—silence means consent. I am as far as possible from blaming the right hon. Gentleman for avoiding the reading of any speech of mine, or of almost any Parliamentary speech, if he can possibly avoid it. But it imposes upon me the necessity of making another quotation from that speech. The House of Commons will recollect that there has usually been before the present practice arose of debating the Address at full length a period at the commencement of the Session—a week, a fortnight, or three weeks—during which there has been very little Business to transact. The right hon. Gentleman—or those who informed the right hon. Gentleman—those who supplied him with the quotation from my speech—might have provided him with another quotation which he has imposed upon me the painful necessity of inflicting upon the House, in which I stated that I was emboldened to make that Motion by its being the first day of the Session when we were not already engaged in the general Business of the Empire, but that if it had been a later period I doubted whether I should have been justified in making it. The quotation is to be found in *Hansard.* My words were—

> "I will, however, make this admission—that great as is the evil of the prolongation, even for a day, of this state of things in Ireland, had this proposal been made to the House at a period of the year when we were already engaged in the miscellaneous Business of the Empire, it might have been doubted whether we should have been justified in asking hon. Members to make the sacrifice which I do not doubt their acceding to such a Motion will involve."—(3 *Hansard*, [257] 1318.)

As to that Motion of 1881, which the right hon. Gentleman quotes as a precedent, I admit I could not have had a case for making it at all had it not been the opening of the Session. But the right hon. Gentleman makes his Motion at a moment when he has already kept us silent for two months. Well, Sir, what is the state of things which is to justify this singular and extreme method of Procedure? Is it the state of Ireland? Is it the amount of crime in Ireland? On all great occasions which I have known it has been customary before and beyond all things for the Minister to make out his case by showing the terrible prevalence of crime in Ireland—of that description of crime which threatens especially social order. Is that the case now? No, Sir; the House has already been acquainted with the fact that during the year 1880—the year immediately preceding the proposals of Mr. Forster—agrarian offences in Ireland had far exceeded the highest amount they had ever touched since the Returns of the Constabulary were instituted in 1844. They had risen by not less than 40 per cent, I think, above that highest amount; and not only so, but during the interval there had been a decrease of population from 8,000,000 to 5,000,000, so that in point of fact the amount of agrarian crime was double at the time when Mr. Forster made his statement—double not only as compared with the preceding year, but as compared with the highest year, or any year, since 1844, the first institution of the Returns. What is the answer to that? The answer is another quotation from a speech of mine, and I return my thanks to the right hon. Gentleman the Irish Secretary for making it. He could not have made a quotation more apposite for my purpose, for I pointed out, it seems, that we must consider not merely the amount, but the character, purpose, source, and object of crime. What is the character, purpose, source, and object of crime now—take it at its very worst? It is to obtain certain reductions of rent. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] It is what your own witnesses say. It is to obtain certain reductions of rent—it is not a movement against rent in general. I think, in saying that, I carry the assent even of that side of the House. Is it a movement against rent in general? Let me hear the man who argues that—let me see what is his knowledge, what is his experience, what is his authority. I contend this—that every fair man would admit and allege that it is an attempt to obtain reductions of rent which are beyond what equity requires. That is the allegation which will be made on that side of the House. I should like to hear the man on the Front Bench opposite who would rise and say this is a movement in Ireland against rent as a whole. You may find a speech of some individual possibly, but I speak of the evidence which is upon the Table; and upon that enormous mass of testimony you have raised, I say the fundamental distinction between this period—besides the amount of crime—and 1881 is this: that whereas now the demand of the people has been almost universally restricted to a demand for just abatements—as can be proved from the evidence you yourselves have laid before us—in 1881 there was a movement in progress which was growing to be, and a few months after the statement of Mr. Forster was avowed and declared to be, a movement against the payment of rent altogether. Therefore, the quality, as well as the quantity, of crime shows that there was no analogy upon which the right hon. Gentleman could quote the proceedings of 1881 as a justification for the present proceedings. Even these are not all the differences. There are others of the greatest gravity which are involved in this case. Unhappily, Sir, the evidence and the information derivable from the history of coercive or repressive measures in this House is but too abundant. There is one feature—there are two features which have accompanied them all along, and which have, at least, mitigated the case. The first of them was this—that from whatever cause—and into that question I will not now enter—coercive measures have never on any of those occasions been resisted by a majority of the Representatives of Ireland. Never on a single occasion—not when Mr. O'Connell opposed the fiercest of all these coercive measures—was he supported by a majority of the Irish Members; but now you know very well that the protest against this coercion is made by a majority, and by an overwhelming majority, of the Irish Members. You have to put it to yourselves—you have to face this question—whether it is your intention to invite Parliament, deliberately and systematically, under a representative system and in a free country, to govern Ireland in defiance of the sentiments of the vast majority of those whom she sends to represent her? At the time when we were painfully engaged—whether wisely or not—in the passing of that measure of 1881, I was accustomed to observe to my Colleagues—

> "For us, at least, as a Liberal Government, it would be totally impossible, even in the teeth of the small numerical resistance we receive, to persist in and to carry through this measure were we not supported by the practical unanimity of the other portions of the British Empire—by the whole of Great Britain."

Sir, is that the case now? You know perfectly well the condition of the Liberal Party. You know how reduced in numbers are those with whom I have the honour to think, to feel, and to act; but, Sir, reduced as we are, yet still the minority which will oppose your measure is a minority which, perhaps, may amount to three-sevenths of the House of Commons, and you deliberately think that you can, as a system, make this a rule of your policy, to throw aside for a time the remedial measures upon the evidence contained in this Book—Lord Cowper's Report—as to the state of Ireland, and upon the evidence contained in those returns of crime which you are far from willing on your own responsibility to produce, and you think you can do all this in the teeth of five-sixths of the Representatives of Ireland, and in the teeth of three-sevenths of the Members of the House of Commons. Well, Sir, I think I may say that I have shown, not that your Bill is wrong; but at least that in every point your proceedings stand in glaring contradiction to the precedents which you have quoted as your sole justification, and that those who are to speak for the Government must set about to search for some other pleas to justify the astonishing proposal that is now before us—that the House should silence itself anew for weeks and probably for months. I must now say something on the other part of the subject—namely, that which concerns the actual condition of Ireland. When Parliament met in the autumn of last year we were anxious to press that the measures of the Government for handling Ireland should be produced as speedily as possible. We did not go the length of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes), who, when we asked for a few weeks to prepare our measures, deliberately made a Motion to stop the Supplies, which Motion was supported by his Party. That was the idea which the head of the Legal Profession in Ireland had as to the propriety of Parliamentary proceedings. We did not go that length at all; but we requested that as soon as the Government could make up their minds, and, as we hoped, before the winter and before the season of coming evictions was faced, they should tell us what they meant to do. They sheltered themselves behind two propositions. One was that they had sent Sir Redvers Buller to restore order in the most disturbed parts of Ireland; and the other was that they had appointed a Commission to go to the root of the evils connected with the Irish land system. Sir, those pleas were very effective. It was felt, I think, very generally in the House, when once we understood that the mission of Sir Redvers Buller was a purely civil mission, that the choice made of the man to deal with the peculiar circumstances was a choice to which no exception could possibly be taken. But that gentleman had attracted to himself the utmost degree of confidence on the part of the Government, and that confidence, apparently, was afterwards renewed and heightened; for, when they had most unwisely, as I think, dismissed from the Permanent Under Secretaryship at Dublin Castle that most distinguished public servant, Sir Robert Hamilton, for no other offence than the offence committed by Lord Carnarvon—whom when he retired from Office the Government he belonged to declared themselves most anxious to retain in Office—at any rate, they did what they could to repair that error by the choice of Sir Robert Hamilton's successor, and showed their supreme confidence in Sir Redvers Buller by making him the head of the whole permanent Civil Service in Ireland. Sir Redvers Buller, as far as the executive and administrative action was concerned, was the shield of the Government. As far as legislation was concerned, the Commission was the shield of the Government. But how, Sir, do we stand now? The evidence of Sir Redvers Buller is utterly thrown over by the Government. He is their witness—he is their chosen witness—and he enjoys their confidence as much as the Attorney General for Ireland—as much, at any rate, as it is possible to exhibit in any civil servant under any circumstances whatever; but now, Sir, we are told that there is a great combination—we are told by the cheers of inarticulate Members that there is a great combination—against the payment of rent in Ireland, and we are invited, it appears, for the 87th time to pass a measure to put down agitation. There is agitation in Ireland. There is, you say, intimidation in Ireland. Within certain limits I shall admit that; but you propose to us to pass a measure to put down agitation. [An hon. MEMBER: Not at all.] I must say that your explanations have been so imperfect, and that you have so deliberately kept us in the dark, that we can only infer from your vague general announcement we have before us what you are going to do. ["Hear, hear!"] But we have before us—and you may "Hear, hear" this if you like—the main remedial propositions which you are now prepared to make. My point is this. If these remedial propositions are, from your point of view, the legitimate method of acting against Irish agitation, is it a mode of action that your own witness—Sir Redvers Buller — recommends? Does he say that agitation is to be put down; that intimidation is to be cured; that the law-abiding man is to be guaranteed, under all circumstances, the full use of his freedom of action—does he say that these aims are to be gained by repressive legislation? Short as is the evidence of Sir Redvers Buller, it is most important, and I will take, without flinching, what I believe to be the main points which it contains. Some time ago it was faintly signified—or at least it was signified not quite in the strong manner so usual on the other side of the House—that there was a general non-payment of rent in Ireland, and a general movement against the payment of all rent in Ireland. When I stated the contrary I was saluted by a rather considerable torrent, a current of contrary assertion, in a brief and succinct form. Now, what does Sir Redvers Buller say on that subject? He is asked in Question 16,456, and at page 500 of the Report—"Therefore, in spite of the opposition of the League, they are willing to pay?" Be it remembered that is in the worst part of Ireland. My right hon. Friend has said—and his statement has not been contested—that seven-eighths of Ireland are free from disturbance or difficulty; but where difficulty exists even there this general movement against the payment of rent in Ireland does not exist. What does General Redvers Buller say in answer to the question?—

> "I believe that the great majority through those counties—that the great majority of those who have not paid are anxious to pay."

Mr. Neligan, as if to emphasize the answer, asked, "Anxious to pay?" which again called the attention of the witness, who replied—"Yes, are anxious to pay." There is not a general movement against the payment of rent. Do not suppose that I am dealing with Sir Redvers Buller's evidence as if I imagined that that would dispose of the whole case. But I am showing that he is your witness, whose evidence and whose recommendations you are going entirely to disregard; and his first point is, that his replies do not indicate a general unwillingness to pay rent, but, on the contrary, a general desire to pay rent. What does Sir Redvers Buller say is the condition of peace in Ireland? You say that the condition of peace is that we shall pass some repressive Bill of which we do not yet know the nature. Is that his opinion? No. His distinct declaration is this—

> "I think this, and I feel it very strongly, that in this part of the country"—the worst part of the country, remember—"you will never have peace unless you create some legal equipoise, or legal equivalent, that will supply the want of freedom of contract now existing between the landlord and tenant."

Those are his views as to the condition of peace; but that is not the proposition on which you are about to act. You are, on the contrary, about to favour us with a Bill directed to the increased stringency of the Criminal Law and with the very measures of procedure that Sir Redvers Buller condemns. Well, Sir, what is the state of the law now in Ireland? Is the law that which it ought to be—a fair arbiter between man and man—and is the law, as it is administered, as it has been generally administered in the opinion of Sir Redvers Buller—a law in which the mass of the population reposes confidence, or ought to repose confidence? What does he say? Sir Redvers Buller says—

> "You have got a very ignorant and poor people, and the law should look after them, instead of which it has only looked after the rich. That, at least, appears to me to be the case."

Is there a Gentleman on the Front Bench opposite who will deny that when you have introduced, pressed, and passed your Bill the Irish people—who now believe the law to be on the side of the rich and against the poor—will still believe it, will believe it more firmly than ever, sustained as they will be by the authority of Sir Redvers Buller? Well, then, it is admitted—of course it is admitted—that we have got classes of unsatisfactory persons to deal with in Ireland. But the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland represented the case of Ireland with reference to rents as the same as everywhere else. "There are," he said, "rents too high and rents too low." Yes; but in Ireland the Land Court, the judicial tribunal, finds 178,000 rents too high, while the proportion of rents found to be too low is so insignificant and infinitesimal that your Land Commission in its Report does not think it worth while, or perhaps thinks that it would be injurious, to quote the cases in which rents have been increased. This new law is to be a law for pressure on the tenant class. Is there any doubt about that? Is the tenant class the class that, in the opinion of your own witness, Sir Redvers Buller, require pressure to be applied to them? Some of the tenants do require pressure, no doubt, but these things are comparative; and if you ask what pressure, in the view of Sir Redvers Buller, is required upon the tenants, you must also ask what pressure does he say is required upon the landlords. It is not upon the landlords that you are going to exercise coercion; you are going to make it easier for the landlords to enforce the rent, whether it be a good rent or a bad rent. Is this the opinion of your witness? What does Sir Redvers Buller say?—

> "What we want is a Court that would have a certain amount of coercive power over a bad tenant, and a very strong coercive power over bad landlords."

A very good recommendation—"a very strong coercive power over the bad landlord." His view is that in the case of the bad tenant something is required, a certain amount of coercive power; but his view of the bad landlord is that a very strong coercive power is required against him. But what are you doing? On your own showing you are proposing to introduce a Bill for exercising a certain power against bad tenants, but a strong coercive power against the bad landlords does not enter into your views. Unless your friends in the Press and elsewhere have totally misrepresented you, the views of Sir Redvers Buller are diametrically opposed to yours. A complaint was made yesterday by a Member of the Government that hon. Members on this side of the House—who had quoted from Sir Redvers Buller's evidence—had refrained from quoting what he said about intimidation, and it was urged that his evidence does show that there is intimidation in Ireland. No doubt Sir Redvers Buller does say that there is intimidation in Ireland. I will not dwell on the different constructions of the term. Some of the witnesses call it the disfavour in which people are regarded who pursue a course different from that which is desired by the mass of the community. Some of them refer to Boycotting, and say that the Irish people in certain cases are rather apt to follow the example which in Ireland, and even elsewhere, is pretty constantly afforded by their betters—apt to try what they can make out of a system of exclusive dealing. But beyond that, no doubt, there are cases of intimidation proper. Well, Sir, you are going to deal with this intimidation; you are going to pursue the old system of dealing with symptoms and neglecting causes. There is much mischief in the condition of Ireland in several counties. What is the root of that mischief? You have appointed a Commission to go to the root of it. Why do you dwell simply on the surface? What is the opinion of Sir Redvers Buller as to the source of this intimidation? Hon. Gentlemen opposite say—"We know the source of it; it is these mischievous agitators; if we can only get rid of them by some dispensation of Parliament, or some dispensation of Providence, then Ireland would be happy, tranquil, and content." Yes; but that is not the opinion of your own witness—the man who pre-eminently enjoys your confidence. Sir Redvers Buller is asked—"What is the cause of the mischief that prevails?" And he answers without hesitation—"The rents are too high." He explains his meaning in this way—

> "I think it was the pressure of a high rent which produced the agitation and consequent intimidation as to the payment of rent."

Now, Sir, I ask, how is it possible we can hope for any state of things other than that which actually subsists, and how is it possible you can dream that you will do anything except aggravate that state of things, and increase it intensely, by the proposals you are about to make? I will take them in kind such as we know they are to be, so far as we know their general purport. They find that all agree, though to some extent, in the case of individuals who may wish to pay rent which is even an unjust rent, yet for their own peace and comfort they would wish to pay it. But the opinion of the community in which they live is inflexibly set against it. And that opinion may manifest itself in just or unjust methods. But what is the root of the mischief, according to your own witness? He says that it is not agitation which produced the intimidation, nor was the immediate cause of it, but that it is the high rent which produced the agitation, and which is the source and fountain-head of the whole mischief. I come now to the consideration of the subject of the National League. That League has been treated by some hon. Members opposite as if it were virtually identical with the Land League of 1881. My opinion is quite different; but I do not intend to dwell upon that point now. For the present we will assume anything you like about the National League. Now, what was the answer of Sir Redvers Buller, your witness, to a question referring to the National League? He was asked—"Is there any general sympathy with the action of the League among the people?" And he answered—"Yes; I think there is sympathy, because they think that it has been their salvation."

Colonel SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.): Would the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to read Question 503?

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: If the House is willing I will read the Question, and indeed I would read the whole of it if my eyes were better, because it would evidently be conducive to the purpose I have in view. I think the hon. and gallant Gentleman will see that it is highly inconvenient to be interrupted unless he can show that I am reading something which destroys the effect of what I have previously said. If he can show that then I will not say that there is anything wrong in interrupting me. I see that at Question 503 the witness says that a man was murdered the other day, but I do not see what relation that has ——

Colonel SAUNDERSON: Be good enough to read the Question.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I do not deny that there is intimidation; I do not deny that in Ireland, as in other parts of the world, there is a certain amount of crime, although I think I shall be able to show that that amount of crime is small and insignificant in comparison with other parts of the Kingdom, and in consideration of the justification. But I am now speaking of the action of the League, and not of the action of the League as it is estimated by the witness—Sir Redvers Buller—who is your chosen officer and agent; and I am showing that he begins by saying that the people have sympathy with and supported the League because they think it has been their salvation. Well, Sir, but we are told they are a poor and ignorant people in that part of Ireland. Perhaps you will say—"Oh, he does not say that their opinion is correct;" but we have got a sentence on that subject, and as the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Saunderson) has recommended me to read Question 503, I will now recommend him to Question 494. The Question is—"It has been their salvation?" When I read that Question I thought I knew by whom it was put. On looking at it, I saw it was put by the inevitable Gentleman who alone could put a Question in that form—namely, Lord Milltown. The answer is—

> "The bulk of the tenants in this part of Ireland tell of rents that have been reduced and evictions that have been stayed which are directly due to the operations of the League. They believe that, whatever truth there be in it."

And after dealing with their belief he goes on to say something for himself; and what does he say for himself?—

> "Nobody did anything for the tenants until the League was established, and when the landlords could not let their farms, then they were forced to consider the question of reduction of rent."

There is your own witness; there is the opinion of the gentleman whose appointment stood you in such good stead in September last; there is the opinion of a gentleman who, before you appointed him, had earned in the service of Her Majesty the very highest reputation, and I believe has since done nothing to compromise, but much to increase and establish, his fame. Sir, I have now, I believe, read every point material to the case in the evidence of Sir Redvers Buller, who admits and asserts there is intimidation, but points to the root of that intimidation, and says the root is not in agitation but in rent. This is the testimony of your own chosen witness and your bulwark, during the first months of your existence him and his authority you utterly reject and cast aside. The other plea put before us last September for delay was the appointment of the Royal Commission; and how do you deal with that Commission? You deal with it in a manner, if possible, still less ceremonious; because the Commission has been invested by you with express authority to inquire into the whole working of the Land Act, and there is one recommendation which overshadows and absorbs all the rest—that is, the necessity, owing to the change of circumstances that has occurred, of re-opening the judicial rent fixed by law under the 15 years' contract. That is their chief recommendation. That recommendation, we know from the mouth of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, the Government mean to cast aside. Then their position is this. They chose men to examine deliberately on the spot the evils of Ireland connected with the land and the rents, and to go to the root of the matter. These men executed their task, and made their recommendations, and their main recommendation the Government mean to cast aside, and at the same time to ask us for a Bill to give increased stringency to the Criminal Law—whether for the purpose of agitation or not, I know not—but certainly for the purpose of putting the law in a position still more offensive to the general sense of the Irish people. What I have now to say is, I think, the most curious portion of the whole case. Why is it the recommendation of the Commissioners cannot be adopted? We have been here fully enlightened by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who rose to the great reputation of his rhetoric in two parts of his case—one when he was reproaching us, and the other when he was describing the acts which the Government knew how to perform. The reason, Sir, why this recommendation cannot possibly be adopted is because it would involve a breach of contract. The argument of the right hon. Gentleman is undoubtedly a perfectly intelligible one. He says you must not break a contract, and he warns and threatens you that if you break any one contract you never can be sure of holding any other.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I desire to correct that statement. I said that to break up a contract solemnly engaged in by Parliament would be wrong.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: The right hon. Gentleman has made a correction which does not, in the slightest degree, affect what I am about to say. But the right hon. Gentleman will not deny that he did say that if one contract were broken you would lose the authority by which you attempt to hold another. He does not question that?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not wish to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman;

nor do I recollect the precise words of my speech; but my point was—my argument was—that solemn Parliamentary engagements should not be broken up.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I am afraid the right hon. Gentleman forgets his own speech, for he went beyond that, and he introduced into this debate, I think for the first time, the question of Local Government for Ireland, and he first said—you are perfectly mad. We have no objection to his saying that—we are much obliged to him for saying that—for much worse things than that have been said about us. That is rather a moderate method of dealing with us, all things considered. He then qualified his language by saying we were singularly unwise; and when he used these words—words almost as gentle as if they had come from the Leader of the House—he objected to Home Rule for Ireland, because, he said—

> "Do what you will with Home Rule for Ireland, it must rest upon a kind of contract between the countries, and when you have broken the contract under the Land Act, you will not be able to maintain the contract under the Act constituting Irish Government."

This is his doctrine—high doctrine which I am not disposed to criticize in a severe or hostile spirit. I think the maintenance of contract is one of the prime duties of Parliament, and rare and strange indeed must be the circumstances which would justify interference with it; but in what condition is the right hon. Gentleman who propounds this doctrine? Is he going to break no contract? He is going to break the contract of 130,000 leaseholders, every one of whom is bound to pay a rent which the right hon. Gentleman is going to allow him to get reduced if he can. Does the right hon. Gentleman think that he will escape by saying that that is not the subject of a Parliamentary settlement? It was the subject of a Parliamentary settlement. There are those sitting in that quarter of the House who remember it—there are not many here who followed the details of the Land Bill of 1881, but there are men here who went through it with a patience and a skill and a perseverance that stamp them—if they had nothing else to stand upon—as men of high talent and capacity to serve their country. Sir, I admit to you that there is this difference between the 15 years' contract and the leaseholders' contract. The 15 years' contract sprang out of the Land Act; but the leaseholders' contract was reconsidered, modified, and sanctioned afresh by that Land Act. [MR. A. J. BALFOUR dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman shakes his head. What does he know of the details of the Land Act? Am I to understand by the shaking of the head that the case of the leaseholders was not discussed and debated? Yes it was, and upon every point, as I can tell the right hon. Gentleman if he likes—for pray recollect the most effective part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech on Tuesday night was that in which he declaimed with fervid indignation about our deadness to the claims of the leaseholders, and insinuated—"There you sat a set of dummies." That was the substance, undoubtedly, of his charge. I must own that in our weakness we had considerable difficulties on that subject, and I expressed those difficulties. I am now proving that the case of the leaseholders was considered, fully debated, and adjusted by serious changes of law by the Act of 1881 just as much as the case of the 15 years' contract was. A proposal was made that the leaseholders should be permitted to enter the Courts and to obtain judicial rents. I made a speech on the part of the Government in answer to that proposal, from which I shall quote a very few words. I said—

> "In my opinion it would be impossible to strike more directly at the very root of contract itself, as it is understood in Ireland, than to give relief in that form."

That speech was the result of long and careful consideration between the then Attorney General (Mr. Gibson) — afterwards Lord Chancellor of Ireland—and myself, with the able assistance of Lord Herschell, and we determined that the Irish leases with which we were then dealing had, and must have, all the solemnity of Parliamentary contracts. This question was not only not passed over in silence; it was carefully dealt with, and we introduced most important changes in the law. We introduced a change in the law by providing that if a leaseholder could show that he had been led to accept the lease by intimidation or fraud he might get his lease quashed—compulsorily quashed in Court. That was in 1870. That was under the Act that we introduced. But we introduced a more important change than that—a much larger alteration. This change was that whereas by law in Ireland up to that date the whole interest in the lessee terminated upon the expiry of his lease, we introduced the most important provision that at the expiry of his lease he should pass into the position of a yearly tenant, with all the rights which the Act conferred upon a yearly tenant; and not only was this contract considered, but all its conditions were re-adjusted; and those conditions which remained have the Parliamentary stamp upon them, just as much as the conditions of any contract. I should like to show how this change came about. At that time, when we proposed that on the expiry of the lease the man should take the position of a yearly tenant, Mr. Gibson gave his opinion on the subject. He said, with regard to that amendment of the law, on the 19th July, 1881—

> "Never was there a more distinct and flagrant violation of contract than is proposed by this Amendment, which would set aside the most solemn covenants and the most deliberate engagements as betweeen man and man."—[3 *Hansard*, (263) 1298.]

The right hon. Gentleman who said this is now a Member of the Cabinet which proposes deliberately to invade the rights of every leaseholder, and not only so, but at the same time that it does this it throws over the Report of its own Commission, and its most important recommendation because, forsooth, as they say, it would be a violation of contract. Yet these Gentlemen themselves propose, at the same time, to trample 130,000 contracts under foot. I must say that, having regard to the total inadequacy of the proposals of the Government, and to the absolute fallacy of the precedents they have quoted, and after two months of Parliamentary silence—I may almost say Parliamentary extinction—I think the proposal of the Government an absolutely unprecedented proposal. I have said enough, I think, for the present. This debate is only the introduction to other debates, an epitome—I will not say a miniature, for that might cause alarm; but undoubtedly these are subjects of the gravest character which are coming before us; and, for my part, I shall now say no more except that I heartily and fervently agree with the views of my right hon. Friend the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley). We shall record our vote in opposition to this policy and this course of procedure; and I do not see how we can forbear to continue that opposition at each step which the Government may make in the prosecution of so unhappy a policy. We can do nothing but resist it; and whether we are in a majority, or whether we are in a minority, it is very important, in my opinion, that the people of England should see that we have done our duty in a matter of so great difficulty. That duty, I trust, we shall do to the last stage of this ill-omened measure, which is now, as it were, flapping its wings over us, until the very last stage of it, when the voice of numbers shall—with full Parliamentary authority—drown what we think to be the voice of reason and of justice; when another false step, after the warnings which 86 years have given, and given in vain, shall be taken, and a further blow shall be struck, under the name of a Parliamentary Statute—a fresh blow shall have been struck—alike at the happiness, at the prosperity, and at the contentment of Ireland and at the Union of the Empire.

After a pause,

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.), rose. He said that owing to the extraordinary and ill-omened silence of the Government and their supporters, who desired by their numbers, if not by their arguments, to pass that Motion, and the silence of hon. Members who called themselves Liberals, the task had been thrown on the Irish Members to continue the debate. He was not surprised at the silence of right hon. Gentlemen opposite, who were now face to face with the Report of the Commission of their own choosing. From the evidence of hostile witnesses they had a complete justification of the Plan of Campaign. The Government had given them no information upon that subject, or upon the subject of crime in Ireland. They had been told that juries had refused to convict. Upon that point also they had declined to lay any information before the House. They had refused to convict, but where? In Belfast. Yet the Government proposed to coerce and punish, by Constitutional and lawful tribunals, the starving peasantry of Kerry and Clare, while they postponed to a later date dealing with the case of the prosperous and well-fed rioters of Belfast.

The evidence of all the hostile witnesses before the Land Commission was to the effect that the people of Ireland—the poor people of the South—were willing, above all things, to live peaceably and quietly in their own country, and that the combination was due altogether to excessive rent. There were two courses open to the Government. One was to establish a despotism in Ireland, and the other was to govern in a Constitutional manner. Since Her Majesty's Government had absolutely declined to carry out a Constitutional method of government, and since they were supported in that determination by a number of hon. Members who called themselves Liberals, the alternative of despotism was the only one they could possibly adopt. It seemed to him that it had been one of the fundamental principles of Liberalism that the will of the people should govern a country, and that where the Government governed against the will of the people the Representatives of the people should take the verdict of the country upon their acts. But the Liberal Unionists had not adopted that principle. They had declared their intention of supporting the Government whether they were right or wrong, in order that they might not go to the country, and that the verdict of the country might not be pronounced upon them. Those Gentlemen were, therefore, neither Liberals nor even Constitutional Conservatives, but simply despots. He was happy to think that those Gentlemen who had gone to the country at the last Election against Home Rule, and who had contended that Ireland could be governed Constitutionally without Home Rule, had now abandoned that position, and he believed that the next time the verdict of the country was pronounced upon them they would receive their political annihilation. He warned the Government that no paltering or partial measure of coercion could possibly succeed. The Government had better dispense with the last remnants of the British Constitution which were dangled over the heads of the Irish people, and go in for absolute despotism, and the sooner they did that the better.

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) said, he thought that the majority of people in the country would differ from the views of the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Chance) with regard to the Liberal Unionists, many of whom had given up honour and profit in order to give effect to their views. They had listened that evening to a very eloquent speech from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), a speech well appreciated by the Nationalist Members; but, for his (Mr. Addison's) own part, he was astonished at the position taken up by the right hon. Gentleman, or that it was possible, by any form of language that existed, so to misrepresent what had been going on in that House during the last two months. The right hon. Gentleman had gravely reproved the Government with the waste of time that had taken place, and had said that private Members had been given no chance. But why was that so? Simply because matters, which might have been disposed of in a night or two, had been debated at very great length by hon. Members opposite who might be considered as followers of the right hon. Gentleman, and whom he might have told to allow Business to get on quickly. He should have imagined, listening to the right hon. Gentleman, that there was no crime in that country; but, supposing that in seven-eighths of Ireland there was no crime, what harm would be done by passing the measure proposed by the Government affecting such a small proportion of the country? Hon. Members on the Conservative side of the House had as strong a desire as Nationalist Members could possibly have not to infringe on the liberties of the people of Ireland more than was necessary; but they maintained that crime must be punished whether in England, Scotland, or Ireland, and when order was restored in Ireland they were desirous of doing all that legislation could do to give happiness to the Irish people, always bearing in mind that they had no stronger claim on the consideration of Parliament than had the people of the rest of the United Kingdom. In this country they had had special legislation from time to time when any particular crime had become rife, such, for instance, as garotting, offences against the Bankruptcy Act, and, more recently, crimes against women and children, which had been dealt with by the Criminal Law Amendment Act; but it had never entered into the head of any sensible man in the country to denounce such measures as coercion, and why was Ireland to be the only country in the civilized world where those who committed crime were not to be coerced—if compelling people to obey the law was coercion? Against whom was coercion directed? It was against those who wished to commit crime. He thought that an attempt was being made to confuse the English mind between what was called coercion for Ireland and that coercion which existed in foreign countries, which was directed against the freedom of political opinion, the freedom of meetings, and matters of that kind affecting the liberty of the people. In England the passing of measures directed against crime had been going on as long as they could remember. Then the right hon. Gentleman told them that coercion had been tried for 86 years in Ireland and had done no good. Why, the result of coercion was that Ireland at least existed, and was, to some extent, a civilized country; what it would have been if no coercive measures had been passed he did not know, and it was impossible to say. But was the right hon. Gentleman so sure that there was no crime in Ireland? He (Mr. Addison) had read in *The Times* newspaper an address of Mr. Justice O'Brien, who he believed was a Catholic, to the Grand Jury of Kerry, no later than on the 10th of March, in which that Judge had regretted that he could not announce any improvement in the extraordinary and unsatisfactory state of affairs which existed, amounting to a state of open war, with all forms of authority and even with the necessary institutions of civilized life; the law was defeated, or rather had ceased to exist; person and life were assailed; an increased confidence in impunity existed; menace had given place to the deed; and terror and lawlessness existed everywhere. Those were the words of a person speaking with authority, and weighing his words, and if such a state of things existed, surely some sort of remedy must be found. It was no satisfaction to those who sat on the Government side of the House, as hon. Members below the Gangway seemed to think, to be told that the jury system had practically broken down; but it was remarkable that, even in the case of the Phœnix Park murders, although the jury had been summoned partly from the county and partly from the city, it had been necessary to make 50 of them stand aside in order to get a jury who would have the courage to do their duty. Then, to secure life and liberty, it was surely necessary that the existing law should have some respect shown to it. The very foundation and meaning of passing a law was that, when it was passed, it should be treated with respect. If that were so, surely hon. Members opposite could not complain if it were desired that some amendment of the Criminal Law in Ireland should be passed which should secure some kind of respect for the law there. With regard to what had been said as to evictions, no man with a heart could fail to be distressed at hearing of any poor family being turned out of their home on to the roadside, perhaps with young children and women; but what was the meaning of those evictions, and how was it possible to avoid them? He regretted that the efforts which had been made over and over again by the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) in this direction had only been made the gravest subject of reproach against the Government by the National League. Scenes occurred in this country in cases of eviction and of distress for rent which rivalled in wretchedness and misery anything that passed in Ireland. But they were, to a certain extent, inevitable as long as people without capital sought to draw a precarious living from the land. It had been found necessary in this country to consolidate holdings in order that the occupier should be able to pay his way. The doctrine put forward by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, if carried to its legitimate extent, would prevent any rent from being obtained in respect of small holdings, either in Ireland or in this country. He should like to see any Land Bill whatever produced by hon. Members opposite which would be consistent with the rights of property. Irish Members now said that the judicial rents could not be paid; but in that case what would have become of the security which the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian proposed in his Bill of last year to offer for the advance by this country of £150,000,000? In his opinion, hon. Members opposite would do well if they accepted the Criminal Law Amendment

Bill which was about to be introduced by his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland. It was believed that its application would extend only to those districts in which crime and outrage prevailed, and, having regard to the restoration of peace and happiness among the Irish population, he considered that was the honest and just course for the Nationalist Representatives to pursue. They should turn their attention to assisting the Conservative Party to restore peace, order, and prosperity to their country.

MR. MENZIES (Perthshire, E.): I shall ask the indulgence of the House, while we are on the very threshold of this important question, in order to state briefly my reasons for supporting the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), and resisting the proposals of the Government. Unfortunately, Sir, demands for the urgency of coercion are so little of a novelty in this House, that the arguments both for and against them are almost as familiar to hon. Members as those of certain annual discussions on our Votes of Supply, or hereditary legislators, or any other continually recurring subject of debate. It is, therefore, quite unnecessary to go into them at any length. But, Sir, there is this amount of novelty in the present proposals of the Government—I mean as compared with other coercive proposals—they have the unfortunate distinction, as has been proved over and over again in this debate, of being the most unnecessary and inexcusable instance of coercion which Parliament has ever been called upon to support—coercion with least crime to suppress, and with most to be said in favour of dealing with the difficulties which do exist by other and more humane methods. With reference to those other methods, we have been told, Sir, by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, that remedial measures will not of themselves restore order. No, Sir; I dare say they will not. There is not the slightest chance, I am sorry to say, of those remedial measures which the right hon. Gentleman has in his mind producing anything like such a beneficial result. But, Sir, are there no other remedial measures than those which the present Government are likely to propose? I believe that there are some—the very hope, the mere introduction of which into the last House of Commons, though defeated by a majority, exercised the most powerful tendency in favour of diminishing the amount of crime and the number of outrages throughout the whole of Ireland. We were told, Sir, in somewhat vague and inadequate language, considering the magnitude of the issue, that Ireland is in a state of disorganization, although it seems impossible to apply that remark with anything like accuracy to more than a portion of the country, containing about one-eighth of the whole population of Ireland. I would like to ask how Scotland would have stood the application of similar reasoning to her own case? Would it have entered into the wildest heads of the most uncompromising supporters of coercion on the opposite side of the House to have described Scotland as being in a state of disorganization, because the crofter counties, containing about one-ninth of the total population of Scotland, were described as being disturbed by an agrarian agitation. I would remind the House that in March last year the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland said that—

> "He doubted whether in any part of Ireland you could exceed the lawlessness, although you might exceed the violence, which now prevailed on some portions of the Western Coast. Nothing but the most courageous exercise of the powers of the Executive Government could possibly restore those elements of social order without which prosperity could not be re-introduced."

And when it was a question of remedial, and not of criminal legislation, which is far worse, was not the whole drift of argument which came from the opposite side of the House towards limiting the area to which the Bill should apply. I am aware that it may be replied that we are as yet ignorant as to how far the Government proposals are limited. But that is not the question. Hon. Members seem to forget that we are now dealing with the question of the urgency of coercion over remedial measures. The whole of Ireland—every single Irishman—is necessarily affected by precedence being given to coercion, and the delay of those remedial measures for which the whole country is calling. Because one-eighth of the population of Ireland may be said to be disturbed, all Ireland must go on in rapidly-increasing misery, and the "door of hope" be shut to every Irishman. And what, Sir, is the chief plea upon which the Government are basing their extraordinary policy? We are told that it goes back to the simple duty of every Government, which is to maintain the law and secure the liberties of the people. What law, I ask, and what liberties? It seems to me almost an abuse of language to make it your excuse for giving urgency to coercion over remedial measures, and preferring a policy of resistance to the Constitutional and reasonable demands of the Irish people to a policy of conciliation, that you are securing their liberties and maintaining their law. It is on this ground that I think the question is one which goes to the very root of civil liberty and the proper respect for the law. For the law which you are asking us to support by coercion, is not law which has been made sacred—or even respectable—by the fact that it has been made by the people themselves whom it affects. And, Sir, when we are asked to support, by coercion, what is called the stability of Government, let us at least be certain what that phrase really means. Let us remember, at all events, that in the eyes of the vast majority of Irishmen, this phrase — the stability of Government —means, under present circumstances, the stability of a foreign Government; and that the maintenance of law and order means in their sight, however much we may deplore it, the maintenance of landlords' law and land agents' order. I think that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle was right when he said that the real hypothesis on which the Government proposals are based is that the Irish, as a people, are incorrigible. And this, Sir, seems to me to be the guiding and impelling idea in many very sincere minds, and not only on one side of the House—an unnatural, an unhappy idea, but one which has taken violent possession of many men and many newspapers, and which it may possibly be difficult to eradicate except by a process more in the nature of a miraculous illumination than an ordinary process of reasoning. Against such an argument, it seems to me to be useless to fight. But the one thing which ought to be clear to all hon. Members is the impossibility of sustaining such a policy as the Government are now entering on, even for a moderate length of time. Hon. Members should remember that they have to reckon in future, not only with Irishmen, but with the electors of England, Scotland, and Wales. How long are they going to support you? May not they very shortly become incorrigible too? Yes, Sir, coercion may be an intelligible policy; but there is one great condition of success that it ignores. There is the heart and conscience of the people of Great Britain, which you cannot force to sleep for 20 years, or guarantee against an awakening, compared with which the Liberal reaction of 1880 would seem almost a feather in the cap of the Tory Party.

Mr. MULHOLLAND (Londonderry, N.): I think it is desirable that some of the Ulster Members should say a few words in reply to the accusations which have been levelled against them by the right hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Morley) and other speakers who have followed him. The right hon. Gentleman quoted from the Blue Book the evidence given before the Royal Commission by Mr. Dickson, who, as hon. Members know, was at one time a Member of this House; but I should like to know what weight the statements of that gentleman can carry on this question, seeing that, although for a long time he has been very hostile to the landlords of Ulster, he was not successful, at the last Election, in inducing a single agricultural constituency in Ulster to return him as their Representative. Other hon. Members who have spoken in support of the Amendment have quoted extracts from the evidence given before the Royal Commissioners which happened to bear specially on their side of the case; but, Sir, I venture to say that I do not think this is a very proper way of putting the case fairly before the House. I have the Report of the Commission here, and I could, myself, quote any number of statements in support of the landlords, and in exactly the opposite direction to the statements quoted by hon. Gentlemen opposite. I think that the House, in studying the evidence, will be rather inclined to balance the evidence of the landlord party and those who represent the landlords as against the evidence of the farmers and those who are specially the supporters of that class; and that they will attach the greatest weight to persons who are obviously impartial in the matter. Probably, the evidence which will carry most weight with it is that of the Head Commissioners—Mr. Justice O'Hagan and Mr. Litton—and I will trouble the House with a short extract from it. Mr. Justice O'Hagan, speaking of the increased reductions which have been made in recent years, says—

> "I think the figures of the change which we made, instead of averaging on the whole about 1 per cent above decisions of the Sub-Commissioners, came to 2 or 3 per cent below them."

So that the whole effect of the recent reductions was to reduce the rents 3 per cent more than they had been reduced under the earlier operation of the inquiry. Mr. Litton, who is the other Head Commissioner, was asked this question—

> "Does this, in your opinion tend to justify an alteration in the judicial rents."

His reply was—

> "I cannot conceive anything to justify legislative interference with the rents fixed under the authority of the Act, if there is to be any finality, or if there is to be any trust in the Legislature."

Again, in respect to a produce rent, the same Commissioner said—

> "If a produce rent is to be adopted, I would not apply it to judicial rents already fixed until the term had run out."

In considering this question of the fairness or unfairness of the judicial rents, it seems to me that this is purely an economic question, and that it should therefore be tested more by reference to the statistics which bear on the subject than by the evidence of individuals who have not studied the subject. I notice that hon. Members who have spoken in the debate in support of the Amendment have kept very clear from statistics. I have not been surprised at it; but I have never yet seen any statistics which, in any way, will support them in their contention. They say that the statistics in regard to agricultural produce show a considerable fall in prices during the last two or three years; but what we complain of is that in regard to this question of agricultural prices, hon. Members, and, indeed, some of the Commissioners, have only dealt with five or six years previous to the time of inquiry. Surely, it would have been very much fairer if they had considered the average of prices during a very much longer period than that. If we compare the condition of the farmer 20 or 30 years ago with his condition at the present time, we shall find broadly that the prices at the present time are from some 20 to 40 per cent higher now than they were at that period; notwithstanding which fact the rents have been reduced 20 per cent by the operation of the Land Courts. In addition to this question of the prices of agricultural produce, there is a large amount of evidence, collected in tables and in the Report of the Commission, to show that the value of the tenant's interest in the farm has been kept up even down to the present date. In fact, especially in Ulster, it is a well-known fact that, on the average, the interest of the tenant is at the present day fully equal in value to the interest of the landlord. I do not think that a fact like that tends to show that the existing rents are either exorbitant or rack rents. Take, again, the bank deposits; they have increased during the last 45 years from £8,000,000 to £34,000,000, and hon. Members will admit that a large amount of these deposits is the property of the tenant farmers. Then, again, there is the case of the Bright purchasers—those who have purchased farms under the Act of 1870. I contend that their case is really a hard one, and I have already brought it under the notice of the Government. Indeed, I am sanguine enough to hope that the Government will take the case of these purchasers into their serious consideration, with a view of giving them some relief. The point I wish to make is, that these purchasers have been paying instalments which are equivalent to a rent very much higher — 30, 40, and 50 per cent higher than the level of the judicial rents. I regard that as a very strong proof indeed that the general condition of the rents of Ulster is not too high. I do not think it is altogether surprising that, taking these matters into consideration, the landlords of Ulster have not been making a general reduction of the judicial rents. Another argument which has, no doubt, influenced them is this—that while the landlords in Ireland have given reductions, either from generosity, or, what I think has more often been the case, because they were too poor to fight the matter, and were obliged to take what they could get, that fact has been brought forward as an argument that the rents were exorbitant. When a landlord reduces his rents in certain years, it is often brought against him in succeeding years that because he made the reductions the rents were exorbitant. There is one point more, and I think it has an important bearing upon the question—namely, the position of the labourers in Ireland. I can speak specially from my own knowledge of the condition of the labourers in my own constituency, and the manner in which they regard the proposals for new land legislation. I may inform the House that the labourers do not look with any degree of satisfaction upon the proposal to confer new benefits upon the farmers. They are of opinion, and I think to a large extent that opinion is justified, that the Legislature has already conferred a sufficient number of boons and benefits upon the farmers at the expense of the landlords. They think it is quite time that if further legislation is to be introduced in regard to the land of Ireland, it should be in their favour. What they want is to have a decent house and half-an-acre of land at a fair and reasonable rent. They know, too, that the landlords are their best friends; that they give them the best employment, and that they treat their labourers much better than the farmers. They look forward with dread to the time when the landlords will be swept out of the country, and when they will be left entirely to the tender mercy of the farmers. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that they are opposed to any sweeping transfer of property from the landlords to the tenants. I believe the other Ulster Members will bear me out in saying that they are not now in favour, nor are they likely to be in future, of any sweeping or drastic land legislation. What Ireland wants is peace and repose; that the grinding and cruel coercion of the National League should be put an end to; and when this result has been attained, when law and order are restored, when the country is in a condition to receive remedial legislation, I hope that this House and the Government will not relax their efforts, but will use British credit to encourage the industries of the country, and to provide that employment for the Irish people which is so much needed. If that be done, I believe that before many years are passed we may hope to see our country on a fair road to prosperity and contentment.

MR. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.) said, that nothing but the most overwhelming necessity could have justified the Government in the monstrous proposition they had made for what really amounted to an appropriation of the whole time of the House for the remainder of the Session. If the Government devoted themselves to coercion in that way, Parliament would cease to be Imperial, and would become a Legislature for the transaction of Irish Business by a majority composed of English and Scotch Members. Looking to the vast amount of opposition this measure was likely to encounter—an opposition very different both in extent and character from that which any other Coercion Bill had met with—it was certain that the matter would occupy a considerable time; indeed, he could not help thinking that possibly Whitsuntide or even the months of July and August would still find them squabbling over this measure. What, then, was to become of the Ministerial programme? This was rather a heavy burden to lay on a new House of Commons in, practically, its first Session, when a large number of Members had come up from the country anxious to bring forward questions of great importance to their constituents and the country generally. It was especially hard when they remembered that the Government had asked for and obtained every minute up to the present time. The House had now sat for two months, and of that period independent Members had not obtained a single day. Not a month ago, the First Lord of the Treasury asked that priority should be given to the Rules of Procedure, on the ground that they were intended to restore the dignity and efficiency of the House. He (Mr. Osborne Morgan) accepted the statement in perfect good faith, and did his best to help the Government to pass the First Rule. But within a few hours of passing the Rule, they threw the dignity and efficiency of the House to the winds, and asked hon. Members to give fresh urgency to a new measure. The right hon. Gentleman had let the cat out of the bag, and had shown that the real motive of the Government in passing the Closure

Rule was not to insure the efficiency and dignity of the House of Commons, but to enable them to pass a severe Coercion Bill for Ireland, for which there was nothing but the most flimsy pretext. What was to become of the other Rules of Procedure, some of which were far more important than the one which had been adopted? What had become of the Rule relating to the Sittings of the House, and to the devolution of the Business of Parliament? What was to become of the measures promised in the Queen's Speech, if this Bill was to take up the remainder of the Session? Why, they would vanish into thin air, and become "such stuff as dreams are made of." Urgency was never before demanded upon such flimsy grounds and such inadequate information as the Government had put forward in this case. There could be no comparison between the state of things in 1881-2, when urgency was granted, and that existing at the present time. Crimes and outrages were now comparatively few and light. On the previous occasion, facts and statistics were placed before the House to justify the action it took; but now hon. Members were called upon to vote with their eyes shut. He insisted, therefore, that the Government were bound to show some more solid grounds than they had done for the demand they made. They ought to have stated some facts, data, and statistics before, and not after, making their demand for urgency. The urgency now asked was sought not to restore law and order in Ireland, but to maintain high rents; not to protect life and property, but to protect the pockets of the landlords, and to enable them collect rents which, in a great majority of cases, were higher than the tenants could possibly pay. The evidence of the Land Commission showed that the whole land system of Ireland was rotten to the core. As a proof of it, he would refer hon. Members to the account given in that day's newspapers of the evictions carried out on the Lansdowne estate, which resembled the description of a storming party in the Peninsular War. A body of 100 constables, under the command of a Resident Magistrate, were told off with scaling ladders, shields of corrugated iron, and crowbars, in order to evict 20 wretched old men, women, and children. How long, he asked, was it possible for those things to go on? The sooner they were altered the better it would be for the Government, and the peace and happiness of the long misgoverned Sister Country. A Bill, they were told, was to be introduced in "another place" to deal with the Irish Land Question. He did not like the domicile of origin of that Bill. He knew what the House of Lords had done in regard to rents in the case of previous Bills, and he had not much faith in anything that came from them on that subject. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was an able man—he was an honest man—but, however able and honest, he could not accomplish impossibilities—he could not govern Ireland in the way he had proposed. Did he expect to succeed where Lord Spencer and Mr. Forster and Sir George Trevelyan had failed? They might gag the Press, imprison priests, stop public meetings, and evict old men, women, and children from their miserable homes; they might put on the closure in the strictest form, and drag unfortunate Members out of bed to enforce it; but the weapon they had formed would break in their hands, for they would still have to deal with 85 Irishmen who had been sent to that House to ventilate the wrongs of their country, and who would, if he mistook not, continue to do so. He believed that the democracy of England were getting sick of those Coercion Bills, and longing to find out a better way to deal with Ireland, and evidence of that was furnished by the recent bye-elections, and would, he believed, be furnished by another bye-election which was going on that day. If the Government really preferred a policy of buckshot let them openly say so. As Cavour said—"Anybody can govern by military law." That was what it would come to; but in Heaven's name let them get rid of that half-and-half policy—that sham freedom—that attempt to combine the despotism of Russia with the democratic system of England. He was not sorry the Government had shown their hand. Every day of that debate would bring them nearer and nearer to the only way of solving the Irish problem, and, possibly, before long Lord Salisbury might wake up from that nightmare which he confessed he had been suffering from, and would find out that the only true way of governing Ireland was to let Ireland govern herself.

Colonel SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.) said, it was not his intention to detain the House at any considerable length, not because he did not attach immense importance to the subject under discussion, but because inevitably during the next week or two that same subject would be discussed again and again; and the great inconvenience of the debate in which the House was now engaged consisted in the fact that it was a partial debate on a question that would be completely debated in the course of a very few days. No doubt, however, hon. Members below the Gangway opposite would expect himself and his Colleagues connected with land in Ireland to say a few words in connection with the question of rent. The Amendment of the right hon. Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) was not an Amendment which simply dealt with rent, but it was a Vote of Want of Confidence in the Government; and he thought he knew the constituency which he had the honour to represent too well not to know that, however tempting it might be—and undoubtedly it would be very tempting—for the tenants to have their rents reduced, they would think it a gain too dearly bought by replacing the Government now occupying the Treasury Bench by a Home Rule Government led by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). The right hon. Member for Newcastle, in moving his Amendment, apparently had two tasks to fulfil. First of all, he had to try and saddle the Government with the charge of backing up Irish landlordism; and, secondly, he had to whitewash his present staunch allies the Irish National League. He had taken down the words of the right hon. Gentleman, and, in speaking of the National League which it was his business to whitewash, as his remedy for Irish Bills was to commit the destinies of Ireland to that organization, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "You are acting against a combination to protect the tenants against rents which you yourselves will admit—will be compelled to admit—to be excessive and exorbitant, and against which these combinations are the only existing safeguards."

Now, the right hon. Gentleman was usually very calm and academic in his style; but when he attacked the Irish landlords he raised his hand and pointed across at the class which he desired to crumple up and destroy; and, happening himself to be the Irish landlord nearest him at the moment, he felt almost alarmed at the anger and fury displayed by the right hon. Gentleman in pointing to the Irish landlords as a class worthy only of abhorrence and detestation. But, a little further on in his speech, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I do not wish to leave off with any particularly bad language against the Irish landlords."

Well, he then thought the right hon. Gentleman was going to pull in the reins and say, at least, a few kind words of the landlords; but, however, he went on and compared them very disadvantageously with Irish Moonlighters. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "Anxious as I am to do that, still I am less anxious to secure vengeance on 100 or 200 ruffians than to secure righteous and humane treatment for thousands of poor tenants in Ireland; and that is the difference between hon. Gentlemen opposite and those who sit upon this side of the House."

Well, what did that mean? He imagined it meant that the great majority of the Irish landlords, in their extortion practised on the tenants, compared unfavourably with the Moonlighters who carried out the behests of the National League in Ireland. Did the right hon. Gentleman mean what he said? The right hon. Gentleman had been Chief Secretary for Ireland, and had been in that country for three weeks, and had therefore had a considerable knowledge of the affairs. If during those three weeks he made a careful examination of the condition of the country, many instances must have occurred to him in which the National League, which he now tried to whitewash, had proved that it was the greatest tyrant that ever exercised its baneful influence over the Irish people. He could give numerous instances of how the National League had helped Irish tenants. In the County of Roscommon, about a year and a-half ago, a man named Brennan had the audacity to pay his rent after he had been ordered not to do so; he was furnished by his brother with the money to pay it, and he paid it; and that night, sitting at his bedside, he was shot dead through the window. This was an instance of the beneficent action of the National League — the only organization that benefited the tenants of Ireland. While the right hon. Member for Newcastle was Chief Secretary, in the County of Roscommon the League Boycotted some grass lands belonging to two landlords —Lord Kingston and Mr. McDermott Roe—and issued orders that no one was to take the lands, simply because they belonged to gentlemen against whom the League had a grudge. They were, however, offered at so low a price that six farmers determined to take the risk, and took portions of the lands. Immediately there were placed upon the telegraph posts by the roadside warnings from the local League, of which the parish priest was president and his curates vice-presidents, that these tenants were to be treated as land-grabbers. This had such an effect that one tenant gave up the land and paid a forfeit of £75. The others continued to hold what they had taken, and the next day the cattle on the lands disappeared. It was afterwards discovered that the cattle had been driven to a coal-pit, and hurled over the edge, and their dead and mutilated remains were found at the bottom. They were brought to the surface and identified; and those dead and mutilated cattle identified the character and nature of the National League. [An hon. MEMBER: How about General Buller?] Oh, I will deal with General Buller presently. So far from its being the main object of the proposed Bill to subject the Irish tenants to a galling yoke, it was to set them free from a yoke that was crushing all progress and enterprise, driving capital away, and depriving the country of its life's blood. He could multiply instances in which the League had done injury to the Irish people. He had a letter from a small Irish Roman Catholic tenant, whose name he could not give, because if it were published his life would not be worth six days' purchase. This man, whose letter he held in his hand—and which he would have no objection in showing to the right hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley)—had committed a crime which was unpardonable in Ireland. He disobeyed the behests of a Court which suffered no contempt to go unpunished —he paid his rent, walking 14 miles into the town of Tipperary to do it in the hope that the League might hear nothing about it. But, somehow, the fact got wind, presumably from an official of the bank; and the next night his farm was visited, the cattle were massacred in the fields, the ploughs and agricultural implements were broken up. The tenant had to fly from his house, and he dared not return for some months for fear of being murdered. This man was perfectly willing to pay his rent. He said—

> "I have sold my horse; I have got the money; I am ready to pay when the rest is paid; but as I was Boycotted last year, I am afraid to do it until they get leave."

And he wound up with the remark—

> "I do not know what is becoming of this country that a man won't be let do as he wants to do."

This remark was entirely apposite; and the writer added—

> "We have a quare Parliament that don't put down such work at once."

Well, he (Colonel Saunderson) believed it was the intention of the House and of the Government to put this down at once. The right hon. Members for Newcastle and Mid Lothian were prejudiced critics—they were opposed to the plan which the Government intended to pursue, because they had a cure of their own for the wrongs and woes of Ireland; and no matter what proposals the present Government might bring forward, they would be opposed by those right hon. Gentlemen. They all knew that doctors, when they had prescribed for a patient, and were superseded by another medical man, always said—"Oh, you will yet be very glad to come back to my pills." The remedy of right hon. Gentlemen opposite was to force Ireland from the control of the British Parliament. It was quite true, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had remarked that evening, that the present state of things in Ireland was different to what it was in the year 1881. That was true; because the Party of Separation was now led by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, whereas it was formerly led by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell). He (Colonel Saunderson) admitted at once that there was not much crime in Ireland; but he held that the first duty of the Government was not only to punish crime, but also to prevent the commission of crime; and Irish society was now ripe for the production of crime in its worst form. The greater part of the Island was absolutely subject to the National League. There was no need now for crime. If they went into the details of the crime of 1880, 1881, and 1882, they would find that that was mainly directed to one purpose—namely, laying the foundation of the authority of the National League everywhere, and to enable it to terrorize over the Irish people. That had been effectually done; the National League had ousted the law of the land; and it was superior to the Law Courts in all parts of Ireland. The right hon. Member for Newcastle and his Colleagues had swallowed that state of affairs and the Plan of Campaign, and hoped the nauseous mixture would be swallowed by the Government, because they would not follow their example. But the Government, and the Unionist Party who had placed them on the Treasury Bench, showed no inclination to take the nauseous dose. There were only two policies submitted to the electors last July—surrender to the National League, and the maintenance of the law of the Crown and the unity of the Empire. The great majority of the country decided that the latter policy should prevail, and the Government intended to carry it into effect. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian quoted the evidence of General Buller. He (Colonel Saunderson) interrupted the right hon. Gentleman—he was afraid somewhat rudely—but he knew the right hon. Gentleman was very averse to saying anything inaccurate in his speeches, and he asked him to read on. The right hon. Gentleman was trying to show that General Buller had stated that the National League had nothing to do with crime. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian went on to accuse Sir Redvers Buller, and he (Colonel Saunderson) thought the right hon. Gentleman would feel obliged to him for calling attention to another question which would throw some light on the subject under discussion. The right hon. Gentleman went on to read the Answer to Question 16,503, but only read a part of it, and then thought he had snuffed him out. But the whole answer showed that, in the opinion of Sir Redvers Buller, in some parts of Ireland, at any rate, the National League was directly responsible for crime, outrage, and intimidation. The Question was whether, owing to the organization of the League, the enforcement of legal obligations had not, in that district, become impossible? And Sir Redvers Buller replied—

> "Quite so; you cannot collect a shop debt. There was a man murdered the other day on account of a shop debt, on the other side of Tralee; and the crops of a farmer having been seized for a shop debt, a man who came to cut them was shot the same evening."

That is General Buller's opinion of the action of the League in that part of Ireland. He (Colonel Saunderson) could not conceive any answer more direct, or to the purpose. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian appeared to think that Her Majesty's Government looked upon, and intended to deal with, the Irish people as if they were the most lawless and criminal population in Europe. He absolutely denied it, and believed that, if they had the chance, the Irish people would be as law-abiding as the people of England and Scotland. They would all admit that the most civilized and exemplary part of the British Islands was that part of them north of the Tweed. If they had in Ireland a law as stringent and severe as had always prevailed in Scotland, they would not want a Coercion Bill. What the great majority of the English people expected was that the Government would bring in a Bill strong enough to crush the National League and enable law-abiding Irishmen, whatever their class or creed, to go about their business as they pleased and to fulfil all the duties of citizens. They expected the Bill to be a permanent one. The right hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Osborne Morgan) asked—"Do you expect to succeed when Forster and Spencer failed?" They failed because their measures were temporary. He hoped, therefore, that the Bill would be permanent, and not confined to isolated parts of the country, because he defied anybody to bring forward an instance where a Coercion Act, while in force, had interfered with any law-abiding man. There was not a county in Ireland which could hold up its hands against that measure. When such a measure as he referred to had been passed and the supremacy of the law was established, the remedial measures Her Majesty's Government intended to bring in would have some chance of success. No Land Bill, the most generous that could be conceived—even one that would turn the landlords adrift and make a present of the land to the tenants—would succeed in pacifying Ireland so long as they were trodden under the foot of an organization which originated in crime and outrage; and whose ultimate object was to separate Ireland from England and to destroy the just rights of the Crown. For that reason he hoped the Government and the House would reject the Amendment, stand by the law and coerce, not the tenants, but the agitators who had ever been the curse of Ireland. Then Ireland might become what they had a right to expect she ought to be—a source of strength and wealth to the British Empire.

MR. ASQUITH (East Fife) said, he would ask the indulgence of the House while he stated the reasons that induced him as an Englishman who represented a Scottish constituency, in the interests of Great Britain no less than in the interests of Ireland, to support the Amendment. It appeared to him that the Government were inviting them to a display of trustfulness, not to say of credulity, which might well tax the faith of the most docile and the best-disciplined majority. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had darkly hinted that when the time came for him to introduce his Bill, he would be able to unfold a terrible tale of anarchy and disorder. But up to this moment, after three nights' hot debate, not a single responsible Minister had condescended to a single specific statement in support of the proposal of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman had contented himself first with general declamation as to the condition of Ireland, and next by appealing to the precedent of 1881. Now that appeal to precedent rested on two assumptions—first, that the state of things now was similar to the state of things existing then—a hypothesis which had been effectually demolished by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone); and, secondly, that the experiment of 1881, repeated in 1882, was so well justified by experience, so brilliantly fruitful of good results, that at this distance of time—1887—they were bound to follow it as a precedent, blindly, implicitly, without question and almost without argument. He would direct the attention of the House to that assumption. A great deal had been said about the duty of the Executive Government to enforce the law. He entirely agreed with that proposition. In his judgment it was the duty of the Executive not to inquire whether the law was good or bad, just or unjust, but to enforce it in all places, and at all times, without distinction of persons, without discrimination of cases, with undeviating uniformity, and with irresistible strength. [*Ministerial cheers.*] Hon. Gentleman opposite cheered that statement, but he would ask them, when, in our time, had that view of the duty of the Executive been recognized and acted upon in Ireland? Once certainly, and once only, and that was during Lord Spencer's administration. Lord Spencer's hand was heavy, but its pressure was even. Wherever he encountered lawlessness — among Catholics or Protestants, the Moonlighters of the South or the turbulent Orange rabble of the North—he dealt with it in one fashion, firmly, impartially, and effectively. But there was not a right hon. Gentleman now sitting on the Front Bench opposite, with two exceptions—namely, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, whatever might be the case now, was then a Member of the Liberal Party, and the Home Secretary, who had not then come to the close of that period of hibernation which separated the two stages of his remarkable political career—with those two exceptions there was not a right hon. Gentleman of Cabinet rank who was not a party, either as principal or accessory, to the most envenomed and bitter attacks upon Lord Spencer's administration. He would quote for that statement the authority of Lord Salisbury himself, who said that under Lord Spencer's administration the Nationalist League had grown into power and spread its branches throughout the whole of the country. Next he said that the practice of Boycotting, which up to that time had been comparatively rare, had established itself throughout the country, and, as Lord Salisbury pointed out, that was a practice with which no law, however stringent, could deal and which no Administration, however zealous, could put down. He, for one, did not believe in the plenary infallibility of Liberal Governments, and he did not think the proudest period in the history of the Liberal Party had been that in which it had frittered away in Office pledges which had been given when in Opposition; and, therefore, loyal though he was to his Party and his Leader, he did not think the fact that in 1881 the Liberal Government committed what he considered a colossal and disastrous mistake was any reason whatever why, in 1887, they should, in obedience to a Conservative Ministry, repeat that blunder. It was admitted that, looking at Ireland as a whole, there had been during the last six months less serious crime, whether open or secret, than in almost any corresponding period of her troubled history. What crime there had been was confined to a comparatively limited area in a few counties in the South and West. In those counties they found another phenomenon. It was in those counties that abatements of rent had been most generally refused. It was in those counties that evictions had been most exceptionally frequent in number, and most grave and cruel in their character. It was in those counties that the standard of rents, judged by the reductions made by the Land Commissioners in the course of the last few months, had been abnormally high. As to the prevalence of crime, having regard to these admitted facts, he said deliberately that this was a manufactured crisis. They knew by experience how a case for coercion was made out. The panic-mongers of the Press—gentlemen to whom every political combination was a conspiracy, and to whom every patriot was a rebel—were the first in the field. They had been most effectively assisted on the present occasion on the other side of the Channel by the purveyors of loyal fictions and patriotic hysterics wholesale, retail, and for exportation. The truth, whatever truth there was in the stories, was deliberately distorted and exaggerated. Atrocities were fabricated to meet the requirements of the market with punctuality and despatch; and when the home supply failed, the imagination of the inventive journalist winged its flight across the Atlantic, and he set to work to piece together the stale gossip of the drinking saloons of New York and Chicago, and eked it out with cuttings from the obscure organs of the dynamite Press. And thus it was that, after six months of comparatively little crime, we found ourselves in the presence of this artificial crisis, and confronted once again with proposals for coercion. They were told—and it was true—that there were certain grave symptoms in the existing condition of Ireland. The National League was asserting its authority throughout the country. In many quarters the practice of Boycotting was carried on to an extent that was inconsistent with the maintenance of law and good order. There was a disposition on the part of juries not to convict persons who ought to be punished. He made these admissions; but he asked hon. Members to consider what was the meaning of the facts. His hon. Friend the Member for the Inverness Burghs (Mr. Finlay) declared the other night that he was going to support the measures of the Government because they were measures, not of coercion, but of emancipation—measures to enfranchise the suffering Irish tenant from the tyranny of secret societies. What secret societies? His hon. Friend did not attempt to answer that question; but it appeared that he was referring to the National League. Well, that was no more a secret society than was the Primrose League. It was an open assocation, and reports of the proceedings of all its branches appeared every week in *United Ireland.* There had been in Ireland and elsewhere secret societies such as the Fenian Brotherhood, the Carbonari in Italy, the Ku-Klux-Klan in the Southern States of America, and the Nihilists in Russia; but these secret societies had been called into existence by measures such as that to be submitted to the House. They had drawn the vitality which enabled them to tyrranize over and terrorize the people by such a policy as the Government were now asking the House to adopt, and in favour of which the Government were asking the House to devote the whole of its time, to the postponement of all the real Business of the nation. Once suspend the guarantees of the Constitution, and take away from the people the privilege of free criticism and of legitimate political agitation, and the consequence was to drive them to those sinister and subterranean methods, which were destructive of peace and prosperity in every country in which they should exist. The really grave symptoms in Ireland were the existence of Boycotting and the indisposition of juries to convict prisoners. No coercive legislation could have the least effect in diminishing or removing either of those evils. With regard to Boycotting, he was content with the testimony of Lord Salisbury. It was one of those impalpable things which legislation could not reach, and the only remedy for it was altering the conditions out of which it sprang. The indisposition of juries to convict depended, firstly, on the rooted antipathy and hostility of the class from which the jurors were drawn to the system of law that they were called upon to administer. In the next place, it depended on the unwillingness of men to give evidence against those whom they believed to be in sympathy with the aspirations of the masses of the community. He would illustrate this by the case of the Curtin family. He did not hesitate to say that the treatment to which that family had been exposed was a disgrace to Ireland and a scandal to humanity. But while they should lose no opportunity of denouncing the cruelty of which the Curtin family had been the victims, yet, when they came to practical legislation, they must consider the real meaning of what had occurred. What was the crime in the eyes of the people which the Curtin family were expiating by this terrible social ostracism? It was not that the head of the family shot and killed the leader of the band of marauders who invaded his house by night. It was because the sons and daughters went to Cork Assizes and gave evidence against the persons concerned in that crime. He was not defending or palliating that course of conduct, but they were sitting there as legislators, and not as moral censors. They had to consider what would be the result of their legislation. From actual violence and outrage, and even from open insult, the Curtin family had long since been protected. ["No, no!"] He was speaking of facts which he had personally investigated. Did hon. Members imagine that by the legislation which Her Majesty's Government were going to propose, they would be able to transmute the social atmosphere in which those people lived and which rendered such treatment of them possible? Suppose they enlarged the powers of the magistrates; suppose they deprived the jurors of their share in the administration of the law; suppose they made punishments more severe; did they imagine that in that way they would increase the disposition of the peasantry of Ireland to come forward and give evidence? Not even a drum-head court-martial could convict without testimony proving the guilt of the accused. The difficulty which they had to provide for was the difficulty which arose from the fact that the great mass of the population in Ireland were alienated from the law, and had no sympathy with its administration. We were not unfamiliar in this country with the very state of things which existed in Ireland. There was nothing novel in the symptoms. They had been witnessed in every country whenever the state of the law had not been in harmony with the wishes of the people. In the early part of the present century, in the days when it was the custom for the Attorney General to file, as a matter of course, informations for seditious libel against political opponents, in vain did the Judges direct that juries had no alternative but to convict. In the teeth of the evidence, and in the face of the direction of the Judge, the jury acquitted the prisoner. It was truly an extraordinary thing that at this time of day the Government, dealing with a well-known form of social and political disease, should come to the House and repeat the catch-words of the Metternichs and Castlereaghs as if they were the latest discoveries of political science. They were told that, after passing this Coercion Bill, the Government were going to give the Irish people a dose of remedial legislation. The procedure of the Government reminded him greatly of that enterprising speculator in the days of the South Sea Bubble who invited the public to subscribe their money in support of a scheme, the particulars of which were to be disclosed subsequently. History did not record that any dividends were ever paid on the capital so subscribed. He did not wish to impugn the good faith of the Government, and he dared say that they believed in the efficacy of the Land Bill which they were to introduce. At present, however, very little was known about that Bill. They knew that it was to provide for the extension to leaseholders of the benefits of the Land Act. That was a provision borrowed from the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell). It was further believed that the Bill would provide for the application of some of the equitable provisions of the Bankruptcy Act to the cases of a certain class of tenants. The road to prosperity for these tenants was in some way or other to lie through the portals of the Bankruptcy Court—in truth a very encouraging prospect. Then they knew that this remedial legislation was in the first instance to make its appearance in "another place." That was a very significant fact. He was far from being disposed to intrust the Government with exceptional powers for the enforcement of the law on the chance, the very remote chance, that some day or other, this year or next, or on the advent of the Greek kalends, that august Assembly, which in the last 50 years had mangled and mutilated every proposal for the remedy of the grievances of Ireland, might be coerced or persuaded into acquiescing in an equitable solution of the Irish agrarian question. The Chancellor of the Exchequer not long ago, with what was then his habitual caution, declined to give a blank cheque to Lord Salisbury. He thought that they might profit by the right hon. Gentleman's example; and the liberties of a nation being at stake, reasonably decline to honour this very serious draft upon their political credulity. He quite understood that there were hon. Members near him who took a very different view of the matter. Those hon. Members were compelled by the circumstances of their position to an exercise of faith which a very short time ago they would have been the first to ridicule and condemn. It was, perhaps, excusable in them, that under the stress of compromising memories—memories of the day when they were wont to declare "that force was no remedy,"—memories of the days still more recent when they denounced the wickedness of Irish landlords, and the more than Polish abominations of Castle rule—it was, perhaps, excusable in them that they should clutch at any pretext, however desperate, which might seem to reconcile their present with their past. He did not know who was the casuist of the Liberal Unionist Party. In that compact and complete organization he felt sure that a place must have been found for a director of consciences. Whoever he was, his time must just now be pretty well occupied. But as for the poor Separatists "the intellectual scum of what was once the Liberal Party," they might be thankful that they had not to exercise their humble faculties in the attempt to explain how they could vote for a Coercion Bill in the hope that some day or other, in some way or other, remedial measures might be introduced. In the course which the Party opposite were about to take, were they not either going too far or not going nearly far enough? Let them consider what would be the position of Ireland, the condition of government in that country under the system which they were about to introduce—representative institutions upon the terms that the voice of the great majority of the Representatives of the people should be systematically ignored and overridden; the right of public meeting tempered by Viceregal proclamation; trial by jury with a doctored and manipulated panel; a free Press subject to be muzzled at the caprice of an official censorship; Judges and magistrates in theory independent of the Crown, but, in fact, by the tradition and practice of their office inextricably mixed up with the daily action of the Executive. What conceivable advantage could there be either to Ireland or Great Britain from the continuance of this grotesque caricature of the British Constitution? There was much virtue in government of the people, by the people, for the people. There was much also to be said for a powerful and well-equipped autocracy. But, between the two there was no logical or statesmanlike halting-place. For the hybrid system which the Government were about to set up—a system which pretended to be that which it was not, and was not that which it pretended to be—a system which could not be either resolutely repressive or frankly popular—for this half-hearted compromise there was reserved the inexorable sentence which history had in store for every form of political imposture.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I do not know whether the speech to which we have just listened is the maiden speech of my hon. Friend (Mr. Asquith); but, whether it be or not, I think that all who have heard him will agree with me that his speech is a favourable augury of the position which he is likely to fill in our Parliamentary contests. I will not say more about his speech at this moment, except to congratulate my hon. Friend upon the position which he occupies, and which he regards with so much satisfaction—that of a Member of a Party which is free from all compromising memories, and which, as he says, possesses the inestimable advantage—I am not quite certain whether I understood him correctly—the inestimable advantage of having no directors or having no conscience. In what I have to say upon the question before the House, I hope that I may not have to trespass at any length upon its attention, and I hope also that I may be able to avoid wounding the legitimate susceptibilities of any of those from whom I have to differ. Although I may differ from some of their conclusions, I find myself in general agreement with most of the arguments and all the statements of fact which have been made in the course of this debate. The issue which we have to decide is, practically speaking, a very limited one. We are not discussing the terms of a Bill for amending the Criminal Law. We do not know what the proposals of the Government are to be. [" Oh, oh !" *from the Irish Members.*] Well, I do not know. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway may be more fortunate. At present I only know that the provisions of that Bill may be so stringent that some of us may find ourselves unable to support them. On the other hand, they may be so moderate and reasonable that some of us are already pledged, by our public declarations, to give our assent to them; but that is not the question before us. The question before us is, whether, before we have heard the case of the Government—whether, before we know the nature of the proposals which they are about to make—we are so certain that any Bill for the amendment of the Criminal Law, whether it be a great Bill or a small Bill, whether it be a stringent Bill or a moderate Bill, is unnecessary that we are resolved to refuse to the Government the facilities for its discussion for which they are asking. Now, what do they ask from the House? What they ask from the House is, that the House shall agree to give the Government control over those two nights in the week on which private Members would otherwise have a right to discuss their Motions or their Bills. Well, I do not think a proposal of that kind can fairly be described, as it is in this Amendment, as " setting aside the Business of the nation." I must say that, in my experience, I have generally found that very little indeed of the " Business of the nation " is ever transacted on nights devoted to private Members. We are told by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone)—and it is perfectly true—that this demand is unprecedented, in the sense that it has never before been made with a prospect of its being in operation for so lengthened a period. That is quite true; but then, the circumstances are unprecedented. Who is it that has told us that " Ireland blocks the way ? " I do not dispute that assertion. Ireland, or a combination of circumstances which it is not my business now to discuss, does undoubtedly block the way; and it is impossible that any practical progress should be made in any social or political reform until the business of Ireland has been disposed of, and therefore there is no question before the House as to urgency in relation to questions affecting Ireland. That must be granted by the nature of the situation. The only question is as to the order in which the various branches of the Irish Question shall be considered—whether we will give priority to the amendment of the Criminal Law, or to remedial legislation. Well, Sir, I venture to say that, in my judgment, no one can consistently vote for the Amendment before the House unless he is determined that, under no circumstances, will he at present be willing to support any amendment of the Criminal Law in Ireland—[*Cries of* " No, no ! "]—until at all events the remedial legislation which he thinks to be necessary has been dealt with by the House. I hear some Gentlemen say " No, no ! " I hope those are the voices of Gentlemen who are unable to support this Amendment; but it has been adopted by the majority of the Irish Representatives—those who call themselves Nationalist Representatives, and by many Liberal Members, on this ground—the majority of the Liberal Party, and the majority of the Irish Representatives, have come to the conclusion that, in future, they will not assent to any measure in the nature of a

Coercion Bill for any amendment of the Criminal Law in Ireland, until, at all events, the remedial legislation which they desire has been successfully passed through the House. They found this determination—which I remark, in passing, is a new determination with regard to many of them—they found that determination on two propositions; in the first place, on the proposition that coercion has always failed to secure the objects for which it has been passed; in the second place, that remedial legislation is an alternative to coercion which may be relied upon to secure those objects, and to bring back peace and order to Ireland. Now, I ask the House whether experience warrants these two assumptions? I am not going back a long time; I am going to deal only with the time which is within my own experience, and with that legislation for which I was in part responsible in the period which was covered by the Government that lasted from 1880 to 1885. We devoted a large share of our time and the time of the House of Commons to remedial legislation. I remember well the hopes and the expectations and the promises which heralded the land legislation of 1881. I supported that legislation with my whole heart; and again and again, while it was under consideration in the country and in this House, I put forward my own opinion and the opinion of my Colleagues, that by this legislation we should restore peace and contentment to Ireland; that while, as regarded the landlords, we should diminish—and rightly diminish—their income, we would, at the same time, secure to them the remnant that was left; that, as regarded the tenants, we would give them just rents and fixity of tenure, which we believed would induce them to peaceful enterprizes and industry; and that, under these circumstances, the real material grievances of Ireland would cease. Well, but, Sir, how have these prognostications, how have these sanguine anticipations, been fulfilled? Can anyone deny that the land legislation of 1881 has conspicuously failed? Has it brought peace and prosperity to Ireland? Let hon. Members below the Gangway bear witness. Has it brought security to the landlords? Why, the landlords are in worse plight than ever. I have never been accused of much sympathy with landlords; but really they are now objects for the pitiful consideration of every Member of the House of Commons. The Royal Commission condemns them; the Opposition condemns them; and even the Government does not defend them. But what is the position of the tenants? This Amendment we are now considering is a confession that the main object of the Land Act of 1881, or of its promoters, has not been accomplished; that we have not secured a fair rent for the tenants of Ireland; and that even now, protected as they are by that Act, they are still subject to the possibility of exactions of excessive and exorbitant rents by bad landlords. [An Irish MEMBER: That is your care.] Well, but it ought to be remembered that this Act of 1881, although passed by a British Parliament, was not an English Act; it was not English in spirit. It was an Irish Act, and such an Act as might have been passed by an Irish Parliament. [Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Certainly not.] I do not accept the contradiction of the hon. Member. I say that that Act was opposed to all the prejudices of Englishmen. I say it violated all the cherished doctrines of political economy—I am not speaking for myself—I am not a political economist; but I am speaking for the vast majority of the Members of this House. I say it was recommended to the House, and passed by the House, because it was modelled upon the demands of the Irish Members, and upon Irish sentiment. In spite of this, the Act has conspicuously failed, and now, six years after its passing, we have to consider a state of things which is as bad as, or worse than, the state of things which existed at the time the Act was passed; and we have still to take measures by the confession of every Member of the House to protect the tenants against the excessive rents which may be levied by landlords unmindful of their duties. But in the time of which I am speaking we did not confine our attention to remedial legislation. I was a party during those five years to two Coercion Acts, and I should have been a party to a third if the Government of which I was a Member had not resigned. Were these Acts of Coercion which we passed successful? I think the answer depends upon what you understand by successful; by what you expect from the Acts of Coercion. If there were any people foolish enough to suppose—and my hon. Friend (Mr. Asquith) appears to believe in their continued existence—that force is a remedy for national discontent—they must have been grievously disappointed by the results of the two Acts which were passed by the Government of which I was a Member. But if force is only intended to secure the temporary suppression of disorder, and an outward respect to the law, then I say that, although in my opinion—I speak only for myself—the first of these Acts which involved the suspension of *Habeas Corpus* was an entire failure; the second of these Acts, the Crimes Act, as it was administered by Lord Spencer, was a success, and justified the expectations of its promoters in this limited sense only—that it produced peace and order in the country and outward respect for the law of the land. Well, then, I say that the lesson of my experience, at all events—others may not have learnt it in the same way—has been that we ought not to be too sanguine as to our remedial legislation, although we ought not, on that account, to despair; but that we may assume that moderate amendments of the ordinary Criminal Law will enable any Government to cope successfully with active manifestations of disorder. What is the position of the supporters of this Amendment? I understand they contend, in the first place, that social disorder is not at the present time widespread in Ireland; and that they contend, in the second place, that the manifestation of disorder is not sufficient to justify any coercive legislation until, at all events, the causes of disorder have been dealt with by the Government. I believe that is a fair account of the position of my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), and those who support his Amendment. In attempting to deal with this contention, I am prepared to make large admissions—admissions that I think will justify what I said in the opening of my remarks—namely, that I am able to agree with a great deal that has fallen from my Friends around me. I agree, to begin with, that the disorder in Ireland is partial, and confined to a limited area. But if you take that by itself, it is really a reason for restricting the operation of any Bill; but it is not a reason for allowing disorder to continue unchecked, even in that limited area. As I have already pointed out, we are not now asked to approve of the Bill. By the Vote which we shall give upon this Amendment, we none of us pledge ourselves, in the slightest degree, to support the Bill when it is brought forward. All that we are asked to do is to admit that there is urgency—that the subject should be discussed and disposed of at the earliest possible moment, in order to make room for other Business, and, if necessary for another Government. I admit, in the second place, that the number of serious outrages is fortunately, much less than it was on many previous occasions when coercion was proposed; but, Sir, there is a reason for this, which does not tell in favour of inaction. I remember a meeting being held in Ireland, which was addressed by an Irish Member who told his hearers that murder was unnecessary, because Boycotting was very much more effective, and when the machinery of intimidation is quite perfect, as it nearly is at the present time in Kerry, I have no doubt that outrages will be altogether unknown. But this involves a state of terrorism which is just as repugnant to true liberty, as the order which reigned at Warsaw under a tyrannical despotism. Then, Sir, I admit also the main facts which my right hon. Friend has sought to prove from the evidence in the Blue Book, and from the Report of the Royal Commission. I admit that combinations for resisting legal obligations have been facilitated by the action of some landlords, who have refused abatements and who have exacted rents which the fall in prices has made excessive. I admit that to the full, and I think that some remedy is necessary for the state of things herein disclosed. But if we are to accept, as conclusive against the landlords, the Report and the evidence of the Royal Commission which tells against them, surely we should pay some attention to this evidence and this Report when it appears to tell against the organization of the National League. I should just like to quote from the Report of the Commissioners. On page 11, there is this paragraph, in which they say—

"In the other Provinces (that is, excluding Ulster) combinations made themselves felt before the passing of the Land Act of 1881, and have in various forms continued to the present time. Outrage was at first made use of to intimidate parties who were willing to pay rents; but, latterly, the methods of passing resolutions at National League meetings, causing their proceedings to be reported in local newspapers, naming obnoxious men, and then Boycotting those named have been adopted. Tenants who had paid even the judicial rents had been summoned to appear before self-constituted tribunals, and if they failed to do so, or, appearing, failed to satisfy those tribunals, have been fined or Boycotted. The people are more afraid of Boycotting, which depends for its success on the probability of outrage, than they are of the judgments of the Courts of Justice. This unwritten law in some districts is supreme."

Then on the next page, the Commissioners further say—

"The evidence shows that the tenant farmers who join many of these combinations, constitute themselves the sole judges of what is an equitable rent. Landlords in many districts, no matter how moderate their rents may be, are practically unable to collect them. The tenant in arrear of rent is sometimes prohibited from selling his holding, and if the landlord ejects him for non-payment, no matter how low the rent or how large the arrears, the land must lie idle on the owner's hands, as he is neither allowed, even if he has the means, to work it himself, the land being strictly Boycotted, nor dare anyone hire what is known as an evicted farm, and very large tracts are now in consequence waste. Thus the recovery of rent is rendered difficult, and sometimes impossible."

I have preferred to quote from the conclusions of the Commissioners as showing in a short form, what passed through their minds as the effect of the evidence they had heard. I say that is the conclusion to which any impartial person would arrive on reading the whole Report, paying equal attention to all parts of it. [An hon. MEMBER: Was Mr. Knipe impartial?] I am not in the habit of interrupting hon. Members, and I hope they will permit me to proceed without interruption. The conclusion to which I have arrived on reading the whole Report is, that a double duty is thrown upon the Executive Government of the country. On the one hand, they have to provide for the temporary suppression of disorder; but on the other, they have the still more arduous, the still more serious and important duty, that of attempting, once more, undeterred by previous failure, the solution of the great agrarian problem, which is at the root, and which is the source, of all Irish discontent. I will say, for my part, I will give no vote to any Government which does not recognize this second—this important duty, as fully, as clearly, and as completely, and does not press forward its prosecution as sincerely as it is inclined to do the other and prior claim to its exertions. Now, Sir, I cannot help glancing at one inference which I am inclined to draw from the Amendment proposed by my right hon. Friend. I gather from that, that it is the opinion of the Liberal Party, or the majority of the Liberal Party, that the most urgent and pressing duty of any Government is to find a solution of the Land Question. Well, I agree with that. I said so some time ago at Birmingham, and, thereupon, I was peremptorily told by the organs of the same majority, that they would not even enter into a discussion on the subject with anyone who was not at the same time prepared to assent to their ideas of general policy on the subject of Home Rule. I am glad that such a controversy is past, and that now, at all events, we are agreed that the most urgent duty of the Liberal Party and of this House is to deal with the Land Question in Ireland. But, Sir, what does the Government tell us on this matter? My hon. Friend the Member for East Fife (Mr. Asquith) has a constitutional distrust of Conservative Governments, which, I admit, I think a very proper feeling on his part, and one which I am myself inclined to share. But I should like the House to bear in mind exactly what the Government does tell us, and then to put their own construction upon it. I would say this—even for a Conservative Government—that I think they have been unjustly accused of vagueness with regard to their agrarian programme. How could it be expected that a Government should give a first or second reading exposition of two important Bills on the Land Question on a Motion of Urgency with regard to a subject of a different nature? But they have drawn aside the curtain to some extent, and they have given us indications of their intentions which I myself regard as promises, and in that matter I am more ingenuous and less sceptical than my hon. Friend. I find that the Government say, or I understand them to say—and they will contradict me if I am wrong—that they propose immediately to bring in a Bill to deal with a matter of the utmost importance and urgency. I understand that they intend to deal with the case of leaseholders, a class which includes no less than 160,000 tenants in Ireland, whose case, I am sorry to say, a Liberal Government has always refused to recognize. I am glad that the pressure of circumstances has brought home conviction to the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and I have no doubt some of the same circumstances will be found also to have brought conviction home to my right hon. Friends around me. Well, but the Government propose to do something much more important than that. If there is one scandal worse than another at the present time, it is the evictions for the enforcement of unjust rents. I understand that the Government propose to deal with these evictions, and to make it impossible for a landlord to evict a tenant upon an unjust rent. [*Interruption, and cries of* "The first time we have heard of it!"] An hon. Member says it is the first time he has heard of it. There are none so deaf as those who will not hear. I understand that the Government propose to deal with this matter in the way I have described. I understand that they propose to allow no evictions without an appeal to a Court which will have equitable jurisdiction upon it. ["No, no!"] Let the Government contradict me if I am wrong. I understand that they propose there should be this equitable jurisdiction, and that if it is proposed to evict a tenant, in a case where the rent is shown to be excessive or unfair, or where the arrears are excessive or unfair, the Court will have power to impose a composition upon the landlord. If I have rightly described the intentions of the Government, I say that it is absurd—that there is no excuse for saying that any Bill for the amendment of the Criminal Law would be a Bill to enable unjust landlords to evict for excessive and unfair rents. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, in his speech to-night, said that the crime in Ireland was due to the attempt to secure a reduction of rent. I should not have said that myself. I should have said that crime in Ireland was due to the attempt to carry out the programme of the Convention of Chicago, to make the government of Ireland by a British Parliament impossible. If I am wrong, if it be as my right hon. Friend says, then I say that this Bill which, as I understand, the Government intend to introduce, will cut the ground from under the feet of the Opposition, and make it impossible that crime should exist which is due to the attempt to secure reduction of rent where rent is excessive. But the Government propose something further than that—oh, I understand more. [MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Read!] I find all that I understand in the text. I have found it in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. I have no other authority, and I unfortunately did not hear his speech; but I can read, and I have read it again and again, and I understand from that speech that the right hon. Gentleman has given a pledge to the House that this Bill will be introduced immediately in the House of Lords. [*Laughter.*] I should have thought that hon. Gentlemen would have been glad of that announcement. I know that, in my experience of agrarian legislation for Ireland, our difficulty has been in the House of Lords, and if that difficulty is overcome there is very good hope that no difficulty will remain in this House. Sir, the Government have pledged themselves to introduce this Bill in the House of Lords. As soon as that has been done, we shall all be aware of its provisions. I hope that it will be pressed forward there. I hope something else—something that I have not seen in the speech of the Chief Secretary for Ireland—I hope that when it comes down to this House it will be possible to press it here to a second reading before the Criminal Law Amendment Bill leaves the House. But the Government have said something more than that. I really feel that I am working a mine for the benefit of the House. All this solid gold appears to have passed unseen. [*Laughter.*] Oh, but it is there! From the same speech I understand that the Government propose as soon as the two Bills—the Criminal Law Amendment Bill and that dealing with leaseholders and other Amendments of the Land Act—have been passed, to introduce a Bill for what they hope may be a final settlement of the Land Question. They do not tell us more about it than this—that it will be a Bill for abolishing the dual ownership of land. Thereupon some of my sceptical Friends——

MR. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): We are not your friends here.

**Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN**: The hon. Gentleman is much too hasty. I assure him I did not allude to him; but some of my hon. Friends who are rather sceptical have said with regard to this statement, that they are convinced that no Bill can be introduced for doing away with the dual ownership of land that will not put a tremendous risk upon the British taxpayer, and that they are pledged to oppose. Well, so am I. All I can say is, that if this Bill which is promised us contains any undue or improper risk to the British taxpayer, my hon. Friends will find me in the same Lobby with them in opposition to it. But I do not believe that that is necessary, and I am confirmed in my opinion by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, who, in a speech which he made the other night at the house of an hon. Member, said himself that he had come to the conclusion that although his proposal, which in the opinion of some of us proposed a risk to the British taxpayer, would have been perfectly safe, yet he was inclined to believe that there was a better and more admirable way by which that risk can be avoided. I hope the Government will find it, and if that be so, then I hope my hon. Friends who now hesitate will be prepared with me to give it their heartiest support. I notice that my hon. Friends do not cheer that statement. I am afraid they are not inclined to support a Conservative Government, even in proposals which are thoroughly approved as in accordance with Liberal principles, and in accordance with the Liberal programme? That is what I understand to be the state of the intentions of the Government as presented to us by the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Now, Sir, if the discussions upon the two first Bills to which I have referred occupy only a reasonable space of time, in my opinion there ought to be no difficulty whatever in dealing with the whole of this great subject during the present Session. That is a matter which is in the hands of the House. Hon. Members below the Gangway might prevent the solution of the Land Question. I am not protesting against reasonable discussion. I only say that if the discussion is lengthened unreasonably, the responsibility will lie with those who take that course. Now, I ask the hon. Member for East Fife whether, under these circumstances—if the Government accept the description I have given of their policy—he is entitled to ask for more at this stage, even from a Conservative Government? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle in introducing his Amendment, based his opposition upon the precedent which he quoted as to the action of Lord John Russell in 1846. But, surely, my right hon. Friend spoke before the announcement of the Government was made. Surely he will admit that that answer is a complete acceptance of the principle that Lord John Russell sought to establish. What did Lord John Russell propose? He proposed to refuse urgency to the Government, unless they would produce, at the same time, their remedial legislation. But the Government are prepared to introduce their remedial measures. I say that it is an unworthy quibble to deny that the Government are prepared not only to produce, but to carry their remedial measure at the same time as their measure for the Amendment of the Criminal Law in Ireland. But I confess that I should prefer to rely upon a later precedent; which does not commit the right hon. Gentleman because he was not at the time a Member of the Government, and I do not think that he was even a Member of this House. We have heard a great deal of the precedent of 1881; but I think myself that that of 1882 is much more applicable to our present situation. I quote that precedent, not in support of the claim for urgency, because as to that, as I have already said, urgency for Irish affairs is conceded by all—but in regard to the priority or order of our legislation. In 1882, the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) brought in his Bill for the Prevention of Crimes in Ireland; and, in doing so, he said that he founded it, not upon the then recent terrible events—the assassination in Phœnix Park, or the murder of Mrs. Smythe, or other similar outrages, though all these were in the mind of the Government—but on the fact of the existence of secret societies and illegal combinations in Ireland. But the hon. Member for East Fife has asked what secret societies are now in existence in Ireland. If he knew all about those societies, they would be no longer secret. Anyone who is in communication with the Irish police will know that a great number of secret societies and of illegal combinations are still in existence. No one will deny that there are unlawful combinations in Ireland; and, therefore, the case now is the same as the case upon which my right hon. Friends in the Government of which I was a Member founded their claim for the Bill for the Prevention of Crime. But the parallel goes much further than that. At that time the serious grievance in Ireland was the existence of large arrears which had not been dealt with by the late Government. It was admitted by the Government, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, that thousands and tens of thousands of tenants were threatened with eviction from their holdings, and consequent destitution, unless an Arrears Bill could be passed. That was admitted; and yet the Government of which the right hon. Gentleman was a Member brought in the Prevention of Crimes Bill first. They produced the Arrears Bill while the Crimes Bill was going on. They did not introduce it in the House of Lords, for the very good reason that they had not a majority in that House. They refused again and again, in answer to repeated demands, to proceed with it *pari passu* with the Prevention of Crimes Bill, and they refused to interrupt the Committee stage of the latter, in order to pass the Arrears Bill. I remember the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian appealing again and again to hon. Members below the Gangway to limit the discussion upon the Prevention of Crimes Bill, on the ground that, by carrying it to great length, they were delaying the passing of the Arrears Bill. I say, therefore, that the circumstances of the case are precisely parallel—only the positions are reversed. Then we asked the Party opposite to give us an opportunity of passing our measures, and now they ask us for a similar opportunity. The hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife and my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle were not parties to the request made. No one can accuse the right hon. Member for Newcastle of inconsistency in this matter. But if I and those who voted with me upon that occasion were to refuse the demand of right hon. Members opposite, we should be inconsistent. In my opinion, we ought to deal out to others the same measure as was dealt out to ourselves. I have said that my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle is untrammelled by the proceedings of 1882; but I would like to press upon him to consider further another portion of the Report of the Royal Commission which deals with the question of the maintenance of order, and is to be found on page 18 of the Report. It is as follows:—

> "That, whilst recommending certain changes in the law which circumstances have rendered necessary for the present relief of the tenants, it is right that we should press, in the interests of all classes, the maintenance of law and order, which has, in several parts of the country, been grievously outraged. In the absence of that security, which ought to be enjoyed in every civilized community, capital is discouraged and enterprise and industry checked, and it is impossible that any country can thrive, or any healing measure be devised which can add to its prosperity."

["Hear, hear!"] My right hon. Friend cheers the statement. I knew he would agree. The conclusion I draw from it, is that no reform and no remedial measures we can propose, or this House can pass, would have a chance of success so long as the National League is supreme, so long as the unwritten law is superior to the law of the land. Just again let us see what are the lessons of experience. We tried conciliation; we tried the absence of any restrictive or exceptional measures. When we came into Office in 1880, we were pressed to renew the Peace Preservation Act; but we thought it better to rely on the generosity and good sense of the Irish people, and those who were leading them. We refused to renew that Act. What was the consequence? In a few short months the state of Ireland got so bad that the Government were bound to bring in a Bill infinitely more stringent than the Peace Preservation Act, and to carry it through and put it into operation. And when it came to putting it into operation, we hesitated and halted —and I think rightly—to put that Act into operation until we had passed a remedial Act—which I now admit to be a failure, but which was then heralded with great hopes, and which was looked upon by the Irish tenants as an unparalleled boon. It was not until we had passed that Act—until we found it would be a dead letter, in consequence of the action of the advisers of the Irish people—that we were forced to take stronger measures, and it would never have had a fair chance if the Land League had not been proclaimed and its leaders put in prison. That is history. I am not commenting upon it; it is within the knowledge of all those Members of the House who were in the House at the time I am speaking of. After we had put that Act in force, no doubt the Land Act had a fair trial. But since then, two Land Purchase Acts have been passed. I do not think they are good Acts, and I am not sorry they have failed. I object to them, not because they are not favourable to the Irish tenants—for they are more favourable to the tenant than any legislation passed in this, or any other country—but they are unfavourable to the English taxpayer. They have been failures, chiefly on account of the advice given to the tenants, and especially because of the interference of the National League. They interposed between what the tenants would have wished to do if they had been free men, and what they have actually done. And that is proved by the fact that in Ulster, where I believe there is much less readiness on the part of the landlords to sell, the number of applications to purchase on the part of the tenants has nearly equalled that from the whole of the rest of Ireland. I say, then, that I do not believe any remedial legislation which the Government can propose has a chance, unless the authority of law and order is at the same time restored. And I say, also, that I believe the Government will not fulfil its duty unless, while it protects the tenants, as it is bound to do, and as I understand it intends to do, it also takes measures to protect honest men against the tyranny of those who are dishonest. Well, Sir, I am afraid that the opinions which I have expressed are rather unpopular with the majority of the Liberal Party. I am content on this occasion to be in the minority. It is a very respectable minority, and at one time or another it has included every man who sits on the Bench beside me. I do not blame them in the least, if they think that circumstances have arisen which justify them in changing their opinions. I hope they will not blame me if I choose to stick to mine. I have said every man on this Bench—I believe without exception——

Mr. JOHN MORLEY: I do not admit it.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: My right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle challenges me. It would take too long—I should exhaust the patience of the House—if I endeavoured to prove my case in reference to every one of my Colleagues. However, I will accept the challenge of my right hon. Friend; but, before that, I want to deal with a still more prominent Member of the Party. I want to quote to the House a passage from a speech made by my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), a passage which I take not in the least with the object of inferring any inconsistency on his part, but because I believe it states the principle upon which hitherto the Liberal Party has always acted, and to which I, at all events, still give in my allegiance. Speaking in the debate on the Prevention of Crimes Bill of 1882, and replying to an appeal made to him by the hon. Member who then sat for Sligo, but who now represents West Belfast, my right hon. Friend said—

> "I was coming to the observations of the hon. Member for Sligo, to the effect that we ought to have only one article in our political creed, and that article should be conciliation; and he went on to speak of that article of conciliation as rather one of justice. Sir, I quite agree with the hon. Member; the article of justice satisfies me perfectly; but I must remind the hon. Member that it means justice to all and to everyone. Unfortunately, this includes the use of force for the punishment of evil-doers, and the praise of all who do well. If the hon. Gentleman asks me whether I place my reliance chiefly upon force, or on what he has termed conciliation, I answer him that I place my reliance undoubtedly upon the removal of the causes of discontent infinitely more than upon mere force. But, Sir, this is also a necessary part of our duty which cannot be overlooked. The hon. Gentleman says—and here again I agree with him—we must show the people that the law is their protector and helper, and trust to our showing this to bring them to the side of law. I agree; but then I must show that to all sections of the people, and among these I am bound not least to show it to those who, during the last autumn and winter especially, have suffered most cruelly for not only the exercise of their legal rights, but for the performance of their legal and personal duties."

Sir, I agree with every word of that. I agree now, as I agreed then, with what my right hon. Friend said, and I rely, as he did, chiefly upon remedial legislation as a cure—as the only cure—for the discontent of Ireland. Not the less do I hold it to be the duty of any Government, as it was the duty of our Government, to protect those who stand in need of protection. Protect the tenants by all means against the rapacity of landlords and against the exaction of excessive rents; but protect also those poor men, the Curtins, the Byers, and the Murphys, protect them also against the assassination and outrage with which they are threatened by those whose unwritten law is superior to the law of the land. My right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle has challenged me. I have a quotation from his utterances also, and I am quite sure from the cheers—the somewhat derisive cheers—with which he has occasionally greeted me during my remarks, that he will not back one iota from the declarations I am about to read. This was written in November, 1881——

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I should like to know whether this was an article actually written by me? I think that is only reasonable.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I quite agree with my right hon. Friend that his demand is extremely reasonable. I should not have quoted the passage, which appeared in *The Pall Mall Gazette*, and which from internal evidence I should myself have been inclined to identify with my right hon. Friend, if it had not already appeared in a life of the right hon. Gentleman which was published by Mr. Stead, who was his colleague and successor in the administration of *The Pall Mall Gazette.* I will read it, and then my right hon. Friend will know whether he will accept it. What he is reported to have said is this—

> "On the other hand, if great social disorder has spread over a country from whatever cause, every Government, exactly because it is a Government, is bound to do its utmost to restore order temporarily, even while it is removing the more permanent causes which have made disorder natural and justifiable."

[MR. JOHN MORLEY: Hear, hear!] My right hon. Friend, I see, recognizes and owns the passage, and, as I anticipated, he does not go back one jot from his utterances in 1881. I would like to know what is the difference between the course which he suggested to an imaginary Government in 1881 and the course which the present Government is pursuing? My right hon. Friend went on to say—and I call particular attention to these words—

> "It would be a singular confession of the impotency of Liberalism as a practical theory of politics, if it were found to forbid its professors to deal effectually with outbreaks of popular violence and opposition to the ordinary work of police."

I call special attention to this passage, because I hold that if Liberalism ever becomes identified with lawlessness, it will lose its hold on the popular feeling. Since the extension of the franchise, we have been living under a system of democratic government. I think I read that my hon. Friend the Member for East Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce) said the other day that no democratic Government would impose coercion on a democratic nation. I do not know what he meant by a democratic nation; but if he meant that no democratic Government would use force to vindicate the law, then I differ from him altogether. I always have held that a democratic Government in this country, as in other countries, would be a very strong Government, because it would rest on public opinion, and would not depend upon the will and the prejudices of individuals or of classes; and I believe that the masses in this country have no sympathy with anarchy, no love for disorder. They have shown in other countries, and notably in the United States, that they can repress it with a sternness which autocratic Governments might envy. So I say, in conclusion, in the words of my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle, that if social disorder prevails, Government is bound to do its utmost temporarily to restore the authority of the law, and if, at the same time, it produces to the country and presses forward to the utmost of its power its remedial legislation, I believe the vast majority of the people will support and approve its action.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Sir, the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has delivered a speech founded on what I may call the minor key, doubtless owing to the great secrets with which he is charged. A great responsibility seems to rest upon him as the mouthpiece of the Tory Government. The right hon. Gentleman does not now feel himself able to indulge, with the same freedom, in that rancour which he was formerly accustomed to indulge in —before he became one of the choice supporters of a Conservative Administration. He has told us of some very wonderful secrets. Everyone says there is a good deal of gold in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour). I have read that speech, but I have found no gold in it whatever; and I have heard the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain), and I find gold there, but with a slight touch of Brummagem about it, because, having the curiosity to turn to the speech of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, I find in it wonderful things which are amplified by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham into the extraordinary promises which he has just made. Here is an extract taken from *The Times* newspaper, and the passage has not been contradicted by the right hon. Gentleman—

> "The first Bill will not alter, and does not profess to alter, profoundly the system established in 1881; but we think it will make the working of that system more smooth, more equitable, and more beneficial to all concerned in Irish agriculture. The Bill, among other things, will deal with leases, and give to the tenant some equitable relief such as was given to debtors in the Bankruptcy Act of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham."

That is to say, that they will bring in a Land Purchase Bill. That is the entire of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. And how is it that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, who boasts that he is not in the secrets of the Irish Chief Secretary, can tell us exactly what it is the Government are going to produce? We have had a promise to-night from the right hon. Gentleman who speaks as the mouthpiece of the Government—who can easily repudiate what he says, because they are not bound to know the statements he has made by a sort of officious authority—that the Government are going to pass an Act which will be in character almost the same as the Bill proposed last year by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell). The statement of the right hon. Gentleman is not repudiated by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and we do not see the eloquent and Jove-like nod of the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) in denial—nodding being the right hon. Gentleman's most eloquent attitude. We have not had from him a single denial that these were the proposals of the Goment. What are they? In the first instance, it is proposed to pass into law a provision enabling tenants to claim equitable consideration of the Court when in arrear; and, secondly, that if the Court considers the rent to be too high, they shall not be evicted. If you propose to enable men's rents to be reduced when the only remedy for the non-payment of rent is eviction—if you propose to enable the Judge to say—"The rent shall not be paid; I will give you equitable relief;" what is that but to enforce by a side wind the Act of 1881? I ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland that question, who interrupted with so much fervour the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham used this to allure his Radical Unionist Friends across the desert of Coercion, stating, at the same time, that he relied on the precedent of the Act of 1882, and not on the Act of 1881. I will take the right hon. Gentleman at his word, and I ask hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway to press on the right hon. Gentleman adhesion to the Act of 1882. His speech to-night was a very wary and technical one. What was the principle of the Act of 1882, and what is the principle of the Government to-day? The complaint is that we refuse them the whole time of the House. Yes; because we do not know what the proposals of the Government are. Let it be remembered that the Government ask for the time of the House before anyone knows what is the nature of their proposals. We know that, by the aid of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), and others, they intend to pass a Coercion Bill for Ireland; but we do not know that they have it in their power to pass either here or in the House of Lords any remedial legislation. What was the position in 1882? Everyone knows the dreadful and terrible event which gave such a momentum to the Government to pass the Crimes Act of that year—the unhappy murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke, in the Phœnix Park, on the 6th of May. Well, on the 11th of May the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby

(Sir William Harcourt) brought in his Crimes Bill. No time of the House was asked for before that Bill was introduced. The Arrears Bill was then introduced, and the Crimes Bill having been read the first time on Thursday, the Arrears Bill was read the first time on the following Monday. And when did the Government ask for the full time of the House and urgency for their Bill? Let it be remembered that on the 11th and 15th of May the House had before them the full proposals of the Government, coercive and remedial. It was not until both Bills had been read a second time, and received the approval of the House, that the full time of the House was asked for by the Government, and they did not do that until the 23rd of May; nor did they ask then, as they are asking now, that the House should discuss coercion alone. On the 23rd of May the Government moved that urgency should be accorded to the remaining stages of the Crimes Bill and the Arrears Bill. This was a totally different state of things from that relied upon by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham; so that when the Unionist Party was asked by the right hon. Gentleman to give their adhesion to these Government proposals on the strength of the precedent of 1882, the state of facts belonging to 1882 was carefully concealed from them. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman to-night was extremely adroit, and, for him, of an extremely moderate character. His position was this—you must restore law and order before you attempt anything like remedial legislation; and one of his great arguments in favour of giving the Government the whole time of the House was that the great secret societies of the last few years are still in active existence. If all the great secret societies are still in existence, it is a very poor tribute to the effectiveness of the Coercion Acts which have been passed for Ireland. If it be true that, in spite of the 87 Coercion Acts passed in this country, and in spite of the stringent measure passed when Lord Spencer was in Ireland in 1882, all the great secret societies are still in existence, I ask what hope have you that, by passing another Coercion Act, you can put down crime and agitation and secret societies in Ireland in the future? We have had put into the mouth of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham the exact intentions of the Government; and all the speeches that have come from the Government side of the House to-night have dealt with crime and disorder in Ireland as the reason for granting the demand of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman has said—"You cannot have peace in Ireland so long as the National League maintains uncontrolled sway in that country." So now you have it for the first time, on the authority of the right hon. Gentleman, that this Bill is practically aimed at the National League. I have no objection to the suppression of the National League. I would have been delighted last autumn if the Government had suppressed it then. I would be delighted if the first thing done, if this Bill becomes law, were the suppression of the National League. Its suppression will relieve us of a great deal of responsibility. We have been obliged to strain every nerve, and make every effort to keep that extraordinary organization within the strictest limits of legality; and, although *United Ireland* has for months published in the fullest manner every resolution of the National League, touching the most vital matter of the lives of the peasantry—although those resolutions have been published week after week, not one of them has been challenged on the ground of illegality. Suppress the National League, and we shall no longer be responsible for what is going on in Ireland; and we shall be no longer able to keep the people themselves in check. I was really disappointed and regretful that the first step of the late Chief Secretary for Ireland was not the suppression of that body; and, therefore, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham makes his attack on the National League, and says that the Government Bill is intended to deal with that organization, I say that I rejoice to hear it. I say that I rejoice that we are to be relieved of the responsibility of conducting the agrarian movement in Ireland; but let me tell the Government that these people will conduct it for themselves. The right hon. Gentleman does not like the National League now, as its speaks through its open and published resolutions, but he will like it still less when, after its suppression, it speaks in a very different tone, and when the uncontrolled, and perhaps uncontrollable peasants of Ireland, suffering under the smart of eviction, come face to face with the calamities in which they believe that this Bill will involve them. I say it is lamentable that this House should be legislating for a state of things in Ireland of which those who instigate this legislation are themselves in a state of unhappy and deplorable ignorance. Suppress the National League, and who will be more delighted than hon. Members on my right and left? Then, Sir, you will, for the first time, be dealing, not with politicians, but with a very different class of persons, and those secret organizations which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham tells us are still in force, notwithstanding Lord Spencer's Act, notwithstanding the Crimes Act and the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, will be augmented in a way of which he has very little conception. The right hon. Gentleman does not know where he is going; our words and advice were unheard and unheeded in 1881 and 1882, and they will be so to-day. Why were the secret organizations which the right hon. Gentleman says are still in existence not suppressed? Because you did not deal with the roots of the disorder; they will continue to spread, and our unfortunate countrymen will be prejudiced by these miserable crimes, but they will be prejudiced when we are no longer responsible for Order in Ireland, and when the responsibility of all the blood spilt will rest on the head of the Chief Secretary for Ireland and his Colleagues. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has dwelt upon the evidence given before the Royal Commission, and he mentioned that Commission as if it were a body that had our fullest confidence. He did not even mention the name of Mr. Knipe; but he left us to understand that the Commission reported unanimously. Before I go to the character of the Royal Commission let me say that in my opinion, no more disgraceful attempt to debauch public opinion was ever made than by the appointment of that Commission. It did not possess one element of authority, so far as its Members went. It was presided over by Lord Cowper, who was associated with Mr. Forster in signing warrants for the arrest of suspects; there was Lord Milltown, one of the most malevolent and persistent rack-renters in Ireland, who spends his time in the House of Lords drafting Amendments to all the beneficial measures sent up from this House with regard to Ireland; there were Mr. Neligan, a landlord of the worst type; Sir James Caird, a Scotch gentleman of considerable authority—perhaps the most respectable element of the Commission—besides a Protestant and Liberal Unionist, who opposed the return of Mr. Thomas Dickson when he stood for Mid Armagh. So that we had not a single friend on that Commission. Of witnesses summoned, there was not one out of 20 on the popular side; and if you read the evidence, you will see that every one of the questions addressed to the witnesses was that of a packed tribunal. The evidence taken is confined to that of magistrates, policemen, and land-grabbers, whose names are not given, and men connected with the landlord system in Ireland—land agents and landlords. And it is upon the evidence taken by that Commission, upon the verdict of that packed jury, which is given in favour of the Irish tenants, that the Government are proceeding. If the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham relies on the Report of the Cowper Commission, and the evidence taken before that Commission, he should be the first to insist on the Report being carried out in its entirety; and the first thing he ought to do is to insist on the reduction of the term of judicial rents from 15 years to five years. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland says he will not have that; but I wonder if he remembers what he said on the Land Act of 1881? In that year the right hon. Gentleman said that 15 years was too long; but it is not too long now. On the 20th June, as will be seen by *Hansard*, vol. 252, p. 190, he had an Amendment on the Paper in favour of restricting the term to 10 years; but now, even upon the recommendation of his own Commission, he will not assent to the reduction of the term to five years. The right hon. Gentleman says he is not in favour of the reduction of the term, because the real remedy lies in a system of peasant proprietorship. But what did he say about that in 1881? According to *Han-*

*sard,* page 1611, he said, with regard to peasant proprietors, that, although he doubted the economic advantages of the system, he believed it would be politically advantageous, on the principle that if legislation was to be carried on under mob dictation in the interests of justice, it was well, in the interests of the nation, to have a mob on both sides. That was the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman in 1881; and now he tells us that the Bill of the Government is not a Bill in favour of the landlords, but one for restoring law and order in Ireland. Sir Redvers Buller says there is very little law in Ireland, and that what there is is on the side of the rich. I would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham if he is prepared, under this Bill, to repay the money to the Irish tenants of which they have been robbed for many years past according to the decisions of the legal tribunals. Two of the chief supporters of the Bill are Gentlemen who waited on Lord Salisbury the other day; and it is to their intervention that we are told a great deal of the stringency of the Bill is owing. The names of these gentlemen appear in the Return of rents judicially reduced. I find on the estate of the hon. Member for Winchester (Mr. Tottenham) that three or four months ago there were the following reductions of rent:—From £8 to £3 15*s.*; £7 8*s.* to £3 15*s.*; £6 12*s.* to £3; £17 17*s.* to £6 10*s.*; £47 10*s.* to £20. Will the right hon. Gentleman introduce into this Bill a provision that the hon. Member for Winchester shall give back to his unfortunate tenants the money of which he has been robbing them? Will he have the same regard for the Macintyres, the Rooneys, and others, as he has for the Murphys, the Byerses, and the Curtins? Again, one of the advisers of the Government whose name appears in the Return is a gentleman named King-Harman, with whom the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham will go into the Lobby to-morrow evening. Woeful tears have been wept by the right hon. Gentleman over the fate of Byers, Curtin, and Murphy, and no one condemns the atrocious crimes perpetrated in their case more than I do, but let me tell the right hon. Gentleman that these were crimes committed by ignorant peasants who have never had the advantage of listening to the speeches delivered in this House by the right hon. Gentleman; they are men who have not had a liberal education such as has been enjoyed by the two Gentlemen I have named. I know not whence these peasants got their education; they may have read something in *The Times* in praise of men like Stepniak, Gallenga, and Mazzini, and they may have read that the liberty of nations is to be worked out with knives and hatchets. But I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he will shed tears over the fate of the men who have been robbed by these educated dragoons for generations. Here is another list of reductions that have been made:—Old rent, £13, judicial rent, £7 5*s.*; old rent, £7 10*s.*, judicial rent, £4 4*s.*; old rent, £18 9*s.*, judicial rent, £10; old rent, £30, judicial rent, £16. 10*s.*; old rent, £9 9*s.* 4*d.*, judicial rent, £4 10*s.*; old rent, £12 10*s.* 8*d.*, judicial rent, £6; old rent, £12 6*s.* 8*d.*, judicial rent, £6 5*s.*; old rent, £13 14*s.*, judicial rent, £6; old rent, £30, judicial rent, £16 10*s.*; and so on *ad infinitum.* Well, Sir, I hope that the first use these Pat Fords and others make of the reduction of their rents will not be to send a contribution to the dynamite fund. The men on whose estates these reductions have been made are the companions of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham; these are the Gentlemen with whom he will co-operate in the Lobby in promoting a Bill for the coercion of men who, Sir Redvers Buller declares, have no law on their side, while he says, at the same time, that such law as there is is altogether on the side of the rich. This Commission has made proposals which are to be acted upon. It has made proposals against Boycotting and intimidation; but its proposals on that point are not unanimous, because the only Member who can profess to have anything like a popular character, Mr. Knipe, entirely dissents from the Report. Mr. Knipe is not a Nationalist; he is an Ulster man, he is a Presbyterian, he is a Unionist, he is a disciple of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. But Mr. Knipe is an Irishman. Mr. Knipe knows his country just as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham knows his. We do not, however, admit, that the right hon. Gentleman knows ours. Mr. Knipe declares that any Coercion Bills you may pass must fail; and he dissents from the Report of the majority of the Commission. He dissents altogether from the proposals which have been made for enforcing coercive legislation. Now, on what leg does the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham stand? If he is in favour of the Cowper Report, he must be in favour of it in its entirety. Lord Milltown, a Tory Peer, is the only dissentient to the proposal with regard to the official term. I ask right hon. Gentlemen what is the use of appointing a Royal Commission if you will not act upon its recommendations? Last August, you refused to pass the Bill of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cork; but, in the words of the noble lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), after immense consideration, you determined to appoint a Royal Commission. What is the good of piling up evidence and getting up Blue Books, if you will not act upon what the Commission recommends? It would appear that all you desire is to find employment for printers and shorthand writers. It is absurd for the Government to appoint a Commission in August and when it reports in the February following, to refuse to carry out what it proposes. I venture to say that the refusal of the Government to put in force the recommendations of the Royal Commission had much more to do with the resignation of the late Irish Chief Secretary (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) than his eyes, which I hope are better. That right hon. Gentleman has had a considerable experience of Ireland, he knows the necessities of the country, he found it necessary to delay the making of the Report of the Royal Commission. The Report was delayed. It was declared in the newspapers that Lord Cowper had several interviews of a long and important character with the right hon. Gentleman. When the Commissioners made their Report, it was found that in the Cabinet there was not unanimity with respect to the proposals the Commissioners made. I am not surprised that that should be the case. There are some Gentlemen in the Cabinet and in the Government who have been already hard hit by the Land Act of 1881. There is the Abercorn family, for instance, and I certainly am not surprised that the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) should refuse to give his consent to any measure which would involve a further slice off the rents of the Abercorn property. Well, Sir, that being so, unanimity was found impossible in the Cabinet, and therefore the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland resigned. Now, what is the remedy the Government suggest. They discover, for the first time, that a great want of Ireland is agrarian legislation. The Irish people have been crying in the wilderness on this subject for years and years. Ever since the Devon Commission we have been telling you this, and it appears that now, for the first time, we have succeeded in awakening your conscience. As I understand him, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham does not believe the Government can pass their coercive legislation, but he will support them in producing it.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: In the preliminary step.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman expressed no hope whatever that they would be able to pass their coercion. I will tell him why they will not. I think the words of the right hon. Gentleman were "in producing it," and not "in passing it." [Mr. J. Chamberlain: No.] I may be mistaken, and, of course, I accept his correction.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: As the hon. Gentleman appeals to me, perhaps I may be allowed to put him right at once. What I said was that I hoped and believed that if the discussion of these two Bills were confined within reasonable limits, the whole of the subject, including the Purchase Bill, would be successfully dealt with during the present Session.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: If this Session succeeds in settling the Irish Question, it certainly will be a memorable year. Well, Sir, let me point out why I have some philosophic doubts as to the possibility of the Irish Question, or of even the Irish Purchase Question, being successfully settled in the present Session. In the first place, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham is reported, in all the newspapers, to have had frequent breakfasts, dinners, and teas with the Irish Chief Secretary, and to be himself the parent of the measure. He allows it to be stated, whether truly or untruly, that the measure is one for which he is largely responsible; that the scheme is, in fact, his notion. He has to-night told us some further particulars; because he says it must be a scheme that will not involve the Imperial credit. I should like very much to see the Irish landlords compelled to sell their lands to the tenants on any security that will not pledge the Imperial credit. I will give them my own note of hand, if they like to take it, and I am sure that the entire Party of 86 Irish Nationalists will back the Bill. But I would like to know how the right hon. Gentleman proposes to compel astute Gentlemen such as the Member of the Abercorn family, and the Financial Secretary to the War Department (Mr. Brodrick), who spoke yesterday, the son of an Irish Peer, to part with their estates upon any other terms than those involving the Imperial credit; because it must be remembered that you cannot, or, I suppose, you will not, force the Irish landlords to sell their property. I imagine that if the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) were forced to sell his valuable property on open security, he would call out his reserves in the Orange brigade, having threatened civil war, as I understand, on much slenderer grounds. I imagine it will require a very stringent Coercion Bill to induce the hon. and gallant Gentleman to sell his estates in Cavan upon the security, say, of the Cavan Board of Guardians—[Colonel SAUNDERSON nodded assent.]—the hon. and gallant Gentleman bears me out in that—or even of the Cavan Grand Jury. The hon. and gallant Member does not dissent to the security of the Cavan Grand Jury. He appears to have rather more faith in them; but I should like the hon. and gallant Gentleman to say whether he will take the security of the rates on the faith of the Cavan Grand Jury, for upon neither of the local bodies in existence will the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh accept security. Well, Sir, what other local institution have we in Ireland, except it be the poor-house. There are the police and the lunatic asylums, and certainly, Sir, as yet, the hon. and gallant Gentleman has never attempted to qualify for membership of the latter institution. Is it not preposterous for the Government to invite this House to pass a Coercion Bill which they know will pass current in this House, and in the House of Lords, on the faith of some *paulo post futurum* measure, which will be knifed in this House, and which will have no chance of passing the golden gates of "another place?" No people have a greater appreciation of the value of pounds, shillings, and pence than the Gentlemen in ermine across the Lobby. No local guarantees will do for them. They want the chink of the current coin; and, that being so, I invite hon. Gentlemen of the Unionist persuasion, who believe in the possibility of remedial legislation for Ireland, to remember that the passing of this measure is inevitable, but that the passing of any remedial legislation is of a most hazy and doubtful character. One is current coin, and the other is composed of Brummagem metal. I, therefore, think that the least we can ask of the Government under circumstances such as these is, that they should show us exactly what is in their Budget before they ask us to buy a pig in a poke. We are asked to give them the whole of the time of the House, not for the twin proposals of remedy and restriction or coercion, but for coercion alone. Is it to be wondered at that we, who are not favoured with invitations to dinners from the Irish Chief Secretary, should demur to giving the Government the time they ask until we know exactly what the intentions of the Government are? The Government of 1882, as I have pointed out over and over again, passed the second readings of both their measures—their measures for coercion and for remedy—before asking for the time of the House. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has appealed to that precedent, and so do we. We are prepared to abide by it. It is absurd to attempt to entrap us, and get us into Chancery by the promise that, when the coercive proposals of the Government are passed, the House will be asked to proceed with remedial legislation. Now that precedents have been cited, why is it that the Government do not choose to follow them? We are told, when we ask for particulars of the crimes that are alleged to have been committed in Ireland, that it is not the volume of the crime, it is not the number of crimes, but it is the character of the crime that requires the passing of this legislation. If the Government had crimes of number or of magnitude we should have heard about them. The greatest crime in their Chamber of Horrors is the Curtin murder, committed in 1885, nearly two years ago, during the *régime* of Lord Carnarvon. How can that crime do service, or be a momentum for the passing of a Coercion Bill in 1887? Give us something new. Let us have some facts that are connected with the present state of affairs in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, in one of his dramatic flourishes, quoted the case—a deplorable case, it is true—of some girl who was tarred and feathered—no, I beg pardon, whose hair was cut off and her head tarred. I heard of the outrage with horror and abomination, and I believe that if the ruffians could be caught, no punishment that could be inflicted upon them would be too great. But, having attended the Assizes all over Ireland, I have come to be sceptical upon the subject of these outrages. My experience is that, whenever these crimes are brought to the test of examination and inquiry, they shrink to very small proportions indeed. Judging from my experience in watching the trial of criminals in Ireland, short as it has been, I do not hesitate to say that, if the facts connected with this case could be investigated, not by some penny-a-liner of *The Times*, who visits the district in the company of the Resident Magistrate, but by someone who earnestly desired to arrive at the truth, we should find a very different state of facts indeed. Remember this, Moonlighters do not go about with pots of tar. Do not suppose for one moment that in the wilds of Kerry there is tar at hand with which people can commit crimes of this kind. I doubt extremely whether what is alleged to have taken place did take place, and I venture to say that this outrage is altogether a-piece with that other outrage in which it was stated a girl was not tarred, but criminally outraged, and in which——

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: If the hon. and learned Gentleman is referring to me as having given a description of the outrage, I wish to say it is perfectly true. I did give a description of it. I took that description from an address of a priest at the altar, who denounced the outrage and described the circumstances.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Who was it? Was it Canon Griffin?

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: A priest.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Was it Canon Griffin?

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I will give the hon. and learned Gentleman the name subsequently. I was not aware he would ask for it.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: If it was Canon Griffin, of Millstreet, I can only say I would as soon believe him as Dr. Patton, of *The Daily Express*. And it is a sad thing to say, but it is undoubtedly the fact, that much of the crime that has arisen in Kerry and in the district of West Cork is owing to the fact that the Bishop of Kerry has entirely lost the political confidence of his people, and that Canon Griffin has set himself with the bitterest hostility against the popular movement. But let me give another reason that may account to the right hon. Gentleman for some of the savagery that exists in that district of the country. Under the *régime* of the late Mr. W. E. Forster—the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was one of his Colleagues—there was a cruel murder committed in Knocknagee; a young man named Patrick Leary was shot at his own door, and Canon Griffin prevented him from receiving the last decency of Catholic burial, under the plea that he was a Moonlighter. I heard it admitted by the informer O'Connell—who was an *agent provocateur* of Mr. Forster—on the witness table at Cork, that he had shot this young man out of pure sport. O'Connell was then in Government pay, and was the Captain Moonlight of the district. Leary was the son of the President of the Knocknagee National League, and O'Connell, who was in the pay of the Government, was examined at the trial, and admitted the murder. On his evidence no less than 70 of the young men of that district—which is at this moment giving you the greatest trouble in Ireland, giving you such trouble, in fact, that you have been obliged to send a Major General down there to quiet it—were arrested, and were kept without trial for a period of 18 months. From week to week, from month to month, from Assizes to Assizes—their trial was postponed. They were kept locked up in separate cells, and were not allowed to speak to one another or communicate with one another. They were denied the newspapers, converse with their friends, and all exercise, except for one hour out of the 24. This was done by the Cabinet of which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chamberlain) was such a distinguished Member. After these young men had been imprisoned for nearly 18 months, I moved the Adjournment of the House at Question time one day, and called attention to their case, and I then took the train to Cork to be present at the trial of one of them. The next day the Government ordered the release of all but one of these 70 young men, who had been in gaol for 18 months. They allowed them out on their recognizances, and they have never proceeded against them from that day. If you now have Moonlighting and outrage in Kerry, I say some of these gentlemen are on the war-path, taking revenge for the 18 months' solitary confinement you gave them, during which they were denied exercise, except for one hour a-day. This was the result of the legislation that the right hon. Gentleman gave us as part of his policy of legislating for the poor, with respect to which he has made so many speeches, both in this House and in the country. This is part of the seed of the hard work done under his auspices and by his sanction in 1881, and it is to be found in the murder of the unfortunate Murphys, Curtins, and Byerses, and in the mutilations of cattle, to which he so indignantly refers. I say you cannot arrest a whole people—you cannot arrest all the young men population of a place, keeping them for months and months in prison without trial, denying them the commonest rights of humanity and the commonest comforts which the people of England have a right to, and for the denial of which your newspapers are crying shame on you—you cannot do this without producing the inevitable consequence of reprisals. If the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was locked up for 18 months, and denied his exercise and his orchids, I venture to think that at the end of that time the speeches he would make at that Table, and the deeds he would do at Birmingham, would be of a very different character from those he now does and advocates. I think they would rather resemble some of the deeds of Mr. Broadhead, who was formerly connected with that thriving and important town. [*Cries of* "No, no!" *and* "It was Sheffield!"] Sheffield? Well, I pretend to know as little of England as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham does of Ireland. Do not suppose for a moment that I am ashamed of making any mistakes about England. I know nothing about the country, and I want to know nothing about it. I do not pretend to legislate for it. ["Oh, oh!"] I do not pretend to sufficient knowledge to enable me to legislate for it—put it in that way. That being the state of things with regard to your legislation at that time, I maintain that it has directly produced the evils of which you complain at the present moment. When the Westmeath Act of 1873 was passing through the House, I remember very well reading in the papers, that Mr. Henry Herbert got up in the House and said—

> "It is true that Westmeath is very much disturbed; but I represent the Celtic county of Kerry, and in Kerry, as in all Celtic counties, there is not at this moment a single crime, or a single disturbance."

He declared, speaking in 1873, that they only had disturbances in counties such as Westmeath and Tipperary, where the English blood predominated; but in Celtic counties, such as Kerry, there was absolutely no crime. What made the crime in Kerry—what has produced it? Why is it that at the present time your legislation is directed to the suppression of outrage? It is because Lord Kenmare has insisted on building his great mansion there, and on having for handles to his doors the backs of Louis Quatorze watches; while in the surrounding neighbourhood are dwellings for the people as miserable as any huts human beings could possibly live in. It is because, cheek by jowl with Lord Kenmare's magnificent castle, adorned and equipped with all the luxuries and artistic embellishments that wealth can procure, are the miserable pigsties of the men Lord Kenmare and his crowd have been robbing for years. How does the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham propose to remedy that state of things?

Will he take from the handles of the doors of Lord Kenmare's mansion the backs of the Louis Quatorze watches? Will he put back into the pockets of the tenants around the Lakes of Killarney and on the mountains of Kerry the balance of the judicial rents of which they have been robbed? Will he do any of those things which Sir Redvers Buller, with his great experience, declares to be necessary? No, Sir; the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham will do nothing of the sort. His only course is to vote for proposals to enable the law to be still more stringently enforced in Kerry by gentlemen of the type of Captain Plunkett, by gentlemen of the type of the present High Sheriff, Mr. George Sands, and by gentlemen of the type of the magistrate who the other day, to the horror of Sir Redvers Buller, dismissed the charge against a policeman who had made a brutal assault upon a man. The incident to which I refer was not noticed in *The Times*, or in the speeches which are brought under the notice of the right hon. Gentleman; at any rate, he has not alluded to it; but the fact is none the less true that a man who had his head beaten into a pulp by a policeman applied in vain to the local magistrate for redress. It was not until Sir Redvers Buller came down, like another Gordon Pasha—until the man who had been beaten went up to him and showed him his wounds, and asked him if there was to be no justice given to him—it was not until this unfortunate man told Sir Redvers Buller how the charge he had brought against the policeman who had assaulted him had been dismissed, and the policeman had been allowed to go scot-free, that a telegraphic message was sent up to Dublin for another Resident Magistrate—you can get them of all sorts and sizes on application—those who will convict and those who will not convict, who will play sharp or flat, at the will of Her Majesty's Government—it was not, I say, until these things had happened that another Resident Magistrate was sent down, and the unfortunate man who had been wounded by the policeman had the satisfaction of seeing the magistrate who would not listen to his complaint, removed. I have said this incident was not mentioned in *The Times*. Let me inform the right hon. Gentleman that *The Times* has just dismissed from its employment the gentleman who represented it in the South of Ireland, and who gave in its columns the account of the Glenbeigh evictions, and has appointed in his stead the gentleman who gave the account of the outrage on the virtue of a girl in Kerry which never took place. So that when the right hon. Gentleman is again referring to outrages reported in *The Times* perhaps he will do well to bear these facts in mind. Now, I ask the House is it a reasonable thing for the Government to ask Irishmen to give their assent to proposals such as they are now making? In the first place—as we have been told to-day in the eloquent and impressive speech of the late Prime Minister—they have the bulk of the Liberal Party against them. Then, in the second place, they have five-sixths of the Irish Representatives against them—a thing that they never had before. I tell Gentlemen of the Liberal Party who are still supporting us, and who will continue to support us, according to the pledge of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, that whether they succeed in preventing the passage of this coercion measure or whether they fail, our thanks to them will be the same. I tell them, moreover, that whatever law and order may exist in Ireland in the future, after the passage of the Coercion Bill, will be law and order dependent on the knowledge of the necessity of retaining the sympathy of one of the greatest of the English Parties. The reflection that that sympathy is necessary in fighting their political battles will have an enormous effect in restraining even the wildest and most wronged of the peasants in Ireland; and when we are told that we have against us a majority of the English people, I say I do not believe it. I say you did not go to the country on the cry of coercion. You did not carry the country on that cry. ["Yes we did!"] You did not. [An hon. MEMBER: I did.] What is the hon. Gentleman's constituency? I believe he is Secretary to a Civil Lord of the Admiralty ["No!"] Then I hope he will be so before long—he is admirably fitted for the position. I say you did not carry the country on the cry of coercion. You carried it on a totally different issue; and when you tell me that the country is in favour of coercion, I say I take leave to deny it, until the question has been put before the country and the verdict has been given. I tell the Liberal Party under the Leadership of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, that their support will be more valuable to the cause of law and order than a score of Coercion Bills. If we have life and breath in Ireland, the action of the Liberal Party will have supplied us with a third lung. The fact that the people of Ireland know they have behind them, in the Amendment before the House, the sense of a great Party will have a greater restraining influence upon them than any "protection" the Government may give. The Government, no doubt, expect to carry their legislation with great precipitancy. Except on their own authority they have given us no declaration to justify it—they have favoured us with no facts or figures to justify their course of action. All the evidence produced is in our favour. If the Blue Book has any effect, it is an effect for us. The Government have not given effect to the evidence in the Blue Book. They should not give countenance to one portion of the Blue Book unless they give countenance to the other; but they have refused to act on that principle. I believe that their intention now is simply to throw dust in the eyes of the English electorate; to mislead English public opinion; to take up the time of the House with the pretence that their legislation for Ireland is necessary in order to facilitate the passage of local government legislation and land legislation for England. They are only anxious to fill up the time of the Session, and this Irish cry is a very good stalking-horse for you to go to the country upon. This Bill will fill up the time of the House perhaps until Whitsuntide. Their Land Bill will then occupy the attention of the House until August; and then you will be able to tell the English constituencies that the state of the Irish Question was such that they had no chance of passing other legislation. This Coercion Bill will pass, perhaps; but no Land Purchase Bill will follow. It is not possible that the landlords would accept such a Bill as would receive the approval of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. Would the hon. Gentleman for South Belfast (Mr. W. Johnston) accept such a Bill, or the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson)? They would accept no guarantee of a local character that did not give them some Imperial source to draw on. That being so, I say it is disingenuous for the Government to ask this House to give assent to a measure which gives them a certainty of coercion alone, but denies them the hope of ever seeing the recommendations of the Cowper Commission carried into effect. I say that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, while extremely ingenious and technical, will not mislead any Member of his Party into giving their assent to the proposals of the Government until they have insisted upon having those proposals incorporated in full in a measure placed before the House.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I hope that in assenting to the Motion for the Adjournment of the Debate, it will be understood that the Government do so in the hope that the House will come to a decision on this Question to-morrow evening.

MR. PARNELL (Cork): I hope we are not supposed to agree to that suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman. I must protest against the assumption of the right hon. Gentleman that the time of this House, on a debate of this character and importance, involving issues of the greatest moment to Ireland, is to be meted out as if it were so much tape.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

## SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 1.]

(*Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Jackson.*)

### COMMITTEE.

### ADJOURNED DEBATE.

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [28th February], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" (for Committee on the Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Bill).

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I am amazed that the Government, who have had weeks and weeks to deal with the objection that I have raised to this Bill, have not taken any steps in the matter. You propose to fuse the Common Pleas Division and the Exchequer Division of the Court with the Queen's Bench Division; but you have made no provision for dealing with the machinery of the Courts and the salaries of the officers. I ask the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill, what is to become of the Masters and Clerks, and the machinery of these Courts, in the event of this fusion taking place? I never knew of a Bill of this character being brought forward in so great haste and in so muddled a manner; and I appeal to the House to say that something more is required besides providing for the fusion of the Courts. Certain Judgeships are to be abolished, and the Bill goes on to say that the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland may, by Order in Council, direct the fusion to take place between the Courts; but, as I have said, there is no provision whatever for dealing with the officers of the Courts. Is it not absurd that, under the circumstances, there should be no provision for the salaries and pensions of those officers? On the last occasion, I moved the adjournment of this debate, and the Motion was carried. I do not like to have to make that Motion a second time; but at least I must have some assurance from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes), who is not enamoured of the Bill, that before we go into Committee the Government will give us some idea of their scheme for dealing with the officers of the Courts in question. It will be seen, from the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers), that in 1885 he introduced a Bill under which it was estimated that a saving would be effected of £25,000; but the right hon. Gentleman proposed to deal with the officers of the Courts. If this Bill is passed, you will weaken the Court of Appeal by removing from it two Judges. The Court of Appeal in Ireland, up to the time of the appointment of Lord Ashbourne, was one which enjoyed a considerable amount of confidence. Lord Ashbourne was, for a long time, a Member of this House; he never practised, and he appreciated nothing but the position of a politician. Under the law, as it stands, you have the Lord Chief Baron and the Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas in the Court of Appeal, and now that you propose to merge the two Courts into the Court of Queen's Bench, what is to become of the Court of Appeal? When registration appeals come on, they naturally excite feelings of strong political partizanship, and I say it is to the credit of Lord Ashbourne that, on such occasions, he retires from the Bench, on the ground that he is a political functionary and never takes part in cases relating to the franchise. Well, Sir, you reduce the Court of Appeal in Ireland to two Judges, one of them Mr. Justice Gibbon, a Tory, and the other Mr. Justice Barry, a Whig; and I say that registration cases are now to be left to the decision of a Court in which neither I nor anyone in Ireland has confidence. Although I am opposed in this House to the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland, I believe, if he were to decide cases of registration, he would give us full measure of justice. But we are not to get him by your arrangement. The Government ought to revert to the Bill which Sir Robert Hamilton caused to be brought forward, which fully and freely dealt with this great subject, and which, if it had become law, would have met this difficulty. The Court of Exchequer enjoys the confidence of the people of Ireland; they believe that when they go into that Court they will get the law, if they have the Queen against them, and that is a very important thing; but you propose, by the action of the Lord Lieutenant and an Order in Council, to merge the Court of Exchequer in the Queen's Bench as soon as the Lord Chief Baron dies. I hope, if that is so, that the Lord Chief Baron will live a long time. I altogether object to having the Court dependent on the signature of Lord Londonderry. That, in my opinion, is a vicious principle. I have no sympathy with the Bill, which deals with this question in a tinkering and obsolete manner, although, of course, I agree that it is necessary to reduce expenditure on the Courts in Ireland, and in that sense we shall vote with the right hon. Gentleman. Further, I am convinced that the Bill does not reflect the genius of the right hon.

and learned Attorney General for Ireland; it would deprive him of an important position, and therefore it is not very likely that he has given his assistance in drafting it. Two months have elapsed in which you could have considered the defects of the Bill, and yet you have not put down a single Amendment to it. I say that Irish Members have no time to come here and make up for the bad workmanship of the draftsman employed by Her Majesty's Government; it is your business, and not ours, and I decline to undertake the remodelling of a Bill that is badly drawn and unsatisfactory in all its provisions. With the proposal to reduce the number of Judges I agree, but with the Bill itself I have not a spark of sympathy.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University): The hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) says that this Bill contains no provision for dealing with the officers of the Courts of Exchequer and Common Pleas; but I point out that there are at the present time the Act of 1877 and the Act of 1882, under which they can be dealt with. The only difficulty in the way of that would be that the Lord Chancellor and two other Judges would have to consent to the arrangement. As regards the other point to which the hon. and learned Member called attention—namely, the Court of Appeal, there would be five Judges of Appeal—the Lord Chancellor, two ordinary Judges, the Lord Chief Justice, and the Master of the Rolls. Inasmuch as the normal number of the Court of Appeal is three, I should think that five Judges would be sufficient for every purpose. I may mention that the late Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) stated, when he introduced this Bill, that he intended to put into a Bill to be brought forward towards the end of the Session some other of the clauses that were contained in the Bill originated by his Predecessor. I trust this explanation will facilitate the passage of the Bill.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): The last remark of the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland induces me to make a suggestion to the Government which, I hope, will be received favourably. I ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman whether, this Bill having been read a second time, when the Motion that the Speaker leave the Chair is agreed to, he will not himself introduce in Committee the clauses which were in the Bill brought forward by the right hon. Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers) in 1885, in order to carry out a much-needed reform in the Irish Judicature and make the system completely satisfactory? I shall, of course, proceed with the Amendment of which I have given Notice, with reference to the Irish Judges, and I shall take the opinion of the House upon it; but for the purpose of settling the plan of the Bill, free from all Party bias, I would ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman to allow the matter to stand over for a fortnight or three weeks.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Mr. Speaker, I think there is a great deal in what the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) has said; but if I followed out his suggestion I would not be fulfilling the object my Predecessor in Office (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) had in introducing this Bill. This Bill was introduced simply in order to meet a present necessity. The Courts of Ireland cannot go on doing their work unless some arrangement is come to within the next two or three weeks. ["Oh!"] I am informed that that is a fact. The House, therefore, has really this choice before them—either I have to follow the example that is invariably followed by right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and fill up vacancies as they occur, pending the carrying out of the complete scheme which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has foreshadowed, or else the House must consent to pass, "immediately and without discussion," this fragmentary Bill, in which case the saving which has been alluded to will be effected. It is a matter of perfect indifference to me which course is adopted; it is purely a question for the English taxpayers. Merely as Secretary for Ireland, responsible for the administration of justice in Ireland, I am absolutely indifferent as to which course the House takes. I quite admit that, from the point of view of the reconstitution of the Courts of Law, the larger Bill is the one which ought to be considered and carried by this House. But I ask the House to consider the difficulty in which we are placed. Hon. Members know in what condition the Public Business of the House is. They know that the Government are pledged to bring forward large measures with regard to Ireland. Do hon. Gentlemen suppose that, in the course of the next three weeks, or even in the course of the next three months, there is the slightest chance of passing the large measure which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has described? But I merely rise now to repeat the pledges made by my Predecessor (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach). If the House will consent to take this Bill in its present form, without prolonged debate and without amendment, I shall be very glad to see it pass. If they will not so consent, I shall be obliged, in order that the work of the Law Courts in Ireland may be properly carried on, to fill up the vacancy which now exists; and I shall then proceed to press on, as far as I can, the large and general measure of reform the right hon. Gentleman opposite alluded to, and which I know my right hon. Friend (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) desired to pass. But that cannot be done now. There are now only the two alternatives I have mentioned, and the question is which is to be adopted.

Mr. MAURICE HEALY (Cork): I have noticed the working of the Irish judicial system, and I beg to question the statement of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) that there is any urgency whatever for the passing of this Bill. I may recall the right hon. Gentleman's recollection to one very significant fact in connection with this matter. Four years ago the late Liberal Government made the proposal to this House to reduce the number of Judges in Ireland by no less than five. The statement which the right hon. Gentleman makes now is that the Irish judicial system cannot continue to go on as at present, although there is only one vacancy, caused by the retirement of Chief Justice May. Anyone who knows anything about the working of the Courts of Ireland knows that the Court of Common Pleas is constituted of three Judges; that there is one vacancy in that Court, owing to the transfer of Chief Justice Morris to the Queen's Bench; and that, therefore, there are two Judges left to carry out the work of the Court. Under the Judicature Act, two Judges are quite competent to do the work of the Court; and not only so, but, in practice, they have been doing it for the past two years. Though the Court of Common Pleas is constituted of three Judges, nine out of every 10 judgments given in the Court are pronounced by two Judges. During a third of his time, at least, the Chief Justice is engaged upon legal business elsewhere —at one time trying appeals; and at another time sitting in *Nisi Prius*. Two Judges can do, and are at the present time doing, the work of the Court; and, therefore, there is no foundation whatever for the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that it is urgent that this Bill should be passed in order that there may be no mishap in the working of the Irish judicial system, owing to the vacancy which now exists. Now, I should like to make a few observations in reference to the statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes). The right hon. and learned Gentleman said there is no necessity for providing expressly in this Bill for the merging of the offices of the Queen's Bench and Exchequer Divisions, because such offices already exist under the section of the Judicature Act to which he referred. He added that the Executive in Ireland have at the present time under their consideration a scheme for effecting this amalgamation. The Irish Members would like some little information as to the nature of the scheme. We should like to know how many of the existing officers are to be pensioned, as to how many are to be continued in the service, and who the favoured officers are to be? The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland was entirely silent upon that point. It is a most important point; it is one which must be explained to the House before this Bill is passed; it is one on which the fullest information should be given to Members of the House; and I can see no more opportune time for affording such information than during the discussion of this Bill. There is another point which has not been adverted to up to the present. I confess, Sir, that when I first read this Bill, I came to the conclusion that it was nothing better than a dummy Bill—a Bill not meant to deal seriously with the subject. This Bill provides for the merging at present of the Common Pleas, and in future of the Exchequer, in the Queen's Bench Division, and for having, in future, only one Common Law Division to do the work now done by three Divisions. Let me call attention to the fact that the Bill makes no provision whatever for pending causes or matters. The only precedent I can find for this Bill is the Judicature Act of 1877. That Act merged the three existing Courts into one, which was called the Supreme Court of Judicature in Ireland; but it made express provision for the causes pending in the different Courts at the time the merging took place. This Bill is absolutely silent on that matter, and no lawyer can read this Bill without having his attention called to the fact. The causes and matters pending at the time of the merging will utterly collapse, or come to an end, owing to the fact that the new Court brought into existence by the merging of the three old Courts will have no jurisdiction whatever to deal with causes commenced in the old Divisions. There is another point on which this Bill is entirely silent. Under the present system, the two Courts it is proposed to merge in the Queen's Bench Division—namely, the Common Pleas and the Exchequer, have certain exclusive jurisdiction. There is nothing whatever in this Bill to show that the Court of Queen's Bench, as constituted by the merging of the three Divisions, will have any jurisdiction to deal with the matters with which the two old Courts had the exclusive right to deal. It seems to me that this is a most perfunctory and imperfect measure. I could understand a complete Bill—a Bill such as the late Government introduced into the House three or four years ago; a Bill which proposed to completely reform the judicial system of Ireland. I could understand such a Bill as that for which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) has asked to-night—namely, a Bill to deal with the emergency which occurred when Chief Justice May retired, and when the Government had to consider whether or not they would fill up the office left vacant by the promotion of Chief Justice Morris. But I confess I cannot understand a Bill of this kind, a Bill which is neither one thing nor the other, which does not confine itself to the one specific point I have referred to, and which does not effect that reform in the judicial system of Ireland which is so badly required. I trust that before this Bill comes to be considered in Committee the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) in charge of it will consider the points to which I have alluded, and which seem to me to be most important and material, and that he will make some statement in regard to them.

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): I should like to say that even if we admitted that a difficulty does exist—and I do not admit anything of the kind—the House should recollect who created the difficulty. There were originally four Judges in the Queen's Bench Division; but one of them recently retired. I do not think anyone can stand up in this House and say that three Judges are too few to carry on the business of the Queen's Bench Division; but as a piece of political patronage the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas was promoted to the Queen's Bench Division, in which he draws a considerably increased salary. It is owing to the action of Her Majesty's Government that the deadlock, if there is any, exists. I do not think it can be denied by anyone that at present we are spending annually on the administration of law in Ireland not less than £150,000 more than we ought to spend. We are spending this £150,000 in what is nothing else but the most barefaced and arrant political bribery, in what is really a prostitution of law, and yet the Government come down to the House and tell us, upon the stand-and-deliver principle, you must allow us to save £1,200 a-year, or else we will go on spending £150,000 in patronage. Now, suppose this Common Pleas Division is abolished. There are many young gentlemen connected with the Division as to whose future the House would do well to evince a certain amount of interest. Take the case of Mr. Courtney, a nephew of Chief Justice Morris. He was appointed to a position carrying a salary of £1,000 a-year, and his duties have certainly not broken down his health. What is to be done with him? Is he to receive a good round sum as compensation, or is he to receive the modest sum of £500 or £600 as pension? There are about a dozen other officers who, in the same way, will have to be dealt with.

But there is another point, which is of more importance to us than any other. We do not pretend to have any great burning regard for the English taxpayers' money; but we do attach great importance to the question of registration. If this Bill is passed unamended, the Court of Appeal, for the purpose of registration, will be constituted by the two permanent Judges of Appeal, the Master of the Rolls, and this promoted gentleman; and I say, without the slightest hesitation, that that Court will not have the confidence of the Irish people in any degree. It cannot possibly have; and the Gentlemen who now desire to uphold law and order would do well to give us some undertaking that the Court of Appeal will be more fairly constituted for registration matters. This object might be secured by the inclusion in the Court of one of the Exchequer Judges, the only Judges in whom the Irish people have any confidence. I trust that before we proceed further with the Bill the Government will give us some assurance on this point; and also afford us some information with respect to the pension scheme which must follow upon the passing of this Bill.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Abolition of distinction between judgeships).

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): I understand there is an arrangement with the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) that the Bill should be taken up on Tuesday. I therefore move, Mr. Courtney, that you do now report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Plunket.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I do trust we shall have some information from the Government on Tuesday as to what the scheme under this Bill is to be. Master Courtney is a young man of 35. What do you propose to do with him? What do you propose to do with all the clerks in the Common Pleas? Are we going to have an answer to that question or not. It is monstrous that English Gentlemen, professing to be anxious for the money of the taxpayers, should allow a Bill of this kind to be passed into law on the strength of their own ignorance, and refuse us the least support in asking the most reasonable questions of the Government. Are you going to pension these gentlemen or not?

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): When this Bill is again taken up, I shall most certainly add my protest against it to that of my hon. Friends below the Gangway, unless we receive the fullest information from the Government as to what they propose to do. The mere suggestion that a young gentleman such as has been described should be pensioned off at the age of 35 is enough to make the Secretary to the Treasury's hair stand on end.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out that it is irregular to enter on this discussion on the Motion to report Progress.

MR. PLUNKET: Perhaps I may be allowed to say that the question raised is one for the Treasury rather than for the Irish Office; but I have no doubt that when we reach the 4th clause the explanation desired will be given.

MR. T. M. HEALY: If on Tuesday we can see no signs of information from the Government on this particular question, I shall, Sir, as soon as you enter upon your arduous duties in the Chair, move that you do leave the Chair.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee to sit again upon *Tuesday* next.

## ACCUMULATIONS BILL.—[BILL 31.]

(*Mr. Cozens-Hardy, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Haldane.*)

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. COZENS-HARDY (Norfolk, N.): There is no difference of opinion as to the desirability of passing the second reading of this Bill. It is an attempt to alter the provisions of an Act passed 88 years ago, by which it was permitted to accumulate the income of property for a period that is regarded as unwise in the interests of the public. The present Bill is an attempt to prevent this power for a longer period than the minority of the person who may be entitled to it. Full opportunity will be given in Committee to consider any point which may be thought to require discussion; and I, therefore, hope the House will allow the Bill to be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Cozens-Hardy.*)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): I trust the House will allow this Bill to be read a second time. Before the question is decided, however, I just wish to say that I am not quite sure that the measure does not go too far in reference to the matter of time. If the hon. Member will put off the Committee stage to some period which will give time for the consideration of clauses, and will enable us to prepare Amendments, if necessary, there will be no opposition to the second reading.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* 2nd May.

## *MOTIONS.*

### DIVORCE BILLS.

Select Committee on Divorce Bills *nominated* of,—Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. J. B. Balfour, Mr. Gibson, Mr. Marum, Sir John Mowbray, Sir Charles Russell, Mr. Shaw Lefevre, and Mr. Wodehouse.—(*Sir John Mowbray.*)

### UNION ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE ACT (1862) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Holloway, Bill to further amend "The Union Assessment Committee Act, 1862," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Holloway and Colonel Hughes.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 204.]

House adjourned at ten minutes after Two o'clock.

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# HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Friday, 25th March,* 1887.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Tithe Rent-Charge (54).

*Second Reading*—Probation of First Offenders (No. 2) (20), *discharged.*

### PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE EASTER RECESS.

### QUESTION.

EARL GRANVILLE: Perhaps the noble Marquess may be able to state what arrangements he proposes to make with regard to the Easter Recess?

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): It may be convenient to the noble Earl and to the House if I state that we propose that the House should rise on Friday next; and though it is impossible, on account of the burdens of legislation in "another place," to make a statement with regard to the actual technical Sittings of the House, I think that if we met again on the Monday after Easter week, that would be satisfactory to your Lordships.

### PROBATION OF FIRST OFFENDERS (No. 2) BILL—(No. 20.)

(*The Earl of Erne.*)

### SECOND READING. ORDER DISCHARGED.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE EARL OF BELMORE, in moving that the Order be discharged, said, the Bill was practically the same as one which had last year passed through the House of Commons, and which he had had charge of in their Lordships' House. That Bill was no doubt opposed by the late Government, and some of the details of it were objected to, and, besides, it was considered that it had come up at too late a period of the Session. But the principle of it was approved by every noble and learned Lord who was then present. He had, therefore, been allowed to withdraw the Bill, and he had re-introduced it at the earliest period of the present Session. Since the Bill had been printed a Bill with a similar object had been introduced in the House of Commons. It was not exactly the same as this Bill, but it would have practically the same effect; it was an improvement upon it, and from what he had learned he had reason to think that if the Bill got through the other House it would come here still more improved. He would therefore postpone this Bill, and take charge of the other one, if it reached this House; and in that case he would eventually withdraw the present one. He would, therefore, move that the Order for the Second Reading should be discharged.

*Moved,* "That the Order for the Second Reading be discharged."—(*The Earl of Belmore.*)

Motion *agreed to;* Order *discharged.*

## TITHE RENT-CHARGE BILL.

### BILL PRESENTED. FIRST READING.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): My Lords, I have to ask your attention to a subject which I am sorry to say has become recently a subject of considerable public interest, and which requires the attention of Parliament—I allude to the incidence and mode of levying of tithes. When the Tithes Bill was passed in 1836 it was passed by common consent of both sides of the House; but the extreme difficulty of the subject was then fully recognized. Lord John Russell said, when he brought forward the Bill, that there had been three plans which he had considered, accepted, and ultimately abandoned. The difficulty was recognized by all as very great; but the result of the efforts which were made at that time was that a measure was produced which has worked on the whole with very great advantage to the Church and the public for the space of some 50 years. But that great agricultural distress which has searched the joints and found out the weak places of more than one of our political arrangements has brought to light the very serious difficulties attending this measure which was passed with so much success in 1836. At that time, although it was received with general favour, Mr. Hume, on behalf of the landed interest, very much objected to it. He said it was not fair to the landowners; that it was a great deceit upon them; that it was being passed at a time when Protectionist laws existed; that he was quite sure that those Protectionist laws would not continue, and that the arrangement which the landed interest accepted with willingness and even satisfaction at that time would wear a very different aspect when those laws were withdrawn. Unfortunately, we have lived to see Mr. Hume's prophecy become true. Free Trade, with all the enormous benefits it has conferred upon other industries in the country, has undoubtedly dealt a very heavy blow at the agriculture—or, if I may use the phrase, the arable agriculture of this country—and the distress which has come from the lowering of prices has led occupiers and owners, and especially occupiers, to look with a very jealous eye at the arrangement for the discharge of the burden of tithes which they had accepted without question in more prosperous times. For political purposes, the weak point which has come out in the arrangement of 1836 is the introduction of the occupier into the matter at all. The debt is the debt of the owner in respect of the produce of his land, but the person who, as a matter of fact, pays is the occupier. I believe that the intention of the Act, if it had been carried out, was that the tenant should have power to deduct it from his rent as he did with the Income Tax. That, however, has not been the common practice. The occupier has taken the risk of what the tithe would be, and has undertaken to pay the debt in good years and bad, when the average is high and when the average is low, and to have it considered once for all in fixing his rent. No doubt, that circumstance has added very much to the discontent with which the occupier in some parts of the country has looked upon the burden of tithes. He has had to pay often a very high average at a time when prices had fallen very low, and he has felt aggrieved. Some persons have thought that the difficulties would be entirely met by so far amending the Act of 1836 as to prevent this transference of risk from the owner to the occupier—to insist that the owner should not contract himself out of his liability, but that, as in the case of Income Tax, he should always pay back to the occupier whatever the occupier has paid to the titheowner. I do not dispute that that would be an admirable plan, but it would not meet the whole difficulty of the case. It would not remove the occupier from the position which he now fills of having to discharge the debt and bear the first blows of a financial conflict in which he is not actually or legitimately interested. If he has paid in the first instance you say he has a right to deduct that from his rent. Yes; but supposing he has paid no rent? That is not an impossible contingency, I am sorry to say, in these times. It has not infrequently happened that landlords have not asked for any rent at all, but have given the tenant time, in order to enable him to dispose of his produce and pay with greater convenience. But although they may be ready to forego the rent for a certain time, very few landlords would carry their philanthropy so far as to pay the tithe as well, and therefore the occupier, in the midst of his distress, finds that the titheowner is the person with whom he must deal. I do not think that that touches the worst part of the question. The fundamental vice of the system is this—that though the debt is the debt of the landowner to the titheowner, if the titheowner wants to recover it, he has to distrain upon the occupier's goods. Now, the remedy of distress has many advantages; it has great rapidity, but it is probably the most irritating to administer which it is possible to adopt. It is not only irritating, but it is not, in this particular case, very efficacious. The titheowner comes for payment on a particular day, and the farmer knows when to expect him, and every bit of stock may be driven off the farm. In old times you had a security in the crops which could not be thrashed until the winter, but thrashing is no longer relegated to the winter; thrashing machines have changed all that. Therefore, although it is an immediate remedy, it is not an effective one. For the clerical titheowner it is singularly unhappy in its character. It is subject to all kinds of difficulties, doubts, and technicalities, and the expense makes the poorest clergy naturally very unwilling to resort to it. I have heard that it has amounted to as much as 50 per cent of the sum recovered. That is the material side of the question; but there is the spiritual side, of the relations between the clergy and their parishioners. The farmer ought to look on the clergyman as his best friend. The use of that remedy is not calculated to increase the spiritual influence of the clergymen upon the farmers, or to promote the peace of the parish; and when, in addition to all other causes of difference between the farmer and the titheowner, there is the bitter *odium theologicum*—when differences on doctrinal or ecclesiastical questions separate the two, and make the farmer look with a special jealousy and mistrust on a measure which is necessary to keep up an order of ministers to whose very existence he conscientiously objects—it would be easy to foresee what has actually happened; that the necessity of recovering tithes by this machinery has in many parishes constituted an almost impassable barrier between the pastor and many of his flock, and created spiritual differences which it would require years to heal. Those are evils which exist at the present time, and I have preferred to dwell upon them in a general way and not to bring before your Lordships special instances; but many scenes of great gravity have occurred. Not only in Wales, but in the East of England, sufferings have been endured by the clergy through their inability to obtain that which is their undoubted due, while terrible results have followed to the peace of the parish and the influence of the pastor when this rude and painful machinery has been put in force by clergymen for obtaining their rights. The Bill which I shall now ask your Lordships to read a first time to-night is for the purpose of remedying these evils. One of the main objects of the Bill is to shift the incidence of tithe from the occupier to the owner. Perhaps I may say, in passing, that much larger anticipations have been formed with respect to this subject, and a much more extensive scheme of change has been expected. I wish, on behalf of the Government, to disavow any intention of grappling with projects of that kind. I am sorry to hear it has got abroad that tithe is excessive in amount, and that the bargain which was made in 1836 ought in the interests of the landowner to be revised. This idea, if it has at all spread, is due entirely to misconception. The bargain made in 1836 was a very good one for the landowner, and remains a very good one still. It is said that tithe must now be excessive because it is more than a tenth part of the value of the land. The value of the land is an exceedingly ambiguous phrase; but what it ordinarily means in our parlance is the rent of the land—that is to say, the profit that remains after all the expenses of cultivation in their widest sense have been discharged. But the tithe is a tenth part of the produce of the land, and it was in that sense that it was recognized by the Act of 1836. If your Lordships will consider the matter, you will see that even now the tenth part of the produce of the land would be something very much in excess of what the Church has a right to under the existing rent-charge. Present prices are very low; I suppose the value of an acre of wheat in grain and straw is now about £7. The tenth part of £7 is 14*s.*, but you will not find any tithe even in the most heavily burdened part of the country amounts to 14*s.* an acre. I will not go through barley, clover, and other articles of produce, but I think you will find that the result is much the same. Take an acre of hay. I suppose an ordinary acre of hay will bring in between 70*s.* and 80*s.*, and the tenth part of that is 7*s.* or 8*s.* I think it will be found to be much the same for turnips and barley. On the other hand, it is undoubtedly true that an acre of wheat, which under the old system might have yielded the Church 14*s.*, would not, if the Church were held to be entitled to a tenth part of the value of the land—the rent—yield it anything like that sum. It should be remembered that the old right of the titheowner was to take no account whatever of the cost of production. It was a right to take a tenth part of the produce of the land, with deduction for the cost of bringing to the market. Therefore there is no ground for saying that any revision of the tithe would in any degree benefit the land. I have seen it stated, although I have not gone into the calculation, that even now, according to present prices, more would be yielded than was the case before 1836. The prices of barley and wheat have fallen heavily; but I doubt — though I cannot speak with certainty—whether the prices of animals are not higher now than in 1836. Therefore, my Lords, unless you propose on this occasion to take from the Church the rights that belong to her, you could not revise the bargain made in 1836 without very considerable damage to the landowner and without damaging the titheowner. Owing to agricultural improvements the value of land has very considerably advanced, and in any such revision of the bargain the Church would have the right to reap the advantage of that change. There is another grievance with respect to which I cannot use the same absolute language. I do not wish to disguise it, though I do not propose to deal with it by the present Bill. The grievance arises out of the seven years' revision of the tithe. Supposing four good years and three bad to occur, the effect has been that the unfortunate tithepayer has, perhaps, during the first two years had to pay on an average calculated on the very prosperity that has gone from him. I believe it would be much wiser to arrange to make the tithe payable on prices adjusted from year to year. But anyone who undertakes to make such a change will find that he has all his work before him. For the difficulty will be to find the exact point of transition, and I doubt whether you will ever get the two parties to agree as to the precise amount at which the tithe should be fixed. What this Bill proposes to do is to make the landowner responsible for the tithe; the titheowner will recover it from him as a simple debt. As long as the land yields more than the amount of the tithe, that is a change which I believe will be attended with no difficulty. An arrangement of machinery will be necessary, which will not tax our ingenuity; but there is a difficulty arising out of a state of things which, I am sorry to say, is by no means unknown, in which the rent of the land—the rent that can be claimed for the land—is less than the tithe due upon it. That state of things exists to some extent in the Eastern Counties now, and it raises rather a difficult problem. If the land grows anything at all the titheowner is entitled to his tithe; but if we look forward a step we shall see that that is a very illusory privilege. Directly the farmer finds out by experience that after he has paid his tithe he is not able to pay the cost of cultivation, it is obvious that next year he will cease to cultivate the land. The land will go out of cultivation, and the titheowner next year will lose his right altogether. I acknowledge that, technically, it may be said that at least for one year the titheowner has a right to get his tithe out of land which yields no profit if it yields anything at all. Of course, if the land is out of cultivation, the question does not arise; but out of land which yields no profit, but which will still yield some produce, then for the first year I will admit the titheowner has a right to obtain his tithe, but it is a right which he will obtain at the cost of throwing the land out of cultivation. With that hanging over it the claim of the titheowner would rest as a burden upon the land which would prevent its being brought into cultivation again. It appears to me to be more just to the landowner, and more just to the titheowner, to say that when the land does not yield the value of the tithe to that extent the titheowner should lose his right. And we propose by the Bill to give power to a County Court Judge to ascertain this state of facts from the landowner, and if he pleases make such allowance as he thinks just. I admit that the arrangement, in point of argument, is open to attack; but we have taken into consideration not only the rights of the respective parties, but their future rights and future prosperity. I think, therefore, we shall do well to adopt an arrangement which is not only just, but most favourable for encouraging the cultivation of the land. There are two other points of smaller importance. One is whether the titheowner should pay anything for the greater convenience he obtains by taking his tithe direct from the landowner. The question is difficult to decide, because the convenience which titheowners receive differs. In many cases there are 10 or 20 landowners in a parish, while in others there are only two or three landowners. It is, however, very much better for the titheowner to go direct to the landowner instead of the occupier for his tithe, and we propose to recognize this by allowing the landowner to deduct 5 per cent discount. It appears to us that it is almost impossible to draw any definite dividing line between lay and clerical titheowners; and, therefore, we propose that the Bill shall apply equally to titheowners of all kinds. I feel sure that if, by the waving of a wand, we could get rid of tithes altogether, without injuring any particular interest, Members of both Houses would be prepared to abolish them; but all that we are justified in doing at the present moment is to do our best to encourage the redemption of tithes. Your Lordships are aware that in cases where the land has been cut up into very small portions the landowner can force the titheowner to accept 25 years' purchase of the tithes, and we are of opinion that in the existing state of things 20 years' purchase at the par value is a fair rate for redemption. This proposition may, at first sight, appear rather startling; but, on a careful examination, it will be seen that it will do good rather than harm to the titheowner. In the first place, the titheowner will benefit by having his money every half-year instead of having to press a reluctant farmer for payment; and, in the next place, he will be saved from the costs of collection, while there will be an entire absence of litigation and of ill-will, which, under existing conditions, without imputing blame to anyone, inevitably arise. Allowing 10 per cent for the average fall in the par value, 15 per cent for rates, and 5 per cent for cost of collection, the £100 of par value is reduced to £70, which, at 3½ per cent, would be the precise interest yielded by the 20 years' purchase of the rent-charge. I do not know how far Parliament is prepared to accept such a measure as this, and undoubtedly it is open to criticism; neither do I know how far we may be able to persuade the Chancellor of the Exchequer to help us, although he has hitherto shown us very good will in the matter. I need not go into any details as to the extent to which the redemption of tithes could be assisted by loans from the Public Loans Commissioners, only we must remember that we cannot offer as security for any such loans the land itself, but merely its produce. There are, I admit, many difficulties in the way of carrying out this scheme; but I trust that they may eventually be overcome. I do not know whether, in the present state of Parliamentary Business, we can have any very great hopes that a Bill of this kind, which certainly presents considerable surface for attack, will become law during the present Session. But I am sure that Parliament can pass no measure that will do more to put a stop to differences that are rending asunder communities in different parts of the country, or do more to secure the foundations of the most essential institution of our land. I beg to move that the Bill be read a first time.

Bill to amend the law with respect to the recovery and redemption of tithe rent-charge in England—*Presented* (The Marquess of SALISBURY).

EARL DE LA WARR said, it was not very usual in their Lordships' House to enter into a discussion on the first reading of a Bill, but rather to defer such discussion till the second reading, in order that time might be given to consider it. But as the noble Marquess had thought it well to deviate somewhat from the more usual course, he should not, perhaps, be out of Order if he made a few remarks in accordance with the Motion of which he had given Notice—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, in view of the depressed state of agriculture and the heavy burdens upon land, it is desirable to afford greater facilities for the redemption of tithe rent-charge in England and Wales; and that the attention of Her Majesty's Government should be called to the question."

He might, perhaps, first be allowed to explain the reason which induced him to bring under their Lordships' consideration the subject of the redemption of tithe rent-charge. The existence of very great agricultural distress throughout the country must be, unhappily, too well known to need any proof. In some parts of the country there were hundreds, he might say thousands, of acres out of cultivation; in some the land, if cultivated, would barely pay the tithe rent-charge; in many others it made no return at all, and was often cultivated at a loss. It was generally admitted that wheat could not be grown much under 40*s.* a quarter in this country. The average price for some time past had, he believed, not much, if at all, exceeded 32*s.* a-quarter. Many other kinds of produce had also materially depreciated in value, and it was calculated by those who were competent to give an opinion that 70,000,000 a-year did not overstate the loss in agricultural produce as compared with 15 years ago. That sum, it was estimated, represented more than the actual rents received by the owners of land in this country. There were many more details which might be given, but their Lordships as landowners, having tenants and labourers dependent on the produce of the land, must too well know that the land was fast being reduced in very many places to a condition which would render it impossible to maintain those who had hitherto lived upon it. It was with much disappointment that he read the letter the noble Marquess the Prime Minister not long ago addressed to the Marquess of Bristol, in answer to a Memorial of the owners and occupiers of land in Suffolk. After expressing great sympathy with the Memorialists, the noble Marquess added—

> "We will take into our earnest consideration your prayer for measures of relief, but I should be misleading you if I used any language to indicate that I entertained any hope of being able to cope with an evil of this kind by any sort of legislative action. I heartily wish it were otherwise; but it would not be justifiable to hold out hopes for which no trustworthy grounds exist."

He was quite sure that that statement had been received with great disappointment by agriculturists throughout the country. They naturally said—"Look at the burdens upon land in the shape of taxation. If these were imposed by Parliament, can they not be at least modified or adjusted by Parliament?" There were Imperial taxes; could not Parliament deal with these? There was a high Income Tax—a tax formerly unknown in times of peace; there was a Land Tax which pressed heavily in many places, could not some relief be given in respect of this? There was a local taxation, which was an increasing burden. There were school rates enforced by Act of Parliament, and highly-paid schoolmasters, far beyond what were required in agricultural districts, but which were rendered necessary by the regulations of the Education Department. There were School Boards and Local Boards, and Sanitary Boards and Highway Boards, with highly-paid officers. There were poor rates, highway rates, and police rates; there were Boards of Guardians, with their paid officers. All charges such as these were thrown in a great measure upon the land, which was expected to maintain the landlord, the tenant, the clergyman, and the labourer. One especial way of relief seemed to present itself. He did not say there were no others; he believed there were many. Personal property should be assessed for local as it was for Imperial taxation. It would be difficult to see how the fairness of that method could be disputed. He had pointed out where it seemed to him some relief might be afforded as regarded Imperial and local taxation. It remained for him to show that a great and permanent benefit might be conferred by a well-considered scheme for the redemption of tithe rent-charge. It had been suggested that the present difficulties might be removed if the landlords were made wholly liable for the payment of the tithe rent-charge. It would, no doubt, relieve the clergyman from the inconvenience of any collision with the tithepayer; but as the landlord must raise the rent if he had to pay the tithe, the occupier would practically be in the same position as regarded the amount of payment. But if the tithe were redeemed the occupier might be freed from all liability, and the landlord, in consideration of the advantage which his property would ultimately derive by the redemption of the tithe, would be induced to make easy terms with his tenants with regard to raising the rents until the whole charge was paid off. The scheme, it might be urged, was a large one. The annual amount received from tithe divided between parochial incumbents, lay and clerical impropriators, and collegiate bodies, amounted to about £4,000,000. But although the financial details for effecting the redemption might require experienced handling, it was by no means deemed impossible by those who were competent to form an opinion on the matter. He had figures which he could lay before their Lordships; but he thought it would be more convenient on that occasion if he referred to the Irish Church Act of 1869 and the Amendment Act of 1872, one of the objects of those Acts being the redemption of tithe. By Section 7 of the Act it was enacted that—

> "The Commissioners may at any time after the passing of this Act sell any rent-charge in lieu of tithes vested in them under the principal Act to the owner of the land charged therewith in consideration of a sum equal to 22½ times the amount of such rent-charge, less such sum in the pound as such owner shall be ascertained by the Commissioners to have been, on an average of five years preceding the passing of the said Act, entitled to deduct for poor rates from the tithe rent-charge payable by him, and upon any such sale being so made the Commissioners shall by order declare the rent-charge to be merged in the land out of which it issued."

By this it appeared that a landowner in Ireland since the year 1872 could redeem the tithe chargeable upon land at 22½ years' purchase, less the sum paid by him for poor rates; and it further added—

> "The Commissioners may by order declare his purchase money to be payable by instalments, and the land out of which such rent-charge issued to be accordingly charged as from a day to be mentioned in such order for 52 years thence next ensuing with an annual sum calculated at £4 9s. per cent on the purchase-money.

The result of this arrangement would be that the tithe could be altogether redeemed by the annual payment of a sum very similar to what was now paid for the annual rent-charge, less the rates and the charge for collection. But by being spread over a greater number of years, it might, in proportion, be still further reduced, and thus give greater present relief to the landowner. He believed this Act was in operation in Ireland, and landowners there, especially in Ulster, had to a considerable extent availed themselves of it. It could readily be shown that this transaction could be carried out without at all affecting the Revenue of the country. It might, perhaps, be advisable that the measure should not be compulsory, but that the landowner should have the option of redeeming the tithe or of taking the onus of paying it himself. A re-adjustment of the present rent-charge might probably be necessary before the redemption was effected, in order to adapt it as far as possible to the present value of agricultural produce. It could hardly be doubted that the advantages of a measure of this kind would be great, for it would, he believed, set at rest a question which was becoming one of great friction and uneasiness. The tenant occupier of land would no longer be liable for tithe in any shape. The owner of land would repay the money advanced for the redemption by easy instalments spread over a number of years, and at the end of the time the land would be freed from all charge. He was happy to hear that Her Majesty's Government would take into their serious consideration this important question, which was assuming large proportions, in order that by timely legislation a remedy might be applied to circumstances, the burden of which was increasing at a time of almost unparalleled agricultural distress. He would not move the Resolution of which he had given Notice, understanding that the noble Marquess at the head of the Government would consider the question of tithe redemption during the passage of the Bill through the House.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY) said, he wished to state, with respect to a letter of his to which the noble Earl had referred, that he had not the slightest intention of drawing back from any expression which he might have made of a desire to effect reforms for the advantage of the agricultural community of the country. He believed that much might be done, though the task might be extremely difficult, to adjust the burdens of taxation on land and personal property. What he wished to impress on the noble Earl and on agriculturists was that distress of the character referred to could not be met, could not be coped with, by measures of that kind, and that it was not to legislation they could look for any effective relief. He wished to reply to another point. He was very anxious that his agricultural friends, with whose sufferings he had the greatest sympathy, should not imagine that it was within the range of practical politics that Protection could be restored in this country. He believed that the injury caused would be great if they imagined that such a thing could be done. Before Protection could be restored it would be not merely one Party, but both Parties in the State, that would have to be converted. Let them suppose, for instance, that the Conservative Party were converted and became Protectionists; that would not make it safe for agriculturists to rely upon obtaining Protection. Men could not venture to invest their money on the chance of Protection unless it was so thoroughly received by the country that it would be accepted by both Parties in the State. He thought his noble Friend would agree with him that that was as unlikely a contingency as it was possible to contemplate. It was very natural that agriculturists, in the sufferings they were undergoing, should look for a remedy; but he feared that some public evil might be caused by their looking forward to a remedy which he sincerely believed to be impossible.

Bill read 1ª. (No. 54.)

## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Standing Order No. XXXV. to be considered on *Monday* next in order to its being suspended.

House adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Friday, 25th March,* 1887.

MINUTES.] — Public Bills — *Resolution in Committee*—Bankruptcy Offices (Sites) [Consolidated Fund].

*Resolution in Committee—Ordered—First Reading* —Licensing Laws Amendment * [207].

*Select Committee*—Stannaries Act (1869) Amendment * [147], *nominated.*

*Committee — Report —* Consolidated Fund (No. 1) *; Army (Annual) * [202]; Isle of Man (Customs) * [199].

Provisional Order Bill — *Ordered — First Reading*—Metropolitan Police * [206].

## PRIVATE BUSINESS.

### METROPOLITAN RAILWAY BILL.

#### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Charles Forster.*)

Dr. TANNER: (Cork Co., Mid): I have given Notice of my intention to move the rejection of this Bill, and I find that Notices to a similar effect have been given by two other hon. Members —the hon. Member for East Northampton (Mr. Channing) and the hon. and gallant Member for the Hornsey Division of Middlesex (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg). Under these circumstances, I hope that the second reading will be postponed.

Bill to be read a second time upon *Friday*.

### REGENT'S CANAL, CITY, AND DOCK RAILWAY BILL.

#### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Charles Forster.*)

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): This Bill is in precisely the same position as the last, being opposed by three Members.

Sir CHARLES FORSTER (Walsall): It will be postponed until to-morrow.

Bill to be read a second time *To-morrow.*

## WALTON-ON-THAMES AND WEYBRIDGE GAS BILL.

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Charles Forster.*)

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): In connection with this Walton and Weybridge Bill, I wish to say that an immense number of Petitions have been presented against it, and I understand that several hon. Members intend to oppose it. One very important Petition against it has been presented by the Justices of the Peace.

SIR CHARLES FORSTER (Walsall): If it is opposed the second reading must be put off, and I will fix it for Thursday.

Bill to be read a second time upon *Thursday.*

## *QUESTIONS.*

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### ADMIRALTY—SIR WILLIAM PALLISER (ARMOUR BOLTS).

CAPTAIN M'CALMONT (Antrim, E.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether any pecuniary acknowledgment has ever been made to the late Sir William Palliser, or his representatives, by the Government, in connection with his valuable invention of armour bolts, which have been for a long time, and now are, in general use in Her Majesty's Navy?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. FORWOOD) (Lancashire, Ormskirk) (who replied) said: No, Sir.

### CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—MRS. LUCAS, CONVICTED OF ARSON.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it the fact that Mrs. Lucas, wife of a Cork magistrate, was in March 1886, sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment for having attempted to burn down her own mansion, then inhabited by her family and a protection party of police, by pouring paraffin oil over the curtains of her rooms, to which she set fire; that she was detected by, and convicted on the evidence of, the police who guarded the house; that her husband had claimed for compensation for malicious injury off the rates in this and other cases, which the Grand Jury rejected; is it the fact that Mrs. Lucas was released from gaol several months before the expiry of her sentence; that her husband still remains a magistrate for County Cork; at whose instance was the sentence commuted; and, in how many cases within the past six years have sentences for arson, with intent to defraud, been commuted?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The facts are substantially as stated in the Question. A Memorial was received on her behalf, numerously signed, the signatures including those of the Protestant clergyman and the Roman Catholic curates of the parish, setting forth that the case was one in which the clemency of the Lord Lieutenant might be properly exercised; and His Excellency, after considering all the facts, ordered the discharge of the prisoner. Two sentences for arson have been commuted within the last six years.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman have any objection to say whether the claims of compensation made to the Grand Jury were rejected, as stated in the Question, and whether Mr. Lucas, who made these claims after getting his wife to set fire to the place, still retains the Commission of the Peace; and, will he also state whether these outrages, reported by the police as agrarian outrages, will be given in the Return as against the people?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Part of the Question of the hon. and learned Member I am unable to answer. The other part I have already answered, by stating that I believe the statement that the Grand Jury rejected the claims for compensation is accurate. As to the assertion that the lady's husband urged her to commit the crime, I have no knowledge at all.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman lay the facts before the Lord Chancellor?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The question has already been fairly judged and decided. His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant thought it was a case in which his clemency should be extended, and I do not think the question should be reopened.

## CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND) — RIOTS AT BELFAST — REPRESSION OF DISTURBANCE.

Mr. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to a paragraph in *The Daily News* of this date (21st instant), referring to disturbances in Belfast on Saturday last, in which, after describing the arrest of a prisoner, it is stated—

> "As soon as this was done, the mob, which had now become large, began to violently stone the police. Despite the attacks made on them, the Constabulary arrested, not only Edgeworth, but six others. . . . . Matters to-day (Sunday) passed over quietly; but to-night, in Millfield, there was more stone throwing. A numerous body of police were soon present, and charged the mob with their batons;"

and, if he will explain why people in Youghal, and other parts of Ireland outside of Ulster, are to be charged with the sword bayonet, and even to be fired upon, for resistance to the police, while only the baton, or at worst the bayonet, is employed in Belfast?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The report referred to is substantially correct as regards the disturbance in Belfast on Saturday last; but the circumstances of the following Sunday were not of the serious character suggested. As regards the insinuation made in the last paragraph of the Question, I may inform the hon. Member that the police will use the means for quelling disturbance, or resisting attack, which the circumstances of each case may unhappily render necessary without regard to distinctions of place, Party, or religion.

## MADAGASCAR — RECALL OF MR. PICKERSGILL, HER MAJESTY'S VICE CONSUL AT ANTANANARIVO.

Mr. M'ARTHUR (Leicester) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether there is any truth in the statement made in a Reuter's telegram, dated Paris, 21st March, that the French Government have asked, and obtained, the recall of Mr. Pickersgill, Her Majesty's Vice Consul at Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar; and, if so, will he inform the House on what grounds Mr. Pickersgill has been recalled?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): There is no truth in the statement referred to, and Mr. Pickersgill is still Her Majesty's Vice Consul at Antananarivo.

## CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—OUTBREAKS OF ANTHRAX.

Dr. CAMERON (Glasgow, College) asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, with reference to the various reported outbreaks of cattle anthrax, Whether any steps have been taken to warn Local Authorities of the danger of establishing permanent centres of infection, by the burial of carcasses of animals suffering from that disease?

The CHANCELLOR of the DUCHY (Lord John Manners) (Leicestershire, E.): The Anthrax Order of 1886 provides for the destruction of carcasses of animals dead of anthrax by exposure to a high temperature or by chemical agents, and some Local Authorities, in districts where the necessary appliances exist, have been authorized to adopt such modes of destruction instead of burial. In reference to burial, which in many parts of the country is the only available method of disposing of carcasses, Local Authorities have been warned that the carcasses should be buried entire and be well covered with lime. There is reason to believe that when carcasses are so buried as to exclude the air the infection does not continue for any great length of time.

Dr. CAMERON asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the attention of his Department has been called to the numerous outbreaks of cattle anthrax recently reported; and, whether he proposes to take any measures, by way of warning or otherwise, to guard against the danger of disease being communicated to human beings?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The danger of anthrax being communicated to human beings is one almost exclusively incurred by those who have to deal with the hides or opened bodies of infected animals; and obedience to the Order of the Privy Council of September 16, 1886, as to dealing with such animals and their carcasses, will practically get rid of that danger. No other measure is regarded as called for. I may add that the Report of the Medical Officer of the Board for 1882 contains a Memorandum which was prepared in order to give the means of recognizing anthrax as it affects people dealing with hides; and this Memorandum may be useful as guarding against error in diagnosis in districts where actual anthrax has appeared.

### LAW AND POLICE—SENTENCE ON FRANCIS M'LOWRAN, AT SOUTHWARK POLICE COURT.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the Memorial sent him, with reference to the case of Francis M'Lowran, who was sentenced at the Southwark Police Court on the 8th instant to three months' hard labour, for an assault on a police constable, in which it is alleged that a miscarriage of justice has taken place; and, whether he will have inquiries made into the matter?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; I have carefully considered this Memorial, and I have read the evidence and obtained a Report from the magistrate upon it, and I see no reason to interfere with the sentence.

### ADMIRALTY—GREENWICH HOSPITAL FUNDS—INVESTMENTS.

SIR SAMUEL WILSON (Portsmouth) asked the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, Whether, in the interest of the seamen of the Royal Navy, the Greenwich Hospital Funds, which were originally in part subscribed by them, or deducted from their pay, will be invested in Government loans of the Colonies of Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, and New Zealand, paying Four per Cent, instead of the Three per Cent Annuities?

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (A LORD of the ADMIRALTY) (Sheffield, Ecclesall): Arrangements have been made already, or are in progress, for the re-investment at home, on favourable terms, of the greater part of the Three per Cent Annuities held on account of Greenwich Hospital; and it is not considered that there will be any difficulty in similarly re-investing so much of the remainder of the Stock as it may be considered advisable to re-invest. The Colonial Stocks of Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, and New Zealand mentioned in the Question are at present quoted above par, with the exception of the New Zealand Stock, and at present prices would yield interest of less than 4 per cent on the sum invested.

### CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIOTS AT YOUGHAL—THE CORONER'S WARRANT.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What steps, if any, have been taken to carry out the warrant of Mr. Coroner Rice against District Inspector Somerville and Constable Ward for the wilful murder of Hanlon at Youghal; whether the accused have been suspended from duty and lodged in gaol; and, if so, when; and, whether the jury attached any rider to their verdict, or made through their foreman any statement when returning their verdict; and, if so, what rider or statement?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The accused officers were arrested and committed to custody on the 23rd instant, and are, therefore, suspended from duty. I am not aware that the Coroner's Jury added any rider to their verdict; but I understand that before separating they adopted a Resolution which has been published in the Press.

MR. CHANCE: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he will state the terms of that Resolution?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member is as much in possession of the Resolution as myself.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast W.): Will the right hon. Gentleman say if these prisoners, District Inspector Somerville and Constable Ward, are receiving in Cork Gaol the treatment of ordinary untried prisoners?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I presume they are; but I do not know. If the hon. Gentleman has any anxiety in the matter he can put a Question on the Paper.

### EJECTMENTS (IRELAND)—THE MARQUESS OF DOWNSHIRE'S ESTATES, CO. DOWN.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a paragraph in *The Belfast Morning News* of the 15th instant, in which it is stated that processes of ejectments had been, on the previous Saturday, served on about 70 tenants of "The Seven Townlands," near Dundrum, County Down, on the estate of the Trustee of the Marquess of Downshire; whether any reduction of rent was offered to these tenants; whether any of the tenants so sued owe more than one year's rent; and, if so, how many; and, whether, having regard to these and other cases where the tenants are sued for rent which they cannot pay, the Government will bring in a provisional measure to empower the Judges to adjourn ejectment proceedings for the recovery of rent, pending legislation on the subject?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): My attention has not been called to the paragraph except by the hon. Member's Question. I do not think it part of my duty to inquire into the particulars of special transactions between landlords and tenants. Certain of the proposals which the Government have to make in reference to land in Ireland will be brought into the House of Lords on Thursday next, when hon. Members will have an opportunity of satisfying a curiosity which I admit to be legitimate.

## POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—TELEGRAPH ESTABLISHMENTS AT WATERFORD.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether the postal and telegraphic establishments at Waterford are still ranked in the second class, notwithstanding that the Returns taken last year show the work transacted to be sufficient to warrant the first class being applied; whether, when the late Mr. Fawcett's scheme for the revision of offices was issued in 1881, Mr. Baines, of the General Post Office, who superintended its application, included Waterford among the offices to be promoted, possessing as it did the necessary qualification in high class instruments and direct telegraphic communication with London; whether, in consequence of the strenuous opposition of Mr. Guinness, Surveyor of the Southern (Ireland) District, Waterford was struck out, but on consideration that it would be restored when Limerick obtained the necessary qualifications, and if this promise is still unfulfilled; whether the recent revision of the establishments confers only two clerkships in a staff of 34, while English offices with a smaller staff have three times the number of superior appointments; and, if it is the intention of the Department to improve the prospects of the general body of the staff, and remove the discontent which now prevails?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): All the officers consulted in 1881 were of opinion that the Waterford office should be ranked in List B. In November last I revised the establishment, increasing the number of clerks by two to the present number of four, which was all that the work of the office required. It is not the fact that English offices with a smaller staff have three times the number of superior appointments. The office is still properly ranked in List B; and I should not, I think, be warranted now in reconsidering my decision of November last.

## POST OFFICE — TELEGRAMS—SHORTENED TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESSES FOR THIS HOUSE.

SIR RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells) asked the Postmaster General, If he will be good enough to state whether he has had any further consultation with the authorities of the House with reference to the adoption of a shortened telegraphic address for telegrams addressed to hon. Members at the House?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I have been informed by the Speaker that it will be for the general convenience if the word "Commons" could be registered for telegrams addressed to the House of Commons, and I have given instructions accordingly.

## POST OFFICE—SUNDAY DELIVERY OF LETTERS—POSTMEN'S WAGES.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven) asked the Postmaster General, Whether, in the event of its being decided to discontinue the Sunday delivery of letters throughout the Country, a proportionate reduction in the wages of the postmen will not necessarily follow?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): In fixing the wages of postmen, it is the practice to take into account whether or not they have any work on Sunday. If the Sunday delivery of letters were discontinued throughout the country, and postmen were relieved of all work on Sunday, it would certainly be necessary to consider whether the wages of the men who now work on Sunday, and who, of course, form the great majority of the postmen, should not undergo a proportionate reduction.

## COLONIAL CONFERENCE—AUSTRALIAN OPINION.

Sir SAMUEL WILSON (Portsmouth) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he will consider the expression of Australian opinion contained in Reuter's telegram from Melbourne, published in yesterday's *Times*, and make public the proceedings of the Colonial Conference, thus taking the public into its confidence from the outset; and, whether any other Members of the Government, beside the Colonial Minister, will take part in the Conference?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Sir Henry Holland) (Hampstead): I am glad that the hon. Baronet has asked this Question, as there seems to be some misunderstanding as to the matters referred to. It was clearly explained in my Predecessor's Circular Despatch inviting the Conference that

> "Secrecy must continue to be observed with regard to many of the defensive measures,"

the consideration of which is one of the principal objects of the meeting of Colonial Representatives in this country. Further, it is not desirable that proposals and tenders for mail services and telegraphic communications and the discussion of them should be prematurely made public. And it is no less important that questions bearing upon the relations of this country with Foreign Powers should, if they are to be freely discussed, be considered without the necessary publication of all the observations that may be made and all the information that may be given. It is intended to admit reporters on the opening day of the Conference; but on subsequent days two official reporters only will be present. But it is proposed to furnish the papers with a *précis* of the proceedings of each day. As I have before stated, the Prime Minister and other Members of the Government will be present at the opening; and Members of the Government will attend when the Conference have under discussion matters affecting their Departments.

## THE COLONIAL CONFERENCE — THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON IMPERIAL DEFENCE.

Mr. O. V. MORGAN (Battersea) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether, in view of the fact that the first subject for discussion at the Conference, summoned to meet on the 4th of April, is that of Imperial Defence, the Representatives appointed by the Colonies will be furnished with the Report of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into that subject, and presided over by the Earl of Carnarvon?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Sir Henry Holland) (Hampstead): The Report of the Royal Commission, and the evidence brought before the Commissioners, must be still treated as confidential. But that Report has been taken as the basis of the different recommendations that have been made from time to time, some of which have already been carried into effect; and it will be my duty, as President of the Conference, to state fully, for the information of the delegates, all that has been done in consequence of the Report, and to bring to their notice what measures still remain to be taken.

## LOCAL TAXATION—ASSESSMENT OF CHAPELS AND SCHOOLS AT HAYLE, CORNWALL.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is the fact that the Local Authorities for the District of Hayle, in Cornwall, have determined to tax all the chapels and schools; whether in any, and what, cases exemption from such taxation is admitted by the law; and, whether such exemption should be permitted in the case of those school-rooms, belonging to certain religious denominations, which are attached to and form portions of the chapels, and are used simply for religious instruction on Sundays, such instruction being given without fee or other payment, and the chapels and schools being erected and maintained by voluntary offerings?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) (who replied) said: The Local Government Board have no information as to the proposed action of the Local Authorities in the district of Hayle with regard to the assessment of chapels and schools. As to the cases in which there is an exemption from assessment to the poor rate of churches, chapels, meeting-houses, or premises appropriated to public religious worship, the statutory provisions will be found in the 3 & 4 *Will.* IV., c. 30.

### SALMON FISHING (SCOTLAND).

MR. A. L. BROWN (Hawick, &c.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it is the case that salmon fishings in Scotland are the property of the Crown; and, whether, when such properties are for sale, he will take steps to put them up to public competition?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): Salmon fishings in Scotland are *primâ facie* the property of the Crown; but a large proportion of them has been acquired by those who now possess them by ancient grant, or, more recently, by purchase from the Crown. No undertaking can be given that when the salmon fishings still belonging to the Crown are for sale they will be put up to public competition. The mode of sale must depend upon the circumstances of each case; but it has been assumed that the proprietors of the *ex adverso* lands are entitled to some consideration when a prerogative right of the Crown affecting their properties is disposed of.

MR. A. L. BROWN (Hawick, &c.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he will take steps to institute proceedings against river proprietors in Scotland who fish for salmon on parts of rivers for which they have no Charters?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): This Question relates to a matter with which the Lord Advocate could not interfere. The interests of the Crown in regard to salmon fishings are attended to by Her Majesty's Commissioners of Woods and Forests.

### CIVIL SERVICE WRITERS — BOY CLERKS.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) (for Mr. JAMES STUART) (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Treasury will extend to Civil Service Writers the privilege now enjoyed by boy clerks in competing amongst themselves for a limited number of vacancies in the examinations for Lower Division Clerkships?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): Copyists, under the existing regulations, are allowed to deduct from their actual age, when competing for Lower Division Clerkships, any time not exceeding five years which they may have spent as registered copyists in the Civil Service. They have, therefore, already a great advantage over other competitors, and it is not considered desirable to give them the further privilege proposed by the hon. Member.

### TRIALS BY JURY (IRELAND)—THE RETURN.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will grant the Return relating to Trials by Jury (Ireland), which stands on the Paper for Monday?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I am informed that the information that the hon. Gentleman asks for cannot be prepared from official records; and, inasmuch as it would have to be based on matters of opinion, I am unable to hold out any hope of it being granted.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Will the right hon. Gentleman have any objection to give a Return showing, without any comment, the number of convictions and acquittals at the last Spring and Winter Assizes in Ireland?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, if Notice were given of the Question, no doubt the Attorney General for Ireland would answer it.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Newcastle-on-Tyne) inquired whether the Chief Secretary would be prepared, in the course of a week or so, to provide a Return of the number of persons committed for trial, convicted by juries, and so forth; and, whether he would produce it before the termination of the debate on the Criminal Law Amendment Bill?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) replied, that if it was a Return that the Government could furnish it should be done. He would inquire into the matter; but the right hon. Gentleman was aware that there were difficulties in making out such a Return so that it would be intelligible.

## *ORDER OF THE DAY.*

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### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT (IRELAND) BILL—MOTION FOR URGENCY.

RESOLUTION.

ADJOURNED DEBATE. [FOURTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming the Adjourned Debate on the Amendment proposed to the Question [22nd March],

> "That the introduction and several stages of the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motion, including the Rules of Procedure, whenever the Bill shall be set down for consideration by the Government as the first business of the day."—(*Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

And which Amendment was,

> To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House declines to set aside the business of the Nation in favour of a measure for increasing the stringency of the Criminal Law in Ireland, whilst no effectual security has been taken against the abuse of the Law by the exaction of excessive rents."—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) said, that whatever might be the result of the Division upon the Amendment before the House, hon. Members would be of opinion that already the discussion had been of great service to the House and the country. It had forced the Government to lift the veil from a portion of their policy for Ireland, and to disclose to them part of their intentions with regard to land legislation. It had also enabled his right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain) to follow suit upon the Government, and to announce on his part, or on the part of the Government—he was not quite sure which—a fuller explanation of the Government land measure, giving them greater detail than was supplied by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour). He could not but comment on the extraordinary Constitutional novelty of this course. Never in his recollection had such a course been pursued in that House as that of a right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench expounding at greater length than the Government themselves a Government measure. Nor had it ever occurred that a Government had sat by without protest and heard the announcement of their own intentions from a right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench. Probably they might have further explanation of the same kind from the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) later on. He ventured to hope that they might have some further announcement of a Ministerial policy from that other Member of the Dissentient Liberals who for the moment appeared to be in the confidence—if not in the Ministry—of right hon. Gentlemen opposite. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham devoted some part of his speech to proving his own consistency in regard to coercion, and to throwing some doubt on the consistency of many of his former Colleagues. The right hon. Gentleman said he had voted in 1881 and in 1882 for coercion, and that in 1885 he was prepared to support another Coercion Bill. No doubt, the technical record showed the right hon. Gentleman to be perfectly consistent; but the right hon. Gentleman did not go on to say that there were certain Members of the Government in 1885 who were strongly opposed to a policy of coercion. Some information on that point was at the same time derived from statements which appeared in *The Birmingham Daily Post*—which were regarded as authoritative—and which were certainly never denied. On the 22nd of May, 1885, *The Birmingham Daily Post* announced that—

> "The opposition of Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Charles Dilke to a policy of coercion is unmistakable, and the Radical section have made up their minds that the fullest extent they can go is that the Crimes Act shall run for one year only. In the event of the Government not taking this step they will resign their places."

Some time later the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. Chamberlain) addressed a meeting, at which he informed them that, with the Liberals, coercion was a hateful incident, but with the Tories it was a policy. A subsequent announcement connected him with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham and Sir Charles Dilke in taking up that attitude. He could not say whether that was accurate, but it was not denied. He had the privilege of being a Colleague of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham at that time, and was closely associated with him in many political aims and objects up to the period that the Home Rule Question was brought before Parliament by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). He then thought that the right hon. Gentleman and he agreed on a great many subjects, and especially on the subject of coercion; and if anyone had then foretold that the right hon. Gentleman might in the year 1887 be prepared to support a Coercion Bill brought in by a Conservative Government, he would have considered such a suggestion as that of a madman, and would have asked him to leave his room. Like the right hon. Member, he had voted for coercion in 1881 and 1882. When the Coercion Bill was introduced in 1881 the circumstances were very different to what they were at present. Crime was rife throughout Ireland; witnesses would not come forward, and juries would not convict. He soon found out, however, the mistake he had made in voting for the Bill, and he had ever since regretted having done so. He (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) himself went over to Ireland at the beginning of 1882, at the suggestion of the late Mr. Forster, and he saw the mischief that coercion was doing. He went to Loughrea, and was struck by the amount of crime that prevailed and the relations that still existed, in spite of coercion, between landlord and tenant. He was convinced that coercion was doing infinite mischief throughout the country, and he recollected suggesting to the late Mr. Forster at the time that it would be wise to drop coercion, to release the suspects, and to pass an Arrears Act. The Government did not do so then; but later on they carried an Arrears Act, accompanied, however, by a Coercion Act, which resulted from the Phœnix Park murders. Any person protesting against that Act at that time would not have been listened to; but even then he had great and grave misgivings as to its advisability. He believed that it would have been better then to trust only to the Arrears Act. He did not agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that the Crimes Act of 1882 had been a success; in his opinion any good that had taken place had been the result of the Arrears Act. It might be that the Crimes Act drove agitation below the surface; it had, at all events, created a strong feel- of disaffection against the Government, and led to many evil results. One effect had been entirely to destroy the Liberal Party in Ireland. Then came the proposal in 1885 to adopt another Coercion Act, and during the time that the Members of that Government were discussing whether there should be one or not, it turned out that the Tory Leaders had secretly come to a determination to oppose the renewal of coercion, and had made an agreement with the Irish Members below the Gangway, the result of which was that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian was turned out of Office. When the Tory Government came in they did not propose coercion, and the sequel justified them in that course. It was quite certain that while Lord Carnarvon was Lord Lieutenant a very great improvement took place, which was even greater during Lord Aberdeen's term of Office. Well, he would ask—what had arisen between that time and the present to justify a return to coercion? All the difficulty which had since happened was due to the fact that the Government would not accept the measure proposed by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) last autumn, and had failed to meet the demands of the Irish Members to remedy the defects of the Land Act of 1881, and provide for the extraordinary agricultural emergency. He could not agree with his right hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham that the Land Act of 1881 had been a gigantic failure. In his opinion it had been, on the whole, a just and sound Act; it had already done a great deal of good, and it would be the foundation of more good throughout Ireland. The Land Act had not created dual ownership of land in Ireland, as some appeared to think; it had only given legal sanction to a state of things which existed in Ireland, not only in Ulster, but in other parts as well. It should be remembered that the Land Act had come into existence amid considerable difficulties, having been preceded by a Coercion Bill, which had predisposed the Irish people against it, and in that way done much to prevent its success. Another mistake was that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had neglected to consult Irish opinion in the framing of that Act, and also with regard to the Amendments which had been moved to it. If they looked at the debate upon the Act they would see that it had been moved by Irish Members to include leaseholders and the tenants of town parks, and it had also been contended that the term of judicial revision was too long, and that it should be reduced to five years. These contentions had been affirmed by Lord Cowper's Commission, whether the Government accepted them or not. Other Amendments had been pressed by hon. Members below the Gangway, which the House would not listen to; and it was his belief that if on that occasion they had listened to the Irish Members, and taken information on the subject of Ireland from them, the Act would have been to a great extent, if not wholly, a settlement of the Land Question, and would have been a remedial measure of far greater importance than it had actually been. As it was, however, the Act had been a measure of the greatest importance to Ireland. It had reduced rents to a very large extent, and had produced what he might call a common denomination, which would make it much easier to deal with the question in future. The great fall in prices which had taken place had not been wholly unexpected by hon. Members from Ireland. For shortly after the Land Act was passed the hon. Member for Cork, at a Convention held in Maryborough on the 16th September, 1881, made a remarkable speech, and one which showed there were wise men in Ireland who predicted the difficulties which were coming. The hon. Member for Cork in that speech said—

> "He thought the tenants had better not go into the Courts for the purpose of getting a rent fixed. Rents, he said, for the statute term of 15 years were dangerous for the tenants to enter upon. They were at the commencement of a new system of American competition in corn and wheat, and no one would know whether before 15 years Irish land would be able to pay the rents or not. If they went into Court and asked to have a fair rent fixed, and that application were granted, the statutory term would be fixed for 15 years; and if after five or six years they found they were unable to pay the rent fixed, what position would they be in for obtaining the moral sympathy of the world if the landlord was able to point to their own action as the cause of these intolerable and impossible rents?"

That was an interesting statement for the hon. Member to make, and a wise prediction of what had actually occurred. Nobody now would deny—after reading the evidence given before Lord Cowper's Commission—that a very serious emergency had arisen in Ireland, resulting in very great difficulties to the tenants of that country, and imposing upon that House the necessity of providing a remedy. The Commissioners had not only pointed out the very serious fall in the prices of agricultural produce amounting to 18½ per cent, but also a number of other concurrent circumstances tending to increase the difficulties of the tenant. The question then was, whether the whole of the loss which the tenants had admittedly sustained ought to fall on one of the two parties to the dual ownership of land? Parliament had legalized a system of dual ownership, but they must take that system with all its conditions; and one of those conditions was this—that if a serious fall of prices occurred wholly unexpected after the determination of rent, it was not fair or just that the whole of that loss should fall only on one of the parties. It was, therefore, incumbent upon Parliament to do something to amend the Land Act of 1881, and to meet the difficulties of the tenant farmers. Now, all the difficulties which formed the foundation of the Government's measure of coercion arose from the agrarian question. Those difficulties would have been far greater but for the very great pressure put by the late Chief Secretary upon the landlords to reduce their rents, and for which he ought to have the gratitude of the people of Ireland, and also of this country. What had occurred on Lord Clanricarde's property was an illustration of what went on in Ireland. Some time ago he stated publicly that Lord Clanricarde had declined to make any abatement to his tenants; that he had reason to believe his Lordship's own agent—Mr. Joyce—had recommended that there should be an abatement; and that if he had done so the whole country would have been quiet. Lord Clanricarde wrote to the papers to say that he was untruthful in making such a statement, and that the statement was not in accordance with fact. On turning, however, to the evidence before the Royal Commission, he found he was fully justified in his statement. Mr. Joyce stated before the Commission that he had recommended Lord Clanricarde to make small abatements of rent, but that Lord Clanricarde had declined to do so; and he added, in answer to a question put by Mr. Knipe, that "if that abatement had been given the whole country would have been quiet." The consequence was that evictions took place, scenes of disturbance ensued, and £1,400 was spent by the Government in car hire for the conveyance of the police and bailiffs engaged in them. Eventually 74 persons were sent for trial in connection with these disturbances, and by means of packed juries, were sentenced to terms of imprisonment varying from 12 to 18 months. Later, in consequence of a strong letter from the Chief Secretary, Lord Clanricarde consented to make a reduction of 20 per cent; but there could be no doubt that if he had done this a few weeks before the disturbances in question would have been completely avoided. In his opinion, the story of the conduct of Lord Clanricarde and the Woodford evictions constituted a monstrous case of injustice, and what he asked was this—was it right and just to give any further facilities to men like Lord Clanricarde to exact rents, or was it not wiser, in the circumstances of Ireland, to legislate in the interest of the tenant farmers at the present time? He thought there could be but one answer to that question. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had enlarged and explained the Government proposals with regard to land legislation; but even with the right hon. Gentleman's explanation it was difficult to understand the exact nature of those proposals. It would appear that something in the nature of bankruptcy proceedings was to take place—that the Court on eviction was to be entitled to proceed upon some equitable bankruptcy jurisdiction and to remit rent in certain cases. That might be a very large or a very small proposal. If it was a large proposal, it most closely approximated to the scheme of the hon. Member for Cork; if, on the other hand, it was a very small one, it would be totally useless. He urged the Government to consider whether on the whole it would not be wiser at once to adopt the proposal of the hon. Member for Cork—supported as it was by the recommendation of Lord Cowper's Commission—rather than the proposal which they had now under consideration, which appeared to have come to them from the right hon. Member for Birmingham, and which, in all probability, would be inadequate for the occasion. His right hon. Friend very well and sufficiently explained the present position of the Liberal Party with regard to the Motion before the House, and the question of coercion when he said—and he thanked him for the words, which seemed to suggest his own ideas and wishes on the subject, if he were not trammelled by other unfortunate connections—

> "The Liberal Party object to any measure in the nature of a Coercion Bill until, at all events, the remedial legislation which they desire has been successfully passed."

That appeared to exactly point out the present position of the Liberal Party on the subject. His right hon. Friend proceeded to state the principal arguments on which this was founded; but he omitted altogether one of the most important arguments on which they based their present objection to the proposal of the Government—namely, that coercion, especially at this moment, would inevitably ruin the remedial measures. It was on this point mainly that he relied for his objections to the course of the Government on the present occasion, and for his contention that by proceeding to coercion they would do infinite mischief to the present condition of Ireland. That was the strongest reason which weighed with him against coercion at the present time. It was, he thought, the lesson which they learnt from the legislation since the Act of Union. The cause had been the same in nearly every case; Irish grievances and Irish demands had been refused at the time when the demands were made in a Constitutional way. In consequence agricultural agitation and disturbance and outrage had occurred. England then found it necessary to legislate; but while remedying the grievances it had associated its remedies with coercion. He knew that it had been the doctrine of a certain class of Whig statesmen from early times—of whom the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale was now the exponent—that we must put down disorder in Ireland a "judicious mixture" of coercion and remedial legislation; but it had always been an unsound one and a great mistake, and it would have been far wiser in every case to have postponed coercion, at all events, until they had seen the effect of their remedial measures. It was the doctrine of Lord Grey and Mr. Stanley in 1833, and of many other statesmen since; but it had always failed, and always would fail. He would quote on this point a few words from a Conservative statesman, delivered in 1833, on Lord Grey's Coercion Bill. The tithe agitation was then raging violently in Ireland, and the Government had promised to legislate on the subject; but meanwhile they brought in a Coercion Bill to put down disorder. Mr. Bulwer Lytton, afterwards Lord Lytton, in a very remarkable speech, said that—

> "The question is how disorder and anarchy in Ireland are to be put down. The Government say by coercion tempered by concession. I say by concession, and concession only. I am sure that no people on the face of the earth can be governed by the system which His Majesty's Ministers propose. To-day coercion —to-morrow concession. . . . You flatter yourselves, that under shelter of those laws you will be able, with effect, to apply your remedial measures: it is just the reverse—they will blight all your remedies, and throw their own withering shadows over all your concessions." —(3 *Hansard,* [15] 1234-1238.)

All the remedies tried by the Liberal Government failed till Lord Melbourne came into Office, and dropped coercion and took the Irish Leaders into his confidence and governed Ireland through them. The same lesson resulted from every other attempt to precede remedial measures with coercion. But there was one other argument he would state, and that was that the present occasion differed from any other that had hitherto occurred when Coercion Acts had been carried. He had searched through all the cases of the 86 Coercion Acts which had been passed since the Act of Union, and he found that there was not a single Act which had been passed by a Party vote, or otherwise than by the most unanimous vote of the English and Scotch Members. In the few cases where it had been tried to carry such a measure against any large section of English and Scotch Members it had failed. Thus, in 1834, Lord Grey was compelled to withdraw his second Coercion Bill, and had to resign Office, because a majority of the Liberal Party was against him, and Sir Robert Peel was defeated in 1846 on a Coercion Bill by a combination. But there had not been a single case in which a Coercion Bill had been carried otherwise than by practical unanimity. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian had already pointed out that in no single case had a majority of the Irish Members been opposed to a Coercion Bill. The Act of 1833 was carried by a majority of 466 to 89, of whom 41 only were Irish Members. In 1881, 36 Members only voted against coercion, of whom three only were English Members and 33 Irish. In 1882 the Coercion Act was carried by 383 to 45, of whom nine only were English Members. The Government were now going to attempt to carry a measure against 86 out of 100 Irish Members and the great bulk of the Liberal Party. Had they considered the cost of this, and appreciated the results? A measure going to Ireland with the practically unanimous vote of English and Scotch Members would carry great force with it; but a measure going to Ireland carried by a Party vote, and with five-sixths of the Irish Members against it, would carry no weight and no sanction. It could not but have most serious effects. He should fear to predict the consequences. An hon. Friend of his quoted three nights ago a passage from Lord Macaulay in favour of coercion. He preferred Lord Macaulay when he spoke in opposition. There was a remarkable passage of his spoken at a time when it was proposed to put down the repeal agitation by force. He said—

> "Force will not suffice. You cannot govern a gallant nation by the Law of Quarter Sessions; because it is in vain, though you have law on your side, if you have the people against you. There is only one power that can make the law strong, and that is the consent of those for whom the law is made."

This was a consideration of a serious character; and he asked the Government —he asked the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale—to consider the effect of the measure they were now about to propose—to consider its effect in Ireland when going to it with that little sanction. He was lost in wonder at his noble Friend, as one of the traditional Whigs of the country, adopting so perilous a course—one so opposed to every principle of popular government.

In his humble opinion the Coercion Act could not fail to be mischievous in the highest degree. It would aggravate a hundredfold the difficulties in Ireland; and, worst of all, it must absolutely ruin and blight the prospects of whatever principle of good there might be in the best of remedial measures.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, it had been stated last night by the hon. Member for North Derry (Mr. Mulholland) that it was the opinion of the Unionist Members for the Province of Ulster that no drastic measure of land reform was required by that Province. He (Mr. T. W. Russell) desired to take the earliest opportunity of dissociating himself from the statement made by the hon. Member, and to state to the Government and to the House his conviction that, unless a very drastic measure of land reform was introduced and carried, the Ulster tenant farmers would be totally destroyed and lost. Hon. Gentlemen among whom he sat appeared to be perfectly clear as to the course they ought to pursue on this matter. He wished he could share their feelings and enjoy their apparent peace of mind. The Party to which they belonged had forged most of the 86 Coercion Acts which had appeared on the Statute Book. They were asked to believe that now they had turned over a new leaf, that they had entered upon a new stage, and that they were done for ever with all that sort of thing. They proposed the sharp and decisive remedy of throwing the Irish problem into a seething cauldron, and trusting that what went into the cauldron black would come out white. Like the illustrious author of *The Apologia*, they went through seas of trouble when they did their own thinking; but, like that eminent man, now that they had learnt the virtue of obedience and the duty of surrender to authority, all was peace, and they saw their way clear before them. For himself, he did not share their clearness of sight, nor had he their seeming peace of mind. He approached the consideration of the question unfettered by any Election pledges. [*Ironical cheers.*] The jeers of hon. Members below the Gangway pleased him more than their cheers; and, what was more to the purpose, they pleased his constituents better. Not having learnt the Irish Question by means of a holiday tour, he was aware, in June and July last, that the National League aimed at making all government in Ireland impossible; and on every platform on which he stood he declared, and with the warm approval of those who listened to him, that if the law proved weak and unsuitable, he would vote to strengthen it and make it suitable, and to make it apply to priest and peasant alike. That, he supposed, was flat blasphemy to hon. Members below the Gangway. What was he to do under those circumstances in the present emergency? He had listened with admiration to the speech of the right hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley); but what was the pith of it? The right hon. Gentleman, on Tuesday night, admitted that one-eighth of the total area of Ireland was in a disturbed state. When the Assizes had to be adjourned, when trial by jury was admitted to be a farce, when contracts were openly scouted, when shop debts were almost irrecoverable, and ordinary morality was set aside, the disturbance of social order could not be denied to exist over that area. But what of parts of the country not included in that area? They were told by holiday tourists that the National League was a Constitutional body, and on all-fours with the Liberal Federation or the Conservative Association. Let them take a local branch of the National League and see what was their ordinary Sunday work. He was not quite certain that a good many hon. Members had not been humbugged in Ireland. He would tell them what the National League did. He would take a local branch outside the prescribed district, and show what their Sunday work was, and he was speaking of what he knew. A judgment in a family dispute was solemnly given by the Master of the Rolls in Dublin, and the local branch of the League presumed, on the following Sunday, to sit and reverse that judgment, and the authority of the local branch of the League was of more weight and power than the decision of the Master of the Rolls. That was Constitutional action, was it? Did the Liberal Federation do work like that? He would take the same local branch of the League. Three tenants sold their interest in their farms three years ago, and went to America. They came back to Ireland a few months ago and claimed their farms; and on

Sunday the local branch of the League ordered the solicitor to produce the deeds, and sat in judgment on the question whether the farms should be restored to men who had got the money for them and gone to America. Was that the kind of work which the Liberal Federation or the Conservative Association professed to do? How about Boycotting? Respecting that, he wished to quote the testimony of the Rev. Canon Griffin, of Millstreet, who was not very popular with hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway; but it did not follow that a priest, because he dared to be an honest man and refused to bow the knee to the Baal of the National League, was not to be believed in that House. When examined before the Commissioners, Canon Griffin was asked—"And rents are being paid?" He answered—

> "Well, I must say that during the entire agitation the rents were fairly paid, and any disturbances that took place in that district were not caused so much by disputes between landlords and tenants as by trade jealousies, which caused a great deal of Boycotting."

Asked whether he could give any information as to Boycotting, he said—

> "That has been very extensively practised in my parish, and, in fact, it has been the curse there for the last five or six years."

Asked—"Does it continue in the same force?" He replied—"Yes; it does." Next he was asked—

> "Is it aimed at persons who transgress the edicts of the League, or on what account is it effected?"

He answered—

> "It commenced, I think, through trade jealousy in the town against one shopkeeper who was a very large trader there, and a very large farmer, but not a land-grabber in any way."

He further stated that

> "the man's trade was nearly ruined as far as his shop business was concerned;"

and also that the school in the town was Boycotted and broken up, because the schoolmaster was a witness in a case of Boycotting, tried at Cork Assizes, and simply told the truth. The system of Boycotting was followed by murders, which were its ultimate sanction and only authority, and it was in issuing Boycotting notices and edicts that the local branches of the League spent their Sundays. Was that Constitutional work? But they were told that outrage had diminished; that there was no such case now as there was in 1881 and 1882 for increasing the stringency of the Criminal Law; and they were asked for statistics showing the cause assigned for the demand for coercive legislation, when, as it was said, outrage had diminished. But what did the cessation of outrage mean? It was, to a great extent, true that it had ceased; but to his mind the fact covered a terrible truth. Why had outrage ceased? Because of the alliance between the National League and the official Liberal Party in England. That alliance never could have been maintained had crime and outrage stalked red-handed through the land. ["Hear, hear!"] Hon. Gentlemen had better wait until he finished the sentence. The conscience of the Liberals of England would not have tolerated it; therefore, the outrages ceased, and intimidation and Boycotting took their place. But the power that could stop outrage in that way must have some knowledge of the criminals. If the League had the power to restrain them, how fearful was its guilt in the past—how terrible would be its responsibility in the future. Admitting the truth as to the extent of the area referred to by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. John Morley), he, for one, held that a case had been made out for interference of some kind. He was told that coercion had always failed. He asked, did the Westmeath Act fail? Did the Act of 1882 fail? When did these outrages cease? They ceased when they got the power to change the venue and when the treasonmongers and the murderers were brought from the South and West of Ireland to Green Street, Dublin, for trial. ["Oh, oh!"] He was speaking that which he knew, and he said that the Act of 1882 did its work as well as any Act that ever passed, and that the evil system began afresh when that Act unfortunately expired, and when hon. Gentlemen on that (the Conservative) side of the House refused to Lord Spencer the power which they ought to have given him. Well, what shape should the necessary interference now take? The right hon. Member for Newcastle-on-Tyne declared for land reform as against what he called coercion. He (Mr. T. W. Russell) himself was in favour of land reform of the most drastic character. He did not believe that either the Act of 1870 or the Act of 1881 had been a total failure; he never would subscribe to any such statement inside or outside that

House, and he should like to know what the state of Ireland would have been if they had not had the Act of 1881? He, too, had read the evidence taken by Lord Cowper's Commission; and, with that evidence before them, the Government would have been culpable in the highest degree had they introduced a Bill for increasing the stringency of the Criminal Law, and allowed the Land Question to drift. That, however, was not their declared policy. They proposed to deal with crime, to restore freedom to the individual, to enable every man to exercise his judgment freely and without fear, to bring to swift and stern justice those who represented the "Constitutional" Associations of the hon. Member for Scarborough (Mr. Rowntree); and, believing in the policy of restoring the reign of law and dealing at once remedially and effectively with the Land Question, he, for one, should vote for urgency on that question. But he should do more than that. He should vote for urgency as required by the Government; but he would wait to see the Crimes Bill before he would make up his mind whether he would support it or not. What did he gather from the responsible Minister for Ireland in that House? This—that the Government intended to bring forward a Land Purchase Scheme. That appeared to be what was wanted to finally settle the Irish land difficulty. Now, he did not think there were half-a-dozen Members in that House who did not believe that a purchase scheme of some kind was at the bottom of the whole question. He was not prepared to throw the slightest obstacle in the way of such a scheme. Let them take any witness they liked in the Cowper Report—and he had carefully gone through all the evidence that was taken before the Commission—and they would find that they one and all declared for Land Purchase as the solution of the Land Question. Well, that was going to be done—or, rather, the Government had announced that they were going to try to carry such a scheme of purchase, and it was for that House to say whether or not that plan should be adopted. He was not going to cast stones at anyone on the Opposition side of the House; but it seemed to him that it ill became certain hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Benches near him to sneer at the proposal of the Government to admit the leaseholders to the benefit of the Land Act. Who but the Gentlemen sitting on that side of the House had kept the leaseholders out of the provisions of the Land Act of 1881? He, therefore, welcomed the promise of the Government in regard to the leaseholders, who had borne the burden almost until they could bear it no longer. They were the flower of the tenantry of Ireland, and he rejoiced that the Government had consented at last to listen to their passionate prayer. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy), in the course of his speech last night, said that he would give the landlords of Ireland his note of hand for as much land as he wanted. The hon. and learned Member was then speaking as if he were speaking on behalf of the farmers of Ulster; but he (Mr. Russell) must tell the hon. and learned Gentleman that he had no authority to speak for the farmers of that Province. As soon as they got the opportunity, the farmers of Ulster sent the hon. and learned Member to Longford, which was not in Ulster. The farmers of Ulster were willing to pay a fair price for their holdings. What was the present campaign in Ulster? It was not a "No Rent" Campaign, but it was a "Fair Rent" Campaign. The hon. Member who stated, or insinuated, in that House that the tenant farmers of Ireland, and especially of Ulster, did not wish to meet their engagements did them an injustice; and in the name of the farmers of Ulster he (Mr. Russell) repudiated any such characterization of their hopes or wishes. He apologized to the House for intervening in the debate; but, speaking in the name of law-abiding people in Ulster, he considered that a case for urgency had been made out. He hoped that the Government would deal resolutely and firmly with crime, and not only with crime, but with incitements to crime as well; but, at the same time, they should not let out of their mind the thought that that was not the solution of the Irish difficulty. The solution rested on the Land Question; to that Ministers must bend themselves, and in that they must succeed, if they would solve it.

THE LORD MAYOR OF DUBLIN (Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN) (Dublin, College Green) said, the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. T. W. Russell) was a temperance orator. Of the temperate nature of the man the House had many opportunities of forming a judgment. That hon. Gentleman had ruined the temperance movement in Ireland. He ruined the temperance movement in Ireland he was sorry to say, by his violence, his folly, and his fanaticism. The hon. Member said the hon. and learned Member for Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) had no right to speak for the tenant farmers of Ulster. Who, forsooth, had that right? The Irish Nationalists were the majority of the Representatives of Ulster, and, therefore, they or any man among them had a better right to speak for the people of Ulster than the hon. Member. The hon. Member sneered and jeered at Members who paid flying visits to Ireland; but the hon. Member had not long been in that country himself, and if he ventured to correct the impressions of those who paid flying visits, then the Irish Members who were born and bred there must take leave to correct the impressions of the hon. Member. They were natives of Ireland, like their forefathers; but the hon. Member was not. In saying that, he had no desire to throw any imputation whatever upon the land of his birth. Time was when Scotland and England seemed to be very hostile to the rights and claims of Ireland and its people; but, happily, that state of things had passed away, and they were now proud to recognize that since the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian introduced his Home Rule Bill a happy change had taken place in the feelings of the English and Scotch people. Ireland had now honest sympathizers in Britain, but the Party opposite desired to make the feeling of animosity eternal. What was it they argued? The hon. Gentleman (Mr. T. W. Russell) had admitted — for he could not deny it— that outrages had greatly declined. But they were confronted with this state of circumstances—that if crime was prevalent that was a serious accusation against the Nationalist Members; if crime was not prevalent that was worse again. They had been told that the Irish National League had subjugated the country, and that it was because of that subjugation there was an absence of crime. If it was a fact that 87 years after the Act of Union the National League—unsupported by bayonets or cannon — was able to supersede the written law of the British Parliament in Ireland, what evidence did it give with regard to the system and the condition of government that had prevailed in that country during all that time. He maintained that outrages and disturbances were inevitable in any country that was misgoverned, misruled, and grievously oppressed. Could they have in any part of the world such a system as that of Irish landlordism, and have peace, happiness, or contentment among the people. Could they have such a system of rule as that of Dublin Castle, and have no crime or outrage in the country? Such a thing was impossible. Some hon. Members seemed to revel in accounts of shootings, maimings, and murderings; and they would, apparently, be miserable if they could not do it. It was becoming a stale trick to produce a letter from someone whose name could not be revealed. The last time it was done the trick produced little sensation, and it appeared to be nearly played out. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) said that 86 jawbones were the weapons of the Irish National Party. When it came to a question of jaw or a question of bone, the hon. and gallant Member should be the last man to open his mouth, for he (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) ventured to say that in the matter of bone and of jaw the hon. and gallant Member was able to hold his own with any man on this side of Crim - Tartary. If Ireland was in a state of disorder and of disturbance and of anarchy, he asked who had the ruling of the people? If Ireland was in a state of anarchy and disorder, it was the fault of the British Parliament. It was admitted, and could not be denied, that the people were pretty much what circumstances and what history had made them. Who had had the making of the Irish character for so many hundreds of years? Who had had the ruling of these people, and why were they now found to be disaffected— or what the Tories called disloyal— engaging in combinations regardless of the law of the land and preferring very much the law made for themselves by themselves? The ruling of Ireland had been in the hands of the British Parliament for many a long year, for 87 years since the passing of the Act of Union, and a pretty mess indeed they had made of it. Was it not time to make a change? Had not this experiment of ruling Ireland from London by the votes and decision of people who knew nothing of the country—was it not time that that experiment, which had proved an utter and a disastrous failure, should be given up, and that recourse should be had to another and yet untried course which there was every reason to believe would produce very different and very much happier results? If Coercion Bills had not been tried before by all means try them; but if 86 or 87 of them had already been tried, and if at the end of them all Ireland was now in the condition in which she was represented to be, was not that fact a condemnation of the British system of rule and of their 87 Coercion Bills? After the new Coercion Bill was passed, and after its period expired, what was to be the state of things in Ireland? It was alleged that by virtue of this impending Act of Parliament the Government could put a large number of Irishmen into gaol. That was no new experience with the Irish people. The very centres and leaders of Irish National opinion in Ireland—a thousand of them were formerly put into gaol, and what was England the better for it to-day? Had the heart of the Irish people been intimidated thereby? Had the spirit of the Irish race been suppressed? Had the desire for Irish National independence been extinguished? Not a bit of it. By the Government's own showing the condition of Ireland to-day was, according to their point of view, as bad and as barren as ever it was. In these circumstances he read a condemnation of the system of rule, or rather of grevious misrule and hateful oppression, inflicted upon that country so long by the dominant power of Great Britain. He denied that there was anarchy in Ireland. He denied that the moral condition of the country was inferior to that of any other country on the face of the earth. He did not wish to go into unpleasant or invidious comparisons; but he challenged comparison between England and Ireland with regard to all crime and all offences outside the range of political and agrarian matters. There was a good deal that was disturbed, unsatisfactory, and unpleasant in relation to those two things; but the explanation was to be found in the state of agrarian and political legislation. He had heard frequent references in that House to the Ten Commandments. Any references to the Ten Commandments were usually cheered to the echo by the virtuous Tory Party; but, taking the Ten Commandments all round, he asserted that they were as well observed in Ireland as they were in England. They were as well observed by the peasants, and the labourers, and the farmers of Ireland as they were by the Tory aristocrats and the *crême de la crême* of the English aristocracy. The Tory Party liked to take their Ten Commandments with a certain abatement—with quite as large a reduction as the Irish tenant demanded off his rack-rent. The evidence of that could be seen in London day after day, and night after night—evidence of which they could read in the newspapers every day of the year, and these splendid Gentlemen who choose to relieve themselves of a very considerable degree of the latter half of the Ten Commandments cheered every reference to the Decalogue as if hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House were to be silenced thereby. On the behalf of his countrymen, and of those who represented them, he challenged the highly moral and exceedingly virtuous Tory Party with respect to the Ten Commandments, taking them all round. In the eyes of the Government anarchy consisted in the non-payment of rents, and in the payment of rack-rents they found the fulfilment of the whole Law and the Prophets. If the Irish people only paid rack-rents they might do anything else they pleased, but by not paying them they were denounced as worse than the publican and the heathen. He considered it the right and the duty of the Irish people to resist the payment of these infamous exactions. The men who tried to extort those rents from the Irish tenants ought to remember one at least of the Ten Commandments, which told them, "Thou shalt not steal." What had they been doing in Ireland for ages but stealing and plundering from the hard-working, the laborious, and the industrious classes of the country, and living in ease and luxury upon money they had never earned, by exacting rents upon land which they were pleased to call their own? At the very best, the landlords were only the part owners of the soil of Ireland. Many of them had had their fee simple paid 10 times over, and had rented the people upon their own improvements. They had confiscated these improvements, and he was justified in calling them thieves and robbers. What sort of persons were these Irish landlords who were perpetually appealing to the House against the tenant farmers of their country? In no country—except, perhaps, in Turkey—had there been so ruthless, so worthless, so vicious, and so bad a class as the Irish landlords. In England the country gentlemen held a certain position, and fulfilled certain duties. In Ireland they were simply an affliction and a burden upon the people —they did the people no service; they set them no good example. He would quote the description which appeared of the Irish landlords, not in any Nationalist newspaper, but in *The Times*. *The Times*, writing some years ago, made use of the following memorable words—

> "It is no earthly use to go on abusing the Irish landlords. Their names stink already to the ends of the earth. We might as well go on expatiating for ever on the vices of tigers and wolves as to be saying every day what we think of a class which for selfishness and cruelty has no parallel, and never had a parallel, in the civilized world."

Those words were not published in an Irish Nationalist paper. They did not come from *United Ireland*. They did not come from *The Nation*. They did not come from any organ of sedition and disaffection. They came from *The Times* newspaper, and he hoped would be treated accordingly.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): What is the date?

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN: It was some time towards the end of the year 1852. But he had yet to learn that the character of these gentlemen had beneficially changed since. The leopard had not changed his spots, and the character of the landlord class to-day was what it was then, save in so far as their power for cruelty and mischief had been restrained by the strong hand of the British Parliament. But he would, with the leave of the House, give them a more modern quotation—it came from a not unsympathetic source, being an extract from an article published in *The Contemporary Review* in January, 1882, and written by Professor Mahaffy, of Trinity College, Dublin. Professor Mahaffy described the Irish landlords as a most worthless, idle, and uneducated class, and described them as reading what they considered safe and sound newspapers, though in many cases these papers advocated views the very opposite of those held by members of their class, and gave the following illustration—

> "An old M.P., who resides now in Dublin revisited some time ago the county which he had represented in Parliament, and upon going into the country club—an exceedingly Tory club—saw on the table *The Pall Mall Gazette*. As the paper had passed for more than six months into the hands of Mr. Morley as editor, and was producing almost daily his well-known articles on the Irish Land Question, my friend asked some members present how it was that they still took in *The Pall Mall Gazette?* They answered, of course, why not? It is the best and ablest Conservative paper—it always expresses our views precisely. He asked them had they observed anything odd about it lately? Had they read the articles on the Land Question? They said they had, but had noticed nothing strange. At last one man said, for the sake of appearing more shrewd on the question than any of the others. Yes, by the way, now that you mention it, I did think there was something odd about some of the articles I read lately; but, of course, as it was *The Pall Mall Gazette* I knew it was all right."

The Professor than stated that these people really had no idea beyond fox-hunting, sporting, and idleness, and seemed to think education a superfluity and unnecessary. He said—

> "How often when I have been urging on parents the necessity of sending a boy to school have I heard the fatal formula, 'Oh, he doesn't require to go,' expressed in a tone of assumed modesty, as if I had made a social blunder by presuming that the boy was, like most of us, obliged to work for a living. 'What does he want with education?' said an old lady to me once in the same connection—'Isn't he a fine handsome boy?' 'and can't I keep him till he grows up? Then he will go over to England, and perhaps some rich lady will thrate herself to him.'"

That was the class of gentleman for whose benefit England was keeping Ireland in suffering misery, disgrace, and discontent. They constituted the "loyal minority" in Ireland. By going on in the same way England might always have a loyal minority in Ireland, but she will never have a loyal majority. It would pay England better if the majority in Ireland should at last have a taste of freedom, and of righteous justice, even though the loyal minority might consider themselves greatly and cruelly outraged thereby. The Bill that was to be brought before the House might be the result of imprisoning many a brave and honest man in Ireland who could easily be made out a criminal under the provisions of the Act. But he asked the hon. Gentleman to bear in mind this practical consideration — Will it help the landlords to recover their rents? No, he said it would not, but it would only create exasperation, it would cause suffering; it would excite a feeling of vengeance in the minds of many a cruelly wronged man, and the landlords of Ireland would be no nearer to their rack-rents in the end. He warned the House of this, although whenever an Irish Member gave utterance to words of warning honestly spoken; whenever an Irish Member said to the Government "Do not have recourse to this cruel and oppressive legislation, because the inevitable consequence will be disturbance and outrage and crime," he was immediately charged with suggesting and inciting these disorders; but he had noticed, whenever other men declared that if a certain Act was passed by the House that it would be followed by disorder and disturbance in the North of Ireland, that these men were not called to Order in the same fashion. The noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), speaking the other night, rebuked the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) for using language of this character, although, with his usual manliness and candour, the noble Marquess acquitted the hon. Member for Cork of any intention to incite to disorder, but added that the hon. Member for Cork, while prognosticating crime and disorder, should have uttered serious words of warning against them. But why was not the same rule applied all round? Why did not the noble Marquess condemn the men who declared that if a certain Act were passed it would be followed by civil war in Ireland? Why did not the noble Marquess condemn these men because they did not, in the same breath, or at any time at all, say that disorder was a hateful thing and merited the condemnation of all men? Why did not the noble Marquess carry his wise advice to all points of the compass, and apply it to Lord Salisbury, who said of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, who was then in Office—

> "The Prime Minister and his Friends are meddling with edged tools of whose sharpness they have no conception, but which they will painfully find out if they pursue their insane career?"

This resulted not exactly in edged tools, but in the paving stones of Belfast. Lord Salisbury, speaking at the Westminster Palace Hotel, on Saturday, May 15, said—

> "I have no doubt that he, Colonel Saunderson and the Ulstermen mean what they say, and if the time shall come they are the men to do what they say."

Was not that an incitement to violence and outrage in the North? And the result was seen in the Belfast riots, which immediately followed. These were the direct results of such suggestions addressed to these excitable people by Lord Salisbury and by Gentlemen on the other side of the House who now held Office. He (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) desired to say, in all honesty and all sincerity, that he feared the result of the coercive legislation about to be proposed. The result of any suppression of open political organization in Ireland, or interference with political writing or freedom of speech in Ireland, would inevitably be a recourse to secret councils, secret organizations, and the most terrible and deplorable crimes. He did not pose as a prophet when he said that. There was nothing new in it. It had not only been stated over and over again, but it was the teaching of history; it was a plain fact, written large over the history of Ireland, to which the eyes of hon. Members opposite, in some unaccountable way, were utterly blind. The Prime Minister, in a speech delivered a few days ago in Willis's Rooms, remarked that the Irish Leaders of the present day said very little in Ireland about Irish nationality, and that they seemed to have lost sight of the ways and means by which other peoples considering themselves aggrieved sought to obtain justice and freedom. He thought these were very ill-conceived words on the part of the Prime Minister, for they amounted to a plain incitement to the Irish people to have recourse to the pike and gun. The right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary had quite recently in that House used language which was exactly the opposite of that used by his uncle the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman said that certain quotations from the speeches of Irish Members were enough to prove his proposition, which was, in the first place, that the League aimed at political objects wholly alien to the question of combination for the purpose of exacting a fair rent; and, in the second place, that it aimed at this treasonable end by the spoliation of a particular class. Inasmuch as the uncle and the nephew were both engaged in the government of Ireland, they might as well take a little more pains to harmonize their views. The Irish Members were accused of being paid agitators —it was said they were carrying on agitation for the purpose of gain. [*Cries of* "Hear, hear!"] He would like to know from the hon. Member opposite who cheered his words whether the Business of the British Government and Parliament was worked out on the voluntary principle? He would like to know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House of Commons was in receipt of any salary for his services? He would like to know if the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary got any little consideration? He would like to know if there was a man on the Treasury Bench who did not draw pay from the pocket of the British taxpayers for serving his Queen and his country? Besides, there were many English and Scotch Members who, directly or indirectly, either themselves or through their relatives, were receiving pay, profit, and emolument. This imputation against the Irish Members would not stand for a moment under the consideration of a right-minded man. References were being made to American dollars. So long as the Irish landlords were getting the dollars they had no objection to them. The rack-rents of Ireland had been mainly paid by the earnings of hard-working Irish labourers in England, and by the savings of the Irish race in America. Long ago the rack-rents would have broken down but for the folly of these people in sending home the earnings of their hard toil and labour in foreign lands to pay those impossible rack-rents which the land itself never made, and the exaction of which was oppression and robbery. If they turned to the Blue Book of the Cowper Commission, they would find the story of a poor tenant, who asked the landlord for time until he got money from his children who were in service in England. What right had the landlords to the earnings of that man's children? No right whatever. The landlord had perhaps a legal right to some share of the profits of the farm, but he had no right to the earnings of the sons and daughters of his tenants in other parts of the world. Thank God, the day was near when that accursed system would come to an end; and even the proposed Land Bill of the present Tory Government, no matter how miserable and inadequate a measure it might be, would be another nail in the coffin of Irish landlordism. The Plan of Campaign had been censured in that House. His own opinion was that under circumstances of so much oppression and wrong there never was in any part of the world a public movement conducted with so little crime. They did not deny that there had been crimes —lamentable and disgraceful crimes— arising out of this unfortunate condition of things in Ireland; but it was impossible that such a condition of things could exist in any part of the world without crime. His hope, his trust, and his desire was that they might be near the end of the present unhappy condition of things. The only way he saw to end it was not in the invention of new Coercion Acts—not in a meddling and peddling with the Irish Land Question—but in the large, the safe, and the healing measure of Home Rule, and putting into the hands of the Irish people the right to adjust, to consider, and to manage their own affairs. He had no doubt whatever that the mind of England was coming round to that view of the case. He believed in the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, that the flowing tide was with them. There might be little signs of it just now in that House, but the fact was there nevertheless; and in that connection he was reminded of the words of one of their English poets—

> "For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
> Seem here no painful inch to gain,
> Far off, through creeks and inlets making,
> Comes silent, flowing in, the main."

He hoped and believed that the flood was rising, and that the two islands would soon be surrounded by a sea of peace, which would ebb no more.

Mr. CURZON (Lancashire, Southport) said, the speech of the right hon. Member who had just sat down was amusing, rather violent, and very discursive. The point before the House was a very small one, and was confined within narrow limits. It was not the question whether coercive legislation, or, as he preferred to call it, quoting from the speech of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) in 1881, "protective legislation"—for, in his (Mr. Curzon's) opinion, this Bill would protect far more numerous classes and individuals in Ireland than it would coerce—it was not the question whether these protective measures or remedial measures should exclusively occupy the attention of Parliament, but which of the two had the prior claim upon the time of that House? The Government accepted the Report of the Cowper Commission, and intended to make it the basis of legislative proposals. The attitude of hon. Members opposite with reference to this Commission interested him greatly. When the appointment of the Commission was first mooted it was sneered at and derided by hon. Members; but now they had changed their minds. [*Home Rule cries of* "No!"] He was speaking of hon. Members above the Gangway, who had changed their views with respect to this matter just as they had changed them on almost every conceivable point. They now endowed the Report with an almost canonical authority, and quoted carefully-selected and garbled passages from the evidence of individual witnesses with as much reverence as if they were inspired. The Government was at least so much in harmony with hon. Members opposite that they did not ignore the Commission, for they had heard from the Chief Secretary that the principal recommendations of the Commission would be embodied in legislation. But the main question now before them was not whether there should be remedial legislation; the question was whether the Land Bill that had been promised, or the Crimes Bill, should be given priority. A Government had no right to make such a demand as was now made unless they could declare that they had tried and exhausted all the ordinary forces of law, and could show that, while endeavouring to fulfil that duty, they had acted, not only with justice, but with patience, toleration' and forbearance. He appealed to hon. Members opposite whether the late Chief Secretary for Ireland had not shown in the discharge of his duties exemplary patience and humanity? They might feel certain that such a man would not have contemplated proposing to the House repressive legislation if all the ordinary Constitutional means of governing the country had not been tried in vain. Then the Government ought to be able to satisfy the House that they could make out a strong case, resting on plain and incontrovertible facts, and proving the incontestable need for exceptional powers. He felt sure that the present Chief Secretary would be able to make out such a case. Unreasonable complaints had been made that this statement of the Chief Secretary had not yet been delivered. Had he, however, attempted to make it in the course of that debate, he would have been out of Order. The statement would have been delivered before now but for the dilatory Amendment of the right hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley). In calling the Amendment dilatory, he did not allude to the intention with which it was brought forward, but to the practical effect of its introduction. He trusted that hon. Members opposite would believe that it was with extreme reluctance that those on his side of the House approached legislation of this kind. The Government had been driven to this sorrowful necessity by the inexorable force of circumstances, which had been largely shaped and controlled by hon. Members below the Gangway opposite. It could not be a pleasant thing for a Government to signalize its first year of Office by the introduction of a Crimes Bill, and it was not a pleasant thing for new Members to find that their first year of Parliamentary life was to be signalized by the duty of supporting such a measure. [*Ironical Home Rule cheers.*] Hon. Members opposite were inclined to laugh when observations of this sort were made on his side of the House. The other night the right hon. Member for Newcastle made a remark which he was sure he would have readily withdrawn if he had known the pain it gave to hon. Members on the Ministerial Benches. He said Members on the Ministerial Benches were fond of reminding the House of the villainy of the Irish people; and when he (Mr. Curzon) and others cried "No, no!" the right hon. Gentleman leaned over the Table, and, pointing at them, said—

> "Oh, yes; the whole of this Bill is based on the theory that the Irish people are incorrigible."

He wished he could purge the minds of hon. Members of this baseless assumption. The Party to which he belonged gave full credit to their opponents for sincerity; and they respected the right hon. Member for Newcastle because they knew that he was consistent and converted on the subject of Home Rule at a time when all those Gentlemen who sat round him and now clamoured in his wake were steeped in original sin; and when even the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) was engaged upon his famous 15 years' process of incubation over the wrongs of Ireland. Why should not Gentlemen on his side of the House be given credit for sincerity in their turn; why should they always be taunted with this supposed inherent belief in the depravity of the Irish character? If the Ministerial measure were considered to presuppose the immoral character of the Irish people, the enforcement of the Eighth Commandment in any civilized community must be held to presuppose that the bulk of the people were thieves. He admitted that sometimes they were likely to form unfavourable impressions of the Irish character from the exhibitions of it seen in that House. If they were compelled to form a diagnosis solely from the symptoms seen below the Gangway opposite, it might not be a very flattering one; but he could assure hon. Members from Ireland that a far higher opinion was entertained of their constituents than of themselves. On his side of the House, then, they repudiated the insinuations of want of feeling and humanity which were directed against them. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had contended that there was no analogy between the year 1881 and the present time. But if priority was claimed for the Land Question now, as it was by hon. Members opposite, why was it not claimed in 1881? The answer was that the state of Ireland as regarded crime was infinitely worse then. But, he asked, was the state of the Irish tenant better? The ground on which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle said a Land Bill should have priority was that the state of the Irish tenant was urgent and extreme; but in 1881 the Irish tenant was in an infinitely worse condition. He did not enjoy the advantages of the Land Act of 1881, or the Arrears Act of 1882, or the various Purchase Acts. On all points and in every particular the position of the Irish tenant was infinitely worse in 1881; yet, in spite of this fact, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian did not hesitate to claim precedence for criminal over remedial legislation. The right hon. Gentleman would have none of this analogy, and begged them to find out another precedent. He had endeavoured to follow that advice, and would refer the right hon. Gentleman to the case of Sir Robert Peel in 1829. In that year he met Parliament with the statement that he intended to propose the repeal of Catholic disabilities; but before that he insisted on passing a coercive measure for the suppression of the Catholic Association. He would read an extract from the speech of Sir Robert Peel on that occasion defending the priority of coercive over remedial measures. His words were—

> "Until the ascendancy of the laws in Ireland was vindicated he did not think they ought to be called upon to take into consideration the question of concessions. It was not intended on the part of the Government to propose any measures until this essential object should have been accomplished."

Those words might be used with equal force by Her Majesty's Government at the present moment. Upon the analogy of 1829, if not upon 1881 and 1882, he thought everyone would admit that if the Government were erring they were erring in very good company. It was further urged by hon. Members opposite that remedial measures, if they were introduced concurrently with, or posterior to, repressive measures, would be discredited and ineffective. He understood however, that whilst the Crimes Act was was intended to strike at the criminals of Ireland, the remedial measures would apply to the tenants of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian defended his claim for the precedence of his Criminal Bill in 1881 on the ground that—

> "It was directed against those who may not unfitly be called the dangerous classes, and who might not unjustly be described by harsher

terms. Those were not the men to be converted by remedial legislation. What they feared was personal consequences, and it was for the power of administering those consequences that they pleaded, and whether they had a sufficient case or not, it was idle to talk of governing the minds of such men by what was termed remedial legislation."

Now, the Bill of the Government was directed against those self-same dangerous classes; but the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle said it was a Bill levelled at the tenants of Ireland. That suggested a connection between the tenants of Ireland and the dangerous classes. It was a curious thing that it should fall to one who was accused of having an incurable belief in the inherent villainy of the Irish character to repudiate such an insinuation. The Crimes Bill of the Government would not touch the tenants *qua* tenants, but only in so far as they chose to join the criminal classes of Ireland. Did hon. Gentlemen opposite say there were no dangerous classes in Ireland? They did not. Then they observed a creditable moderation. But they had heard again and again the statement that there was no exceptional lawlessness in Ireland, that there was nothing but sporadic disturbance in certain districts. When those statements were made about the law-abiding state of their country, he was constrained to ask whether hon. Members opposite read the daily papers. He was not speaking of publications which could, by any possibility, be said to be prejudiced or partial. He did not refer to the publications of the Loyal and Patriotic Union, nor to *The Times*, but to papers edited and under the control of hon. Members opposite, such as *United Ireland* and *The Freeman's Journal.* [*Cries of* "Read!" and "Quote!"] If he had known that the House would have given him permission to quote he would have come down prepared with bushels. He thought it impossible that anyone could read those papers and still talk of the absence of lawlessness in Ireland. Nor was it possible to read the speeches made by hon. Members opposite when St. George's Channel was between them and the English authorities without coming to the same conclusion. Hon. Members opposite reminded him of an ancient deity, the god Janus—they had two faces, one of peace and the other of war. They wore the face of peace when they wanted to dupe and cajole the English House of Commons, but they wore the face of war in Ireland when they wanted to hound on and inflame the Irish peasantry. Let hon. Members read the speeches made in Ireland by Mr. William O'Brien, a gentleman who was cheered on that side of the House, because he was what he was—namely, a perfect firebrand of sedition in Ireland, scattering sparks of lawlessness and disorder wherever he went. It appeared to him that hon. Gentlemen opposite made a mistake which was not uncommon—they saw one set of facts with extreme and almost abnormal clearness; they saw the misery and distress that prevailed in many parts of Ireland; they saw the hardships of evictions; they saw the unjust cases where tenants, perhaps, received an insufficient reduction of rent or no reduction at all—they saw these things, and, feeling them profoundly, they came to that House and built upon those facts a moving and pathetic appeal. But there was another set of facts of which they saw nothing—that the greater part of Ireland was at the present moment given up to a successful rebellion against the law of the land. Various reasons had been given for the absence of serious crime in Ireland. They had been told by the right hon. Member for Birmingham that the fear of the bullet had made the use of the bullet unnecessary. It was said that violent outrages were not committed, because no man was so foolhardy as to place himself in the position of a possible victim. That explanation was advanced by many much better informed Members than himself (Mr. Curzon), but there was another explanation which had not yet been given. What was the particular quality and complexion of the crimes that were not now committed? They were precisely those very crimes with which the existing law, weak and impotent though it might be, was still strong enough to grapple. The average Moonlighter was the most contemptible specimen of humanity on the face of the earth, but even he obeyed the first instinct of Nature—the law of self-preservation. He worked with a mask on his face, he skulked behind hedges and fired through windows, and conducted his operations under the convenient shelter of the night. Whatever danger he inflicted on life and limb he never endangered his own skin. The absence of open murder, assassination, and outrage in Ireland was due not so much to suddenly acquired scruples on the part of the Moonlighter, as to his timidity and personal alarm.

MR. T. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour): What will this Bill do for him?

MR. CURZON said, he hoped it would put him in the position he ought to be in — in a gaol of the country. He was, further, quite prepared to admit a greater part of what had been said on the other side, to the effect that lawlessness did not largely prevail in Ireland at the present time. The majority of the people were "law-abiding;" but the law which they respected was not the law of the land but the law of the League. Facts showed that whatever might be the case with regard to crimes of violence, outrages did exist, and the administration of justice had very nearly ceased in Ireland; and there was an absolute repudiation of all social contracts, at any rate of contracts relating to land—those very contracts which the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian said last night—and he was cheered to the echo for saying so—that it was the primary duty of the Government to maintain. The House would, no doubt, be told, as they had been told over and over again, that coercion was no remedy for the wrongs of Ireland. He admitted that. They had often heard in the House of Commons about the wrongs inflicted upon Ireland by England in the past; they might or might not be real and genuine and deplorable, but that was not the question now before the House. They had been told that a large number of those wrongs had been inflicted by Statute law, and that this law was hated by the Irish because it came to them in a foreign garb. But whatever might be the wrongs inflicted upon Ireland by England in the past—and he believed that they had been expiated by honest repentance on the part of the present generation, and by an ample atonement on the part of the British Parliament—the sum total of all those wrongs, whether real or imaginary, would not approximate to one-tenth part of the wrong which would be inflicted on Ireland by England at the present moment if the British Government allowed all law, Statute law and the moral law, to be trampled under foot. It was because he believed that the proposals of the Government were intended to re-enact, by the agency of the Statute law, the moral law which was now in abeyance in Ireland that he would support the Motion of the First Lord of the Treasury and vote against the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) said, the hon. Gentleman had admitted that a Government bringing forward such a measure as a Coercion Bill ought to state the facts and the evidence on which they relied. But this was just the course that Her Majesty's Government had not taken. It would have been quite possible for the Government to have introduced their Bill, and laid before the House the grounds upon which they based it before asking that it should have precedence. He was by no means opposed to all coercion, and did not deny that circumstances might render exceptional repressive measures necessary. But before the Government asked for special facilities for such a measure, they ought clearly and distinctly to make out their case. In the present instance they had failed to do this, and he could not support them, especially as it was to be noticed that this was the first occasion on which it was proposed to bring in coercion against the views of a majority of the Representatives from Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) had not met these two points, but had shown himself as very anxious to hide the iron hand of the Government under the velvet glove—under the promises of land legislation. Exceptional repressive measures such as the Government were about to introduce ought not to be levelled against political opponents; but it was the National League that the Government were really aiming at, and not the prevention of the small number of outrages that now took place in Ireland. With reference to the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay), he should like to know whether, if the hon. and learned Gentleman was not going to vote for coercion, he was going to vote for conciliation? The hon. and learned Member had said the proposed legislation was not coercion, because it meant the emancipation of a large portion of the Irish nation. From whom had the hon. and learned Gentleman gathered that? Had he learnt it in Ireland? Or from the Representatives of the Irish people? He thought the voice of Ireland which the hon. and learned Gentleman heard must have been that of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson). The hon. and learned Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay) had accused the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) of half-heartedness in opposing this Motion. He would remind the hon. and learned Member that although the verdict of the constituencies was against Home Rule, yet the other side received from the constituencies no mandate in favour of coercion. If there were any half-heartedness it was on the part of Her Majesty's Government, who were hounded on by the hysterical screams of *The Times*, and by the fiery eloquence of such full-blooded enthusiasts as the noble Lord the Member for North Devon (Viscount Lymington). For himself, he refused to be a party to handing over a blank cheque to a Government of forcible feebles who were being urged to their destruction by a Brummagem Strafford and a bogus Castlereagh. They were told that if this Coercion Bill were passed the Government would bring in remedial measures. This was like using a cane to a sick child, and promising to call in the doctor in three months; but he had no confidence in the sort of parental despotism which the Government sought to set up. It was because he held this Coercion Bill to be against the interests of law and order, and because he believed the policy of the Government tended rather to separation than the union of the Empire, that he felt it his duty to protest against the introduction of this Bill.

Mr. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon) said, that the Government had been charged with preventing matters in which the House was interested from being brought forward; but the fact was that the Irish Question had gone on for Session after Session, until there were a vast amount of English matters blocked in a way that was becoming unbearable to the constituencies of this country. By the course they had taken the Government improved the chance which English Business had of obtaining the attention of Parliament. No one could sympathize more than he did with the small farmers of Ireland; but he was sure that the interests of the farmers would never be advanced by allowing laws which remained on the Statute Book to be broken. He was most anxious that everything should be done to improve the position of Irish occupiers of land; but he could not believe, as they were told, that an abatement of 20 or 30 per cent in rents of £2 or £3 a-year would bring contentment to Irish peasant homes. If something was to be done for the Irish peasants, they should be first shown that the law must be upheld, and then a remedy should be found for their distress. He thoroughly believed, and he had always maintained, that it was far more for the interest of the working classes that the law should be upheld with firmness than it was for that of the rich. If Ireland had been so badly treated as had been represented—and that she had not been treated fairly in connection with many matters he would be among the first to admit—he thought that the Leaders of the Opposition ought to bear in mind that, during the 35 or 40 years they had been in power, they had allowed so many Irish grievances to exist of such a nature, that it was now said that they almost justified breaking of the law. He sincerely hoped that this subject would be treated as a matter of emergency, and that the Government would enforce the maintenance of the law, and relieve the poor people of Ireland, or of any other part of the United Kingdom, from the tyranny of their neighbours, who would not allow them to have those liberties which every Englishman ought to be able to enjoy, merely because they differed from them on a question of politics. If the Irish Members opposite would agree that the stamping out of crime was in all countries a matter of urgency, and would put forward reasonable demands, they would speedily gain the ear of Conservative Representatives for those demands, and would also have the support of the English constituencies in obtaining a remedy for the misfortunes and grievances under which their country had undoubtedly suffered to a considerable extent.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): The hon. Member for the Malden Division of Essex (Mr. Gray), who preceded me in this debate, assured the Representatives of Ireland that, if they came to this House and told us what Ireland really wanted, he and those who acted with him would try to meet their wishes. Why, Sir, the Government which the hon. Member supports have sent their own men to make inquiry in Ireland, and have proved that, so far from listening to the representation of the Irish Members, they will not even listen to their own Commissioners. The hon. Member seems to think that the Government in taking, as they propose to do, what will practically be the whole time of this House till after Whitsuntide, are taking the best course to help private Members. It is more reasonable to say that there are enormous arrears of legislation urgently demanded by Great Britain. And there are vital reforms, which it is essential to the welfare of Englishmen to obtain, and which they rightly think to be quite as urgent and important as any of the questions affecting Ireland. I should be out of Order if I discussed these reforms; but I am expressing the opinion of the whole House, when I say that the disastrous position of the agricultural interest, the revision of local taxation, and technical education for the people of this country, are matters of urgent and immediate importance. What I maintain is, that whatever may be the pledges of hon. Members, whether for or against coercion, hon. Members on all sides of this House have pledged themselves to their constituents to do their utmost to press forward these reforms. The utterly unprecedented number of Bills and Resolutions on the Order Book show that hon. Members are willing and anxious to throw all their energies into this work. Well, Sir, I think, wholly irrespective of coercion, it was imperative on the Government, in the face of such circumstances as these, when they asked for the whole time of the House to make a complete and conclusive statement of the arguments which led them to take this course. But no statement, no coherent argument has been offered. The First Lord of the Treasury does not agree with the Chief Secretary, and the Chief Secretary does not agree with himself. The First Lord of the Treasury gave the House to understand that the whole of Ireland was in a state of disorder. But after the speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-on-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), the Chief Secretary had, in the beginning of his speech, to allow that disturbance was only local in Ireland, and did not cover more than one-eighth of the country; and yet, as he went on in his singular, haphazard harangue, and reached higher flights of rhetoric, he spoke of the whole fabric of society in Ireland crumbling to its primeval atoms. If the Government have failed to tell us why they need coercive powers, they have as conspicuously abstained from defining what sort of coercion they are going to introduce. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) last night showed an extreme anxiety to supply something of the backbone which the Government so woefully lack; but he felt himself obliged to take an attitude of temporizing scepticism, and would not pledge himself to take this leap in the dark and vote for the Bill of the Government till he saw what it was. And yet, at the same time, he was so illogical as to urge his Unionist Friends to support the Government on this occasion, and to give them the power to force the House and the country to take this leap in the dark. The only thing that was clear was that the Government were determined to persist in the fatal error adopted last August. The House will remember that the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), in the speech which ushered in his brief Leadership, declared, as the policy of the Government, that they would treat social order as a thing apart, and not as dependent on remediall egislation. Ireland could wait, and they would send Commissioners to inquire into the real aspects of Irish questions. Then, at Bradford, the noble Lord gave as the apology for the delay of the Government that they would not legislate "until they knew." Well, our contention is, that they will not legislate even when they do know. They have sent the best men they could to Ireland, they have given them *carte blanche*, they have enabled them to call the most capable witnesses; an exhaustive inquiry has resulted in a volume of evidence which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) rightly characterizes as the most important document on the condition of Ireland ever laid before this House. And yet, Sir, we find the Government ready to cast to the winds the practical recommendations of their own Commissioners, and to give the preference apparently to brand-new theoretical schemes from that Birmingham mint; with the ever changing political currency of which we were so familiar last spring, when, as hon. Members will recall, each week there was a new issue, with a new die and a new superscription. As I have said, the Government is persisting in their policy of August in spite of their own Commissioners' Report. If we could gather anything from the speech of the Chief Secretary, it was that he would firmly maintain the sacredness of contracts, and uphold the judicially fixed rents. That makes one call to mind once more the remarkable speech of the Prime Minister at the beginning of the last Session. Lord Salisbury said, in the House of Lords, that if rents had really become impossible, the loss by the difference between the possible rent now, and the rent judicially fixed, should fall, not on the Irish landlords, but on the State—that is, of course, on the taxpayers of England, Scotland, and Wales. Now, if the Chief Secretary were in his place, I should challenge him, and ask him, why he has not the courage of his convictions, why he cannot carry out such a policy, which would at least be equally fair to tenant and to landlord? Why, Sir, can he not adopt the recommendation of his own Commission, and at once carry out a revision of the judicial rents; and, why can he not also bring in a Bill to make good the difference out of the Consolidated Fund? The answer is obvious. It is cheaper, and easier, and less risky to coerce the poor Irish tenant, who is far away, and weak, and helpless, who is groaning under the semi-Russian despotism, which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham once so eloquently denounced, and who is, as that right hon. Gentleman pointed out, at the mercy of 30,000 bayonets. It is easier, I say, to do this than it is to face the free and independent taxpayer of Great Britain, who is at our doors, who has free speech, free right of meeting, and who will challenge the action of the Government and insist on a just consideration of his claims. Does the Report of the Commission justify a resort to coercion? The Commissioners do not recommend coercion, but only a firm maintenance of the ordinary law. Last night we were treated to a singular display of fraternal criticism from the right hon. Member for West Birmingham on the right hon. Member for Newcastle-on-Tyne. He quoted a passage in which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. John Morley) said that it was not inconsistent with, that it was part and parcel of the Liberal creed not to hesitate to deal with outbreaks of violence. But, Sir, that is just the difference. We Liberals and Radicals are always prepared to deal vigorously with outrage and crime. We do not need to call for un-Constitutional powers. We hold that coercion is the avowal of weakness. Liberalism and Radicalism are strong to repress wrong, because they have a strict regard to justice. And I would say, what I am sure on Members on this side of the House will confirm, that my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-on-Tyne showed in that short period in which he was Chief Secretary for Ireland (that period which will remain a bright page of Irish history) just this quality. He had but one great opportunity, and that was afforded him by the digraceful and sanguinary riots at Belfast—riots which, I have no hesitation in saying, were the direct and obvious result of the reckless and inflammatory address of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington. My right hon. Friend showed firmness, justice, and impartiality in dealing with the Belfast riots. I do not think any of us doubt, that if similar occasions had arisen in the Catholic Provinces of Ireland, he would have shown the same resolution and the same impartiality in putting down public violence. But happily the rest of Ireland was peaceful. They had learned the lesson of hope, and had fixed their trust on a great Englishman and a great English Party. The Government have a still stronger warning in the separate Report of Mr. Knipe, which has been so long delayed, and was only laid two days ago on the Table of this House. Mr. Knipe says—

> "I think that any attempt to meet agrarian crime and outrage, which unfortunately prevail

in certain districts, by any fresh coercive legislation will now, as in the past, not only fail to secure the tranquillity of the country, but will inevitably end in seriously aggravating the present difficulties."

The real source of trouble, he pointed out, was the strained relations between landlord and tenant, because rents had become impossible. It was at the Rent Question that the Government must strike, if they wished to pacify and gain the confidence of the Irish people. I would beg the attention of Liberal Unionists to Mr. Knipe's advice; for Mr. Knipe is speaking not as a Nationalist, but as an Ulster Liberal Unionist. The Government have disregarded Mr. Knipe's advice, and seem to have made up their minds that coercion is the best way to improve the relations between landlord and tenant. They have determined to crush by force the combinations of the tenants against rents which the Government's own Commission prove incontestably to be unjust. They seem to think the happiest solution of Irish difficulties is to drive, by force, the tenants of Ireland into whichever of the gigantic, universal, compulsory schemes of State purchase has been excogitated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham for the present emergency of the Government. What is the real reason the Government have thrown over their own advisers? It is the old reason, the exasperation of failure. The Government, the Unionist Party, as it calls itself, has missed a golden opportunity. It is easy to denounce and deride the objects of the Unionists. But it is possible also to state the Unionist creed in noble and generous terms. And I have no doubt there are Unionists in this House, who would find the ideal of Unionist policy in words used many years ago in "another place"—

"We contracted, when we assumed the dominion of Ireland, a solemn duty, that we would give to that country the same amount of benefit as it would have received from an independent domestic Legislature, really representing the wants, the feelings, and the wishes of the Irish People."

If the Unionist Party last summer, when they had the clear and undoubted facts before them, when they were fresh from that "irreversible and final verdict of the country," of which we heard so much, when they had that magnificent majority at their backs; if they had seized the occasion for proving that they were the true friends of the suffering Irish people, then it was just conceivable, from the standpoint of a Unionist, that they might have won for themselves the noble title of being the salvation of Ireland. They have preferred to leave the work and the reward to the National League, and their failure is complete, and that is the key-note of their cry for coercion. What is the spirit in which the Government approach this task? Why, in the speech by the First Lord of the Treasury, and in that of the Chief Secretary also, there is not a word of sorrow or regret—not a single apology for their proposal to abridge the Constitutional liberties of Irishmen. I am almost tempted to wonder whether any Member of the present Government has read and considered the speeches of past statesmen who have proposed coercive measures, such as the noble and generous speech of Lord Grey in 1833, when he spoke with pain and sorrow at the necessity he felt, and said—

"Such powers are only to be exercised in extraordinary circumstances, and are such as, if permanently established, are incompatible with free institutions; if resorted to on all occasions, must prove destructive to every free Government."

My right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle-on-Tyne referred the other night to the singular evidence which Captain Hamilton, the hon. Secretary to the Property Defence Association, gave before the Royal Commission, and I will read to the House the last answer which that Gentleman gave—an answer which seems to me to stamp him as the apostle of prompt and pitiless eviction. In reply to the question, "What further suggestions he wished to make?" Captain Hamilton said—

"The only thing that occurs to me is to make the law as short as possible. What I always do is to sell the farm at once; the hold the tenant has is the six months allowed under ejectment for redemption, and that is one thing that, if it could be prevented, it would be of great advantage. In view of the combination among tenants banking their money, the only way is to show them that they must pay, whether they bank or not, and the only terror you can hold over the tenants is to say, 'I will sell your farm, and knock down your house, if necessary.'"

It seems to me that it is in the temper of men like Captain Hamilton, rather than in the grave, and dignified and apologetic spirit of great statesmen like Lord Grey, that the Government are introducing their proposals. We are face to face with coercion, that does not explain, does not apologize for itself—with coercion impenitent and unredeemed by a single touch of generosity. But I may venture to say also we are face to face with coercion in its unhonoured decrepitude, with coercion in the sere and yellow leaf, which the strong and wholesome breezes of democracry will promptly sweep for ever into the dust, which is its fitting resting place. It was hard to understand how the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham could support the Government in so miserable and so ruinous a policy, when one remembered the forcible words of a speech delivered only a year or two ago, in which he bitterly characterized the want of sympathy Lord Salisbury showed for the sufferings of the Irish tenants. The difference between all the circumstances when coercion was last resorted to, and the present situation, when no reason, substantial or otherwise, had been put forward for such a course, was enormous. I would wish to ask the Liberal Unionists, in the face of this enormous and striking contrast, whether it would not be wiser for them in time to reconsider the vote they are about to give; whether it would not be wiser for their own future interests; whether, apart from interest and on the higher ground of conscience, it would not be better in view of the pledges many of them had given again and again on public platforms throughout the country; and whether they are really determined to identify themselves with a failing and a hopeless cause, and resolved to go into the Division Lobby in support of a policy to which they saw the entire democracy of the United Kingdom were opposed. I do not know that I can more appropriately conclude these remarks than by quoting some weighty words from the noble speech delivered by Lord Grey in 1846 on the state of Ireland, in which he denounced the unwisdom and the hopelessness of the policy of coercion persisted in by the Conservative Ministry of that day. It seems to me that every word applies with equal force to the present Ministry on the present occasion. After pointing out that the Tory Ministry of 1846 refused to supply any real remedy for the miseries of Ireland, Lord Grey said—

> "Her Majesty's Government propose only to go on with measures such as those we have tried over and over again—measures which have allowed all the evils of Ireland to go on, as I have shown, and rather to get worse rather than better. They propose doggedly to pursue the old and beaten track. How, then, can they expect that it should lead to any but the accustomed termination? Two words, 'money' and 'coercion,' seem to describe the whole policy of the Government. . . . Both have been tried over and over again, and we see in the state of Ireland the most convincing proof that by themselves they hold out no hope of success."—(3 *Hansard*, [84] 1347-80.)

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory) said, the Government exercised a wise discretion in not putting up any of their Members to reply to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), because that speech completely pulverized the case of the Government. He said the case of the Government, but practically the Government had no case at all, and it could not be said even by their best friends that the Government had seriously tried to make a case. He had heard many speeches from the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), but he had never heard the right hon. Gentleman say anything yet—he had never yet heard the right hon. Gentleman say anything that was pointed, that was forcible, that was conclusive; and he thought when they considered the demands the Government were making on the House, no speech could be more feeble or more pointless than the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. The right hon. Gentleman took refuge in generalities. He said that Ireland was disorganized, and that expression seemed to serve him in good stead, for he used it several times during the course of a short speech. He said that juries were intimidated and that criminals were going about the country scot-free and unpunished, though Judges had declared they ought to be convicted. He (Mr. Macdonald) did not know what particular instance the right hon. Gentleman had in his mind—if the right hon. Gentleman had in his mind any instance at all with regard to the necessity for coercion, viewing the condition of the country. It seemed to him that the observation was made in that kind of vague talk in which the right hon. Gentleman usually indulged; but he remembered a case pretty distinctly in which an Orangeman committed a murder which was declared to be such by a Judge—and yet a jury of Orangemen acquitted the prisoner. Whether it was to meet such a case as that the Coercion Act was introduced he did not know, but if so, the right hon. Gentleman's friends in the North of Ireland would not be thankful to him.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Will the hon. Gentleman name the case he refers to?

MR. W. A. MACDONALD: The case of the Walkers. He did not think the case for the Government was very much mended by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. It seemed to him to be more like a speech in a young men's debating society, rather than of the character they were accustomed to listen to from Ministers. With regard to the Chief Secretary's description of the National League being merely an *alias* for the Land League, he pointed out that there was a vast distinction between the old Land League in operation in 1880-81, and the National League which existed now. Many of the most prominent persons associated with the old Land League were no longer connected with the National League. The persons who were connected with the National League were hon. Members of that House, and they could be brought to the bar of the House and of the public opinion of the country to account for their conduct if they pursued any course which deserved serious censure. He contended that no case had been made out for coercion. No exceptional crime existed in Ireland as a whole. There was disorder in a few districts, but this was solely due to the action of the landlords. If the Government, therefore, introduced reforms neutralizing the action of the landlords, they would get rid of whatever disturbance might exist. Hon. Members who contended that if the land system in Ireland were reformed or settled there would be an end to the demand for Home Rule, must be singularly ignorant of Irish history, and particularly of the events that had happened in that country during recent years. The very soul of Irish agitation for a long period had been the demand for self-government. In 1843 the great agitation of O'Connell was based, not on a reform of the land system, but on the repeal of the Union; and so in 1885 the hon. Member for the City of Cork, as the Leader of Home Rule, doubled his strength in that House on the same demand—he would say the indestructible demand—of the Irish people for self-government. That was still the great want of the people of Ireland, and until it was granted there would be no satisfactory settlement of the difficulty. Not a few hon. Members must have been puzzled to discover the real object of the coercive policy of the Government. It could not be the suppression of secret societies, for it had been shown that there were none, and it could not be in consequence of the general prevalence of crime, because since 1880 there had been an enormous decrease of crime in the country. This had been proved to the House by the production of very remarkable statistics, and the charges of the Judges to the Grand Juries throughout Ireland might be adduced in strong confirmation of the statement. It was, therefore, not the state of crime in Ireland which induced the Government to bring forward a Coercion Bill; neither could it be on account of Boycotting, because Lord Salisbury himself had told them that Boycotting was a thing which no law could deal with. Moreover, Boycotting was in full force last autumn; and, if the practice could be reached by coercive legislation, why was not such legislation proposed then? He could only suppose that the Coercion Bill was to be introduced in order to prevent the carrying out of the Plan of Campaign; but even if they made it too dangerous for the Irish Members to do so, the people themselves would be quite able to carry out the Plan, in spite of all their repressive enactments, by means of secret combinations. Further, he warned the Government that even if they obtained the exceptional powers which they demanded, they would never break the spirit of the Irish people, who had resisted all the efforts made through many centuries to accomplish their subjugation by force, and would still continue to do so. He trusted the House would not assent to the Motion of the Government, whose object it was to destroy all hope of peace in Ireland.

MR. HOWORTH (Salford, S.) said, the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down

(Mr. Macdonald) always secured the sympathetic attention of the House and set an example to some of his Friends in the earnestness with which he spoke, but which had carried the House a long way from the issue before it. He would like, with the permission of the Speaker, to draw the attention of the House to the very simple issue which was before it. They were not there to discuss hypothetical measures, which the hon. Member had presented, or to discuss that measure on its details. They were there to discuss the graver question, whether law and justice had been paralyzed in Ireland, and whether paralysis of law and justice justified the Government of this country in asking for exceptional advantages in prescribing great remedial measures. Before he addressed himself in a few words to the direct issue, he would like to say a word or two about the incident which occurred the previous evening, and in which he thought he should secure the sympathy of some hon. Members on that side of the House. It seemed to him that after the brilliant speech made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian that it was distinctly the duty of some Member on the Front Bench to get up and reply to it. He and others felt that the fact of the dinner hour intervening at 8 o'clock was not a sufficient excuse for Members on either Front Bench to refrain from speaking when some one of great experience was, and authority in the House had presented the case from the opposite side, not merely to the Benches they saw around them, but to the country. It seemed to him that it was not fair to their own people outside the House, nor quite fair to hon. Members who represented Conservatism there, that that speech should have gone by default for two or three hours, as it would appear to the country as if the great conjurer—who had conjured so often with the House—had no one on the Opposition Benches who was competent and willing to answer him. The only excuse, if it was an excuse, was that Ministers were addressing, possibly, Benches. They had in the Reporters' Gallery, however, friends who performed many services on many occasions, and who formed the conduit pipe between that House and the country, and who would take good care that whatever was worth repeating and reporting was reported duly the following morning. Hon. Members were not there to perform an intellectual and political parade. They were there to answer each other on the one side of the House and the other. Now, having said this, he should like to refer to one or two parts of the right hon. Gentleman's speech to which an answer had not yet been given. The right hon. Gentleman began his speech by a very dexterous side issue, which had nothing whatever to do with the issue before the House. He occupied one-third of his address in showing that the parallel between the cases of 1881 and 1887 did not hold good, and for this reason—that whilst he introduced his measure at the beginning of the Session, the present Government introduced it two months after the Session had commenced, and when they were in the middle of a discussion on the affairs of the country. The fact that the Bill of 1881 was introduced at the beginning of the Session, when there was, therefore, more time to discuss it, seemed to him to demand less instead of more urgency than when such a Bill was introduced later on. Besides, two months, it must be remembered, had been occupied in preparing the machinery necessary before they could pass the Bill which they deemed to be most essential for the community if it was to be preserved from disintegration. This was the preliminary part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech; but he went on to challenge the Government that the state of Ireland did not justify exceptional advantages being given to the Government to carry a measure of repression. He should quote a few extracts more powerful and more judicial than anything hitherto laid before the House. The authorities he would quote were in an absolutely neutral position. He proposed to read two or three short sentences from the addresses of several of the Irish Judges to the Grand Juries in Ireland, not two, or three, or 10 years ago, but within the last few weeks; and he believed the extracts would prove the best epitome available of what was the real condition of things in Ireland just now. He began by quoting the charge of Mr. Justice O'Brien. Addressing the Grand Jury at Ennis, County Clare, on February 27, Mr. Justice O'Brien said—

> "I find by the returns compiled by the Constabulary that even with regard to the undetected crime there is a large increase since the time

of the last Summer Assizes over the corresponding period of last year. . . . From the returns before me I have come to the conclusion that law, to a great extent, has ceased to exist in the county. The common rule of obedience which exist in every civilized State is abrogated and replaced by an influence fatal to industry, fatal to prosperity, fatal to every interest connected with the welfare of the community, and an influence that is becoming dominant here elsewhere through a want of courage and firmness in meeting it."

The same Judge, addressing the Grand Jury of Kerry, on March 9, said—

> "I grieve that it is not in my power to announce any change for the better in the state of this county. On the contrary, there exists even at this moment an extraordinary state of things of an unprecedented description—nothing short, in fact, of a state of open war with all forms of authority, and even, I may say without exaggeration, with the necessary institutions of civilized life. These returns before me present a picture such as can hardly be found in any country that has passed the confines of natural society and entered upon the duties and relations and acknowledged obligations of civilized life. The law is defeated—perhaps I should rather say has ceased to exist."

Mr. Justice Lawson, addressing the Grand Jury of County Mayo at Castlebar, on March 10, expressed regret—

> "That he could not congratulate them on the condition of the country. So far as he could judge from the official returns, the county appeared to be in a state of disorganization. The existing state of things was most unsatisfactory, and, according to the report made to him, approached as near to a revolt and rebellion against the existing authorities as anything short of a civil war could do."

These were appalling statements to which he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) would address himself, instead of indulging in rhetorical by-play. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would avoid appealing to the elaborated rhetoric, to which he had possibly devoted many hours of preparation, and rather bring to bear on those extracts that spontaneous genius which was at his command—extracts, however, which he would not have the courage to contravene. These statements of the Judges presented a state of things so terrible in the condition of Irish society that they must feel that it was not only the duty of the Government but of every Member of that House to assist the Government to find some way out of it unless society was to become disintegrated. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) had laid down the extravagant and extraordinary theory that people were not to obey or be controlled by a law when they were not in sympathy with it. What, he should like to know, would have become of the Slave Trade of the West Indies if Parliament had not gone directly in the teeth of the prejudices of the slave owners. At every turn in their history they had been continuously legislating for the great benefit of the people in the teeth of the prejudices—the immoral prejudices of large portions of the people. Another statement from the Benches opposite was really remarkable, and it has been repeated as if it had some peculiar virtue in it—that no Act for the purpose of restoring order had hitherto been passed in this House by a Party vote. The fact was true; and why was something like a Party vote about to be exercised on this occasion? Because this was the first time in the history of our country that a large and responsible Party, with great traditions, found itself allied with the forces of disorder. It seemed to him that we were in a very critical condition indeed, when a great Party like the Liberal Party was found adding its weight to those who would like to see anarchy produced in Ireland, and refused to assist the Government in passing a law which was called for, not by partizan opinion, but by the opinion of independent observers like the Judges. Apart from these considerations, it seemed to him that they were bound to accept the Government for the time time being as the best judge of what was requisite when the question was one of maintaining order in any part of Her Majesty's Dominions. If the Government made a grievous mistake in miscalculating the position, they would be held responsible presently when they were brought before the bar of public opinion. He thought it was the duty of all hon. Members to support the Government when they were asked that exceptional advantages should be given to this measure, and to vote in favour of a proposal which was rational, which was fair, and which commended itself to the judgment of every man who retained some love of order and of peace.

Mr. JACOB BRIGHT (Manchester, S.W.): There have been many remarkable circumstances in connection with this debate; but I think one of the most remarkable is the exhibition of self-restraint which we find in hon. Members opposite. It appears to me that the Government, as a preliminary to passing a repressive measure for Ireland, had passed a repressive measure for their own Followers. My hon. Friend the Member for South Salford (Mr. Howorth), however, will not subject himself to that discipline, although one would have thought he might have done it more easily than others, because he so often instructs us with his pen. Instead of subjecting himself to that discipline, he, himself, becomes a disciplinarian, and he undertakes to lecture the Bench behind which he sits for a gross neglect of duty. Well, I think there is some reason for the complaint he makes of that Bench; for I have never known, on an occasion so important as this, so many able speeches from one side of the House, and so very few from the other. The question before us to-night is one of great simplicity, and is perfectly intelligible. It is, whether we shall grant to the Government the whole time of the House, in order that it may pass a Bill which it could not readily pass unless we granted them that favour. The peculiarity of it is, that nobody knows anything about the provisions of the Bill. I have a strong feeling that there is no Legislative Assembly in the world that has any degree of self-respect which would bind itself hand and foot in favour of passing a measure which it has never seen. I see my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) before me. He is a reasonable man. He recently belonged to a rational Party. May I not ask him whether it would not have been a manly and respectful course towards this House, that the Government, before asking for the whole time of the House, should have introduced their Bill, and should have read it a first time? I do not know whether there are precedents for the course which the Government are taking; but, whether there be precedents or not, this course is contrary to reason and common sense. It must be allowed that, considering the gravity of the occasion, no case has been made out. When the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) sat down, that was the first thing my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley) said, and in the speech of the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) there was scarcely a sentence endeavouring to make out a case. The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Brodrick) certainly did more than his Predecessors; but I understood that his case was mainly that there are combinations in Ireland that ought to be put down. Then I seemed to get a sort of explanation why the Government had been so reticent. They know that there are millions of men in Great Britain who will have no sympathy whatever with the Government, when they find that their object is to put down combinations against excessive rent, seeing that the poor tenant has no tribunal to which to appeal. The Government is less original than most Governments. It has less courage than most Governments. It scarcely dares to take responsibility for its own acts. It is always leaning on the broad shoulders of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). The Leader of the House seemed to excuse the course he was taking because the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian introduced a measure of coercion in 1881. The Party opposite and the Government may be wise—may be right in following precedents which have been set by the late Prime Minister; but I will undertake to say that even he is not infallible, and they may follow him sometimes when he has been totally wrong. In the precedent of 1881 I believe the Liberal Government was utterly wrong. It was preparing to pass a great land measure for Ireland; but, before it passed that measure, the Government had exasperated the Irish people to the utmost degree by taking the course of giving precedence to a Coercion Bill. Now, I undertake to say that what the Liberal Government did in 1881 had much to do with strengthening the hands of the Nationalist Party; and I believe what the Government is doing now will have precisely the same effect. My right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) last night declared his belief that we required a remedial measure, and we required also a measure for the strengthening of the Criminal Law. When I heard the speech of my right hon. Friend I was reminded very much of the clever people we see in circuses riding a couple of horses at the same time. He seemed to me to have one foot upon the Tory, and another foot upon the Liberal, horse; but I could not help thinking that he leaned rather more kindly to the Tory horse than to the Liberal one. He made an extraordinary statement—a statement which he would not have made unless a great change had come over the temper of his mind. He said that in 1881 he had supported a coercive measure; that he had supported a coercive measure in 1882; and that he would have supported a coercive measure in 1885 if the Government had not broken down. Now, the intimate Friends of the right hon. Gentleman know perfectly well that he supported the measure in 1881 with the utmost reluctance. They have an absolute belief that, if he had had his way, he would have said—"Give us a remedial measure first." Even last night he admitted that the coercive measure had failed, and that the remedial measure had failed to do much of the good it might have done if it had stood alone. But with regard to 1885, we have heard a speech to-night from my right hon. Friend the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), who knows a good deal of what took place in 1885; and it was then currently stated, and, as he says, never denied, that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham either gave in his resignation to the Prime Minister, or threatened to do it, because of the attempt to enforce another coercive measure. Now, this will be one of the most memorable Sessions that any man in this House can remember, and it will be memorable in this way—that we have a Tory Government supported by so-called Liberals, and that that Tory Government has twice asked the whole time of the House—the first time in order that it may gag the Imperial Parliament, and the second time in order that it may forge fetters for the Irish people. It seems to me that the subject would form an admirable cartoon for some of the pictorial papers of the day I voted in 1881 against the coercion measure of the Liberal Government. I have to make no apology with regard to that. I voted with a very small group of Members—I am not sure whether there were more than half-a-dozen English and Scotch Members who went into the Lobby at the time. I shall vote to-night against this attempt to pass a coercive measure; but I shall not vote with half-a-dozen Members. I shall vote with a great and powerful Party. In that short time—it is only six years ago—in that period of six years, we have made enormous and rapid progress. At that rate of progress, the time is very near at hand when Ireland will be governed by reason and by justice, and not by the rude force of coercive legislation which the Government to-night is endeavouring to apply.

SIR HENRY JAMES (Bury, Lancashire): I desire in the brief period during which I shall occupy the attention of the House to state the reasons which cause me to differ from the Amendment of my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), and also from the reasons which he gave in support of it. It will be my endeavour to find reasons for that difference, not so much in questions of policy as in divergence in respect to the principles which ought to govern all who apply themselves to the consideration of this question. I am glad to mark that my right hon. Friend, in the terms of his Amendment, does not for one moment dispute that it is necessary to strengthen the law. He makes no objection to the proposition which the Government has submitted to the House that the condition of Ireland is such that it is necessary to strengthen the law and the machinery which enforces it; but the Amendment directly and distinctly states that the time has not yet come when that alteration in the law should take place. My right hon. Friend, in his Amendment, only asks for postponement—that the measure for strengthening the law should be put off until remedial measures are passed. Thus the question at issue between us ought to be a narrow one. But I am afraid, from the reasons which he has given in support of his Amendment, that there are questions of grave difference between my right hon. Friend and those who support him, on the one hand, and those Members who support the Government, on the other. I have sought to learn from my right hon. Friend what are the motives which have induced him to move this Amendment. He has told us, in plain and distinct words, that the object of his Amendment is to render support to those combinations which he says are the sole protection of the tenants in Ireland. I ask my right hon. Friend whether there are any combinations over which he desires to throw the protection of this Amendment, save the National League and those who have combined to promote the Plan of Campaign? I know of no other; and so I understand that the Amendment, which has received the highest sanction in the enthusiastic support of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), is an Amendment moved on behalf of the National League and the Plan of Campaign. In order to make clear two points of difference between my right hon. Friend and myself, I will call attention to one other proposition which has been submitted to the House. He has told us what are the objects of his Amendment. He is anxious to redress grievances, as he calls them, in preference to punishing offenders. These are the words of my right hon. Friend—

> "I am less anxious, anxious as I am, to secure vengeance against 100 or 200 ruffians, than I am to secure the rightful and humane treatment of the poor tenants in Ireland."

The issue is plain and distinct. Whether there are 100 or 200 ruffians, or 500 or 600, can, in principle, make no difference whatever. It would be petty and technical to discuss his proposition on such a ground. Nor is the number of tenants that may be affected, the question which my right hon. Friend wishes to submit to the House. I will give him a thousand, or let him take any number he chooses. I say that it is a fair construction of what my right hon. Friend said that he would put aside, at least for a time, the necessity of bringing criminals to justice whatever their number may be—that he will be careless of either their detection or their punishment until a remedial measure is introduced into this House. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Hon. Gentlemen behind me shout an emphatic "No!" But these are the terms of my right hon. Friend's Amendment. ["No, no!"] The proposition is made in his own language. [An hon. MEMBER: No; the right hon. Gentleman said "less anxious."] My right hon. Friend said that he would allow the ruffians, be their number what it may—["No, no!"]—to go unpunished until a remedial measure is passed. If that be not his purpose, there is no one who would be more ready to disavow it than my right hon. Friend. What he has stated, he has stated with all the honesty of his nature, and I know he will adhere to it. Let me repeat it again in his own language—

> "I am less anxious, anxious as I am to secure vengeance against 100 or 200 ruffians, than I am to secure the rightful and humane treatment of the poor tenants in Ireland."

That is the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. He holds that these ruffians, number what they may ["No, no!"] ought to go unpunished until a remedial measure is passed. ["No!"] If that is not his purpose, why has this Amendment been moved? It has been moved for the purpose of securing remedial measures first, and then proceeding to the detection and punishment of crime. I am sure my right hon. Friend would be the first to wish that our friendship should not prevent me from discussing with him closely and critically what his proposition really is. To him it means simply that so many persons whom he calls "ruffians" should go undetected and unpunished. ["No!"] That is the proposition which my right hon. Friend has submitted to the House. ["No!"] I can explain his words in no other way. Sir, to my mind, there are other and graver considerations. For myself, I admit that it is of comparatively small moment that individual criminals—in some cases—should go unpunished; for instance, if from want of testimony, or the perverseness of juries, or the individual action of jurors—or from whatever form it may occur—criminals here or criminal there go unpunished because conviction cannot be obtained. That is a comparatively small matter, but if the escape of criminals be systematic; if it proceeds from organized action, then it affects, not only the criminals, but also the State. It becomes not only a question of the criminal who escapes, but of those who are the victims of crime. For every one of these criminals who, upon the theory and suggestion of my right hon. Friend shall, for a time at least, continue his career unchecked and unpunished, represents not only the impunity of individuals who might be named in numbers, but the over-awing of the whole community of the loyal and well-disposed. It represents a life of terror and misery when no man's life and no man's property are safe, and when the hours of every passing day must be hours of fear and wretchedness. We claim not only that criminals should be punished, but that the innocent and loyal subjects of the Queen should be protected. [*A laugh.*] A sentiment like that is jeered and laughed at, and I am asked to be a party to an alliance with such men. I decline to join in an alliance with men who can laugh and jeer at the suggestion that it is the first duty of every Government—of every civilized State—to afford all the protection that the law and the authority of the Government can afford to those who require protection. There are other considerations besides the protection of the weak, which my right hon. Friend ought to have placed in the scale of the balance he held between these two classes of measures. It is not only the protection of individuals who are without protection against organized combination, unless the law should afford it to them which has to be considered; but a great issue is raised now in respect to the very character of the community in which the law is to be administered. It is not only that the state of Ireland ought, I think, to create alarm in the minds of men; it is the countenance that has been given to those acts of crime and illegality that alarm the minds of those who are anxious for the maintenance of the law. We have heard something like a distinct expression of praise of illegality. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Fife (Mr. Asquith), in the remarkable speech he made last night—a speech which was devoid of promise only because it was so full of the realization of success—in that most able speech my hon. and learned Friend reminded us that we are legislators, and that we are not moral censors. But I must remind some of my hon. Friends who sit around him that there is a danger of being worse than moral censors, and that is of being immoral censors. When I hear of hon. Members saying that, whilst they care not that the Plan of Campaign is illegal and criminal they give it their moral sanction, I agree with my hon. and learned Friend that it would be well if they would recollect that they are legislators, and not irresponsible censors. But there is a treatment of this combination which I regard as being worse than an express sanction—it is the conduct of men, on many of whom grave responsibility rests, some of whom have been Ministers of the Crown and know the responsibility of having to maintain law and order. Desiring to speak with the greatest consideration of my old colleagues, I wish they had spoken a little more plainly on the subject, and given support to the maintenance of the Queen's authority by condemning what they admit to be illegal. It is said you may condemn by faint praise; so you may also praise by faint condemnation. Those who would convert the men who commit crime and illegal acts into "village Hampdens" are men on whose shoulders the greatest responsibility lies. The question now is not one of mere figures; it is not whether the crime we have to deal with is of this character or that. We have not only to detect 100 or 200 criminals or ruffians. Differing from my right hon. Friend, we have not only to protect those who are unable to protect themselves, unless covered by the law's great and powerful authority; but we have here to try this great question—when illegality is rife, when illegality is supported by express words and by covert words, when, for the first time, the Queen's authority is repelled with contempt under a covert alliance with men who have been Ministers of the Crown—are we to make the admission that nothing is to be done, or are we to stand here with the confession that we have been bullied by anarchy into dealing with measures of remedial legislation? [*Cries of* "Oh!" *from the Irish Members.*] I scarcely expect the assent of hon. Members below the Gangway to that proposition. I could not suppose for a moment that it would be accepted by those who are anxious that no steps should be taken to recall the authority of the law and of the Crown, when the law is defied and treated with contempt, and when it is admitted that the Queen's writ does not run in many parts of Ireland. It is not from that point of view we have to deal with this question. The issue is very clear. We are dealing with a very grave and serious question which affects the very character of the nation. There are some of us who think the first duty of the Government is to protect the subjects of the Queen by the law. We admit that there is a duty cast upon the Government to redress wrongs and grievances; and the question is whether the proposition which has been made to the House that your first duty is, before you restore law into its proper position and authority, to consider the grievance of a class, or whether, on the other hand, your duty is not first to reassert the deposed authority of the Crown, and then to proceed, in a generous spirit, with the remedial measures. It has been said, in support of the Amendment, that you must not punish the crime that proceeds from the demand for a redress of grievances—that you must first remove the grievances which are alleged to be the causes of crime; that you must satisfy the demands made, and only then can you proceed to frame new laws or improve the machinery of the existing law for the enforcement of the punishment of offenders. What a monstrous proposition, for see what it means? Let there be a demand for the redress of a grievance, just or unjust—although it may be assumed to be just — and it will be inferred that you will not give redress unless it be supported by crimes; and then, if there be criminals to be dealt with, then the grievances of a class, the redress of which is demanded by criminals, will be redressed, and that upon the terms which they dictate, and after all this has been done you may begin to vindicate the authority of the law. Thus, thec oncession of the principle of the Amendment creates demands for the remedy of class grievances, and creates the criminals who will thrive unpunished upon the grievances. If that is so, the principle involved in the issue is immunity from the punishment of crime for political reasons—an immunity which is inconsistent with the maintenance of government in the State. There is nothing so disastrous to the maintenance of good order as the knowledge that impunity for crime exists. I am anxious to quote, on this subject, a high authority whose words will have the full approbation of my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt). I believe I shall be able to show that I am supported step by step in the proposition I desire to lay before the House, by the words of my right hon. Friend. Perhaps my right hon. Friend will recollect the views he entertained and expressed in 1882, and I think that it may be of advantage to many hon. Members who sit on this side of the House to refer to them. In 1882, my right hon. Friend said—

> "The main cause of crimes is the expectation of impunity—an expectation which, in Ireland, is too well founded upon terrorism and its consequences."

My contention is that the impunity which is suggested by the Amendment, and which is involved in the proposition that you should never punish criminals whose crime may proceed from a demand for a redress of grievances until the grievance itself is removed, is an impunity founded too much upon the terrorism which exists in Ireland at this moment. The hon. and learned Member for Fife (Mr. Asquith), whose speech I refer to with pleasure on account of our long personal association, asked what must be the feelings of the Liberal Unionists now, and suggested that we must be suffering much from the pangs of conscience. He asked who was the director of our consciences? I say with pride that for years the director of my political conscience was the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian; he formed, to a great extent, the political views I held; and in the campaign of 1882 it was from him we learnt most of what formed our conscientious views of what was best to be done on behalf of the people of Ireland—especially for those who needed the protection and the support of the law. It is from what I learned from my right hon. Friend, that I believed that my conscience will have no such pangs as my hon. and learned Friend spoke of. My right hon. Friend then said—

> "Am I to be told that such intimidation—not trivial intimidation, but intimidation in furtherance of the objects of illegal combination—intimidation which does not express the silly and foolish wish of an individual, but the set purpose of large and powerful bodies of men; am I to be told that that is one of the objects beneficial to the public welfare, for the sake of which we are to look with tolerance and indulgence on the failure of the Jury system?"

I remember the appeal which my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian made to the constituencies. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] I trust there is nobody who supposes that I enter into this controversy with a view of showing that some of my former Colleagues have changed their opinion. I believe that any Member of Parliament—and especially one who belongs to the Liberal Party—may, from the necessities of political life, rightly change his views from time to time on questions of policy. It is a petty and paltry argument to call attention to words spoken here, and words spoken there, and to show how widely they differ from previous utterances. If that creed had been accepted, the Liberal Party would have lacked its flexibility, and would never have been able to adopt its policy to the necessities of the people, and would have been unable to accomplish the good which it has effected. If our policy had been an invariable and fixed one, it would not have been worthy of the Liberal Party. But on questions, not of policy, but relating to great principles and the necessities of government, there can be, and there ought to be, no change. No one can believe that [the demands of policy can ever change the fundamental principles upon which government should be conducted. My right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle said the other night that he was very unwilling to draw an indictment against the landlords; but he certainly drew as grave an indictment as it was possible for anyone to draw against those who are now his Colleagues. Wittingly or unwittingly, he brought a most grievous charge against those who are acting with him. He charged them with having for five years, as a powerful Government, acted directly in opposition to Liberal principles. I do not know whether my right hon. Friends will entrust me with their defence. If so, I will do my best for them; but there are, undoubtedly, two or three cases which present extreme difficulty. There is, first, the case of my right hon. Friend the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre). How to defend him I scarcely know. I heard him this evening explain the limits of his personal connection with measures of coercion. He told us that he was innocent of the charges made against him and other right hon. Members, and that in his heart—in his inmost heart—he had never been a supporter of any exceptional measures for the suppression of crime.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I did not say that, I said that I had supported by speech the first Coercion Bill.

SIR HENRY JAMES: Yes; but in a most reluctant manner.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I said nothing of the kind. I said that I supported the first Coercion Bill of 1881 in a speech, and that it was after that that I refused to support similar legislation.

SIR HENRY JAMES: I am sure that my client is right and that his advocate is wrong, and I will accept his instruction. But my right hon. Friend distinctly stated that, after giving that vote in 1881, he reflected, he visited Ireland, went among those who were suffering under the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and then expressed to the late Mr. Forster his conviction that coercion must never be applied again. He knew then that our measures ought to have been of a remedial character, and that repressive measures should have been abandoned. The right hon. Gentleman, in fact, poses as a penitent who has discovered the error of his ways. But what strikes me with amazement is this. Although he says that in 1881 he gave a vote in favour of coercion, he has found himself unable to take that course since. He says that he lamented the vote which he then gave; and yet, although the time that has elapsed since the speech of my right hon. Friend, this afternoon, has been short, I have been able to discover that in the year 1882 he recorded no less than 87 votes in favour of coercion—which is a very fair amount for a penitent. I am not complaining that my right hon. Friend or any Member should change his opinion on a question of policy; but when Members do so, had they not better say so? I will now leave my right hon. Friend, in his state of penitence, to account for the 87 votes which he gave in 1882. But there is a worse case yet, there is another criminal—my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) — who offered me a few minutes ago a general retainer. What am I to say for him? I can only offer him advice, and I advise him that the only safe course to pursue is not to plead to my right hon. Friend's indictment. I advise him to remain mute, not of malice, but out of regard to truth. I know that the person remaining mute is judged to be contumacious, but still this offence will not be much regarded by my right hon. Friend. I know, too, that the punishment for contumaciousness of that kind is that you have heavy weights placed upon your chest; but I am sure my right hon. Friend must already have felt some very heavy weights in the neighbourhood of that part of his heart which covers his conscience. Let me recall to my right hon. Friend, before he undertakes his own defence, an incident which occurred in the year 1882. I had the great advantage of constantly acting with my right hon. Friend in 1882; I very often accepted his directions. In fact, to use the phraseology of a sport, he used to put me on as a change bowler whenever he wanted to take himself off. And so I learned his style of delivery, and, although I sometimes thought that it was a little high-pitched, I recognized that it was very effective. Well, I remember that on the 14th of June, 1882, precedence having been given to the Crimes Bill for the purpose of hurrying it through the House, a Bill called the Arrears of Rent Bill to give relief to those who had not received the full benefits of the Land Act—a Bill which was, no doubt, much required, and which was a remedial measure—was placed after, and not before, the Crimes Bill. On the 14th of June, before proceeding with the Crimes Bill, the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) rose in his place, and appealed to my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby to delay the measure for one single day in order that steps might be taken for the relief of evicted tenants, on whose behalf the hon. Member told a far more serious tale than can be told now. My right hon. Friend had then the responsibility of Office, and an appeal being made to him to stay the Crimes Act for one single day in order to enable the Arrears Bill to be brought in, what was his reply? "No," said my right hon. Friend—I wish I could imitate him either in words or gesture. He is but scantily reported, but I will reiterate the effect of his words —"No," said my right hon. Friend in effect—"not for one single day will I stay the Crimes Act. I admit the truth of all that has been said as to the necesssty for the Arrears Bill; I know the hardship and misery that are being inflicted by evictions, but there is a paramount duty placed upon me—I have to maintain law and order in this country. I have to take care, before relief is given to a special class that the law is enforced and that the condition of the population shall cease to be one of terror and wretchedness in consequence of the impunity with which crime can now be committed in Ireland." Is not the spirit that animated my right hon. Friend then the spirit that ought to animate him to-day? I ask him to revert in thought to the position which he took up when it was his duty to administer the law. If he stood to-night in the same position in which he stood in 1882, would not, I ask him, his line of conduct be precisely the same? I ask my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby now, to be careless of obtaining the advantage of a moment—I ask him, and men like him to consider that there are greater considerations than obtaining cheers from any quarter of the House. I cannot pass, unnoticed, the statement which my right hon. Friend made in support of his indictment—that all Crimes Acts have been useless and have failed. I admit that with regard to the policy of the Act of 1881 he proved his case, but he knows that that Act was admittedly a mistaken and an ill-conceived Act. It was not a Crimes Prevention Act, it was a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. It was an Act which could succeed only by terrifying men. [An hon. MEMBER: It did not terrify anybody.] I agree that it did not terrify those it was intended to terrify. Hon. Members played their game with the cards on the table, and did not run away; but after one year the error which had been made was remedied. The measure of my right hon. Friend was conceived and drafted not on account of that sad and terrible occurrence of the 6th of May. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *from the Front Opposition Bench.*] My hon. Friend the Member for Hackney disputes that statement. Well, I know when the Bill was drafted, for I saw it on Sunday the 7th of May, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, in print. I have heard the statement made that that Bill was drafted and pressed through the House on account of the dreadful occurrence which happened in the Phœnix Park. It was nothing of the kind. The Bill had previously proceeded from the Cabinet, and had received its sanction, and the first draft of it was placed before me on Sunday the 7th of May. Therefore that Bill was framed to meet the wants of Ireland, and did not result from the Phœnix Park assassinations. I want the House to see, for a moment, the effect of that Bill. Sir, in the six months before it came into operation the number of agrarian crimes in Ireland was 2,548; I take the corresponding period of 1885, when that Act was still operative, and I find the number had fallen to 373, and out of those as nearly as possible one-half were merely the sending of threatening letters. I am told that has nothing to do with this Crimes Act. But those who had the greatest experience of that Act, as its operations drew to a close, came to the conclusion that its wise and equitable provisions ought to be renewed in order to maintain peace and order in Ireland. I believe it is true that Lord Spencer said Ireland could not be governed without it; and I know it was true that though statements were made that the Conservative Party would not support the renewal of the Act when my right hon. Friend for whose defence I am still acting, in the month of November, 1885, on the eve of the General Election, made a celebrated speech, he took the same view. In that speech there is one sentence which, as long as I live, I shall never quote, lest it should annoy my right hon. Friend. The effect of that speech was that in stating his charge against the Conservative Party he said they were not prepared to retain the wise and equitable provisions of the Crimes Act, but they were going, for Party purposes, to abandon their loyal fellow subjects in Ireland. I know by whom I am to be followed, and I apologize to the House for the long time I have occupied its attention. I can only say that to me there are graver considerations involved either than the treatment of Ireland or this Amendment, which I fear is being fought on strictly Party lines. Sir, this is a question that affects not only the Irish criminal, not only the Irish peaceable subject, it is one which affects every member of the community living in this country; but there must be men in the furthest dependency of the Crown, men who turn their thoughts to their home and ask themselves whether—in that central power which controls not with physical force the vast possessions of the Queen—whether there will not be men amongst them, the great majority of this House, who will not do their best to preserve the integrity of the Empire and the authority of the law.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): Sir, I believe that the first duty of a man who has been unjustly accused and who has been properly acquitted, is to return thanks to the most able counsel by whom he has been defended. That that defence has been able, and that it has been successful, I should be the last to deny, or, by disputing it, to cast any imputation upon, or do any injury to, the professional reputation of my right hon. and learned Friend. I remember a story connected with the trial of Horne Tooke. He was defended by Erskine, and thinking that Erskine was making a very bad defence, he sent him a note, saying—"If you go on in this way, I'll be hanged if I don't defend myself"; to which Erskine replied in another note, "you will be hanged if you do." I am content to leave my defence in the hands of my right hon. and learned Friend. But we have more serious matters to discuss, and as it is getting late, I think we had better come to the Resolution and the Amendment, upon which no very great light I think has been thrown by the speech of my right hon. and learned Friend. I always think it is best, in a great controversy of this kind, to try to understand and to state fairly the position of your adversary, and then to state your own. If I understand the proposition laid down by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, it is this—that the first duty of civilized society is to enforce the law. Is that a correct statement of the proposition of the hon. Gentleman opposite? I take it that it is. But let us clearly understand that the position has been fairly stated. It will be observed that it is a general proposition without limitation. There is no question as to what the character of the law is, or whether it be a law that works justice or injustice. It is a general proposition that it is the duty of the Government to enforce the law, because it is the law. To that sentiment, in that general form, I oppose an absolute denial. If the law be a good law and a just law, it is the first duty of civilized society to enforce the law; but if, on the other hand, it is a bad law, which works injustice, it is not the first duty of civilized society to enforce that law. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *from the Ministerial Benches and interruption.*] I have stated your proposition; allow me to state mine. It is not the first duty of civilized society to enforce that law; but the first duty of civilized society is to abrogate or amend the law. I desire no fairer issue than that. To enforce the law whether it is just or unjust is the Tory principle; to amend and reform laws which are unjust is the principle of the Liberal Party. It must be so; and thus I will answer my right hon. and learned Friend on the whole proposition contained in his speech. If it be the fact that the crime with which you have to deal is the direct and immediate outcome of an unjust law, surely if you amend the law *non constat,* that any coercion will be wanted at all. You may deny that crime is the outcome of the law; but if it be the fact that it is the outcome of an unjust law, the best way to get rid of crime which is due to an unjust law is to amend the law, and thus get rid of the cause of crime. That is a clear proposition, and I am ready to take my stand upon it. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *in which some hon. Members on the Opposition Benches joined.*]

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Surely on one's own side of the House one might expect courtesy. I am referring to the interruptions of a Liberal Unionist, who ought to be content with the other advantages he possesses. I will illustrate my meaning by an instance from my own experience in early political life, when my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) sat with me below the Gangway opposite. At that time Trades Unions were practically illegal. The law of conspiracy had been so strained by the Judges that almost every combination of the labouring classes was criminal, and very cruel and unjust sentences were passed. I was associated with my right hon. and learned Friend in obtaining an alteration of that law, and in taking away the criminal action attributed to such combinations by the Law of Conspiracy, which was a most unjust law. But what would have been the attitude of my right hon. and learned Friend if at that time any Government had introduced a Coercion Bill more effectually to suppress trade unionism. We took a contrary course; we first addressed ourselves to altering the unjust law. That is the course which we desire to follow now. I will not pursue that part of the subject further, because it was fully dealt with yesterday in the admirable and consummate speech of the hon. and learned Member for East Fife (Mr. Asquith), who is, I believe, a pupil of my right hon. and learned Friend. I congratulate my right hon. and learned Friend upon his pupil; and I feel that the principles which the hon. and learned Member for East Fife has enunciated are those which were entertained by my right hon. and learned Friend in his early youth; and I will only say that the hon. and learned Member for East Fife appears to have acquired all the earlier and better manner of my right hon. and learned Friend. Of course, it is a great grief to us to find some of our Friends in disagreement with us on this subject. I do not see my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) here to-night. We are not, it seems, to have his support. But I confess—and I bear in mind—the blessing which has been pronounced upon those who expect nothing—namely, that they are not disappointed. We had no right to expect the support of my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham. Last autumn, immediately after the General Election, and on the formation of the present Government, the right hon. Gentleman very accurately described his political position. He said—

> "I am not going to vote for an Amendment the carrying of which will be equivalent to a vote of censure on the Government. I am not going to do anything which will turn out this Government."

[*Cries of* "Go on!"] I will go on, Sir; I cannot remember the exact words but it is to this effect. "I will do nothing which will in any way be an advantage to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian." I had no wish to state that; but as hon. Gentlemen opposite seem to have desired that I should do so, I have no objection to comply with their wishes. Then it is quite plain that whatever this Bill was, whether there were to be remedial measures or no remedial measures, no Motion whatever, to disturb the present Government, would meet with the support of my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham. Last night, the right hon. Member for West Birmingham undertook to explain the views of the democracy of England on the subject of coercion. Well, Sir, with the greatest respect and regard for my right hon. Friend, I must tell him that the Liberal Party do not recognize in him the right to declare the opinions of the English democracy. The English Liberal Party look more for their "light and leading" in a different direction; they look to the statesmen whom my right hon. Friend abjures and refuses to follow. What the English democracy think of the views of my right hon. Friend we are able to some extent to judge. We have tested it lately in a borough in Lancashire. My noble Friend the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) and I are personally and politically connected with the great county of Derby, and we have heard the opinion to-day of Derbyshire. My right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham is a man of great abilities and great capacity, but he is engaged, at this moment, in what my hon. Friend the Member for Manchester (Mr. Jacob Bright) very properly described as a dangerous performance in political equitation. He is trying to ride two horses at once; he is trying to pose as the confidential adviser and authoritative agent of a Tory Government, and at the same time he claims to be the chief monitor and sole dictator of the Liberal Party. Well, it is impossible to reconcile those two positions. My right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham must make his election between the two. What claim has my right hon. Friend to speak for the Liberal Party? Of course I may be answered—"What's in a name?" [An hon. Member: Hear hear!] The hon. Member is quite right. We, at the present moment have a Liberal Chancellor of the Exchequer. Of the Tory edifice the Chancellor of the Exchequer is the pillar within while my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham is the buttress outside. In that way the Government is well supported. But the doctrine which was preached last night by my right hon. Friend was not always the Birmingham doctrine. There is another right hon. Member—I mean no disrespect to my right hon. Friend; but he will pardon me for saying—a greater Member for Birmingham who has spoken on this question, and who had and has great claim to represent the opinions of the democracy of England. Well, Sir, speaking in the year 1867—[*A laugh.*] I have thought that hon. Members opposite consider that previous opinions ought to be quoted; no matter at what time they may have been expressed, and why I have mentioned the date is, that it was in the very height of the Fenian insurrection when Ireland was in the most dangerous condition that any man has ever known, and compared with which its position now is tranquillity and peace. Speaking at that time the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) used these words—

> "I entirely disagree with those who, when any crisis or trouble arises in Ireland, say you must, first of all, preserve order, you must put down all disloyalty and disobedience to law and assert the supremacy of the Government, and then consider the grievances complained of. This has been the case in Ireland for a number of years, and the great preserver has been the gallows and the gibbet."

That was the Birmingham doctrine in those days. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) passed in review the policy and the acts of the Administration of which he was himself a Member. He condemns all remedial measures. He says of remedial measures that they have all been failures, and there is only one part of the policy of the Government for which he expressed unmitigated admiration, and that was the coercion policy of the time. He does not agree with my right hon. and learned Friend in the distinction he drew between the Habeas Corpus Act of 1881 and the Crimes Act of 1882. The Habeas Corpus Act of 1881, he says, was a capital Act, because it put the Leaders into prison. [An hon. Member: Hear, hear!] The hon. Member opposite is of that opinion, and I presume he expects that that will be the object and effect of the Bill the Government is about to introduce. But I think that expression of opinion was a rather extraordinary one coming from my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham. I think that, when he expressed his admiration of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and of the putting of all the Leaders of the Irish

Party into prison, there is one man who ought to have been here to listen to the expression of the somewhat tardy repentance of my right hon. Friend—a man whose premature decease is regarded on all sides of the House with regret. Mr. Forster, I think, ought to have been here to hear that expression of opinion. The whirligig of time brings about strange things, and certainly a more extraordinary statement never came from a more remarkable quarter. I do not agree in the opinion of the policy of the then Government that is formed by the right hon. Gentleman. I admit that the Act of 1881 did not completely succeed, and I will say a word directly as to the causes of its failure; but that the Coercion Act failed in the objects it had in view I do entirely agree, and in that I have the concurrence, frequently publicly expressed, of Lord Spencer, who had to administer it. But how was that Coercion Act to which my right hon. Friend refers with so much exultation, and the shutting up of the Leaders of the Irish Party, treated by hon. Members opposite? I remember a speech of the right hon. Member the Chief Secretary for Ireland in which he described that Act as infamous. But who was the ringleader in the infamy? It was the very man who now says that the shutting up of the Leaders of the Irish Party was the proper thing. If you want any information with regard to the Kilmainham Treaty, you cannot do better than apply to the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. Last night my right hon. Friend said that he was extremely anxious for a reform in the Irish land system, and so vital and so essential does he regard that reform to be, that he says that, unless it is carried into effect, he will not support even this Government. But let me refer to another right hon. Member for Birmingham. In this morning's paper, in which the speech of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham appears, there is published a letter from the senior Member for Birmingham, in which that right hon. Gentleman says that he does not think there is any need for another great land settlement for Ireland, which would merely be used by the rebel party in Ireland as a weapon for obtaining Home Rule. What a pity it is that we cannot get, even in the select circle of the Members for Birmingham, an accord upon even central principles. If they cannot agree on this point among themselves, how can they expect us to agree with either of them? The right hon. Member for West Birmingham has complete confidence in the remedial measures of the Government; he seems to have divined the nature of the land measures of the Government by a sort of second sight. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham was not satisfied with the exposition of those measures which was made by the Chief Secretary; he thought that the explanation was imperfect, and he gave us a revised edition of the Government plans. He tells us that he approves of those plans in their substance and in their method. The right hon. Gentleman tells us that the Coercion Bill is to be passed with rapidity through this House, and that the Land Bill—the remedial measures of the Government—are to be introduced in the House of Lords. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham has evidently unlimited confidence in the House of Lords. The right hon. Gentleman stands sponsor for the House of Lords, and he promises us in their name that they will pass a complete and satisfactory measure dealing with the Irish Land Question. For my own part, I should have more confidence in the right hon. Gentleman's assurances if I could gather from his remarks that he was himself going to conduct the Bill in "another place." I should not be in Order, and I have not time to go into details as to the proposals of the Government, but the real and material proposal of the Commission of Lord Cowper is the reduction of judicial rents. The hon. Member for the Southport Division of Lancashire (Mr. Curzon) said that the Government have accepted the Report of the Cowper Commission and their recommendations, and that they are going to reduce rents in accordance with the proposals of the Commission. But are they going to do so? I gather that they are not. I understand, from the rather vague allusions of the Chief Secretary, that the Government are going to make some change in the proceedings in bankruptcy. I did not quite understand those observations, but they have been somewhat expanded and more fully explained by my right hon. Friend the Member for

West Birmingham. Now, what is the grievance which is complained of in Ireland? It is that, owing to the fall in prices, the Irish tenants are unable to pay their exorbitant rents, and accordingly the Cowper Commission have recommended that those rents should be reduced. But the Government are not going to reduce those rents; the exorbitant rents are going to be continued, and they are going to better the position of the unhappy tenants by making bankrupts of them. That is the remedial measure for Ireland which the Government have borrowed from my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham. The right hon. Gentleman has many amiable qualities, but I think that that which most distinguishes him is the bump of philoprogenitiveness. He is very remarkable for the fecundity of his brain, and he is also conspicuous by his parental fondness for everything he produces. He once supplied us, as a bantling, with a Bankruptcy Bill, and I really do believe that my right hon. Friend is now convinced that the sum of human felicity is to become a bankrupt under his auspices. In the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman, this is the cure for all the ills of Ireland—namely, to enable the oppressed tenant, who is unable to pay his exorbitant rent, to become a bankrupt. That is the first article of the Birmingham programme. By offering the *solatium* to a ruined tenant, under exorbitant rents, of becoming a bankrupt, we are to restore peace to Ireland. I leave the rest of the Birmingham programme in despair. The suggestions are very ingenious, but so numerous that it is impossible, at this late hour, to get through them. It is somewhat like a rainbow in the variety of its hues; but when you endeavour to grasp it, beautiful as it is to look at, it disappears with the swiftness of a meteor. The Government demand urgency for the measure; but I venture to say that the Government first of all have been extremely prudent on the subject, and they have not yet told us why they demand urgency for their measure. No Government before them has ever made such a demand without laying the condition of Ireland before the House. I know that in 1881 Mr. Forster made a full statement on the subject to the House. [*Cries of* "No!"] It is difficult to prove a negative; but I know that that has been the usual course. Why, then, do you refuse to lay Papers on the Table now? Is it because you know you have no case? Why have you taken this course? The Government, in my opinion, are altogether discredited with reference to their statements on the subject of Ireland. They were challenged last September, and they stated then that there was no occasion, in any way, to deal with judicial rents. They stated that the fall in prices could not possibly have affected the judicial rents. We were told the very opposite by the Members from Ireland, who know Ireland. But the Government argued—"Oh, the valuer must have anticipated the fall of prices in fixing the judicial rents." Why any man of common sense could have seen that no man could have valued on such a basis as that. In this Blue Book there are a dozen Assistant Commissioners who come and tell you that they did nothing of the kind. Mr. Grey, the chief valuer, said, in answer to a question, that if they anticipated anything they anticipated a rise of prices in the valuation. What do you think of a Government that comes and makes such a statement? Why, they had nothing whatever to do but to write a letter to Dublin asking the Assistant Commissioners whether they had or had not anticipated a fall of prices in their valuation; and they would have got an answer from everyone of them saying that, so far from that being the case, they had not done anything of the kind. The Government were so ignorant, careless, and reckless, that, in the face of Parliament and the country, they made a statement on that subject which was entirely without foundation. They were supported, no doubt, by several of their Party. There was the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson), who has a great knowledge of wool, and who demonstrated that there could be no occasion for any reduction in rents. And, of course, there was the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald) and the hon. and gallant Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman), who came forward and demonstrated that it was all nonsense—that there was no occasion for considering the case of the tenants at all, and they refused all redress. There is in this

Blue Book the evidence which contradicts that in every way. The Government, then, does not come into Court with clean hands in considering the condition of Ireland, after the manner in which they behaved last September. Well, now, the facts are clear. The present rent payable by law by the tenants of Ireland is not a fair rent. It is an unfair rent. Every eviction in Ireland is, therefore, *primâ facie* unjust. It is an eviction for an unfair rent. [*Cries of* "No!"] Every rent based upon those prices at that time is an unfair and unjust rent. ["No!"] Hon. Members say "No!" Parliament thought it right, and I will presently state why Parliament thought it right, to fix a fair rent; and it is now proved that that rent is not a fair rent. Now, I will tell the Government that under that state of things, in my opinion, the first thing to do is not to coerce these poor people into the payment of impossible rents. Your first object ought not to be to make it easier for the landlords to exact those rents; and your first object ought to be to make those rents fair. That is a reasonable proposition. You may say that rents are too high elsewhere—in England, for instance. No doubt the legal rents in England are too high; but we do not interfere with these. Why? Because we can trust the English landlords to do justice to the tenants. [*A laugh.*] Yes. The English landlords have given reductions far greater than the additional 15 per cent which is demanded in this Report. The Irish landlords, because Parliament have compelled them to do this act of justice, are always crying out about spoliation. Yes, there has been spoliation; but of whom, and by whom? Why, Sir, we were told that, under the Act of 1881, by the judicial rents since fixed, the landlords have been deprived—as they say, robbed—of something like £600,000 a-year. Now, who was it that was robbed? In my opinion it was the people, who before that time were made to pay £600,000 a-year, which they ought not to have paid. In Ireland, where the landlords have had power to do so—I am obliged to say this because it lies at the root of the whole question—the tenants never have had fair play. That is the root of your whole legislation. That is the root of the agitation in Ireland, that is the cause of the combination in Ireland, and that is the cause of the crime in Ireland; and unless this House understands that, and, unless the English people understand it, they will not understand the Irish Question. That is the story of this Blue Book. It is told in every page of the evidence. There is one piece of evidence given by a gentleman who, up till very recently, was a Member of this House—a man of very strong Tory opinions, and I think a leading Orangeman—I mean Mr. Macartney. At page 223 he is asked—"You say there are some landlords who have not given a reduction of judicial rents?" His reply was "There always are hard landlords who raise the rents as long as they can." Now mark this sentence for, coming from Mr. Macartney, it is a very remarkable sentence—"That was the cause of the agitation in Ireland." That, Sir, is the opinion of an Orangeman and a Tory who knows Ireland well. "That was the cause of the agitation in Ireland." Well, Sir, Mr. Knipe, in his Report, of which the Government seem to have taken so very little notice, says exactly the same thing. We hear it said in this House that all the landlords have shown such great consideration for the tenants. I wish I thought so. The Blue Book shows that that is not the case—that the number of instances in which it has been done are the exception and not the rule. Mr. Knipe says—

> "The landlords, with a few honourable exceptions, have failed to meet by prompt reductions of rent the serious fall in prices, or to recognize the serious losses to their tenants, and to this may be attributed the combination and the resistance to eviction which has taken place and is likely to happen."

Now, that, in my opinion, is a very fair example of the evidence contained in this Blue Book. I am sorry to say it is a very old story and a very shameful story. By the Union the British Parliament placed in the hands of the Irish landlords weapons of oppression which they never possessed before the Union. I have here Mr. O'Connell, in 1846, quoting a series of statistics which, very shortly after the Union, were passed in favour of the landlord of Ireland and against the tenants. The hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Howorth) challenged me to produce the authority of the Judges. Here is an extract from a

Judge—Baron Pennefather—soon after the Union, who said—

> "The entire landlord and tenant code goes to give increased facilities to the landlord. It never entered the head of the Legislature to make provision for the tenant; and all these enactments, at least 32, are invasions of the Common Law, without any declared intention to invade."

What was the consequence of that? In the same year another Judge, Mr. Justice Fletcher, in his charge to the Grand Jury of the county of Waterford, July, 1814, said—

> "What is the wretched peasant to do? Hunted from the spot where he had first drawn his breath, where he had first seen the light of Heaven, incapable of procuring any other means of subsistence—can we be surprised that, being of unenlightened and uneducated habits (education having been denied him by the Penal Code), he should rush upon the perpetration of crimes followed by the punishment of the rope and the gibbet? Nothing remains for peasants thus harassed, thus destitute, but with a strong hand to deter the stranger from intruding upon their farms, and to extort from the weakness of their landlords—from whose gratitude and good feelings they have failed to win it—a sort of preference for the ancient tenantry."

In 1846, Lord John Russell held exactly the same language. Speaking after the Devon Commission had sent in its Report, he said—

> "However ignorant many of us may be of the state of Ireland, we have here (in the Devon Report) the best evidence that can be procured, the evidence of persons best acquainted with that country—of magistrates of many years' standing, of farmers, of those who have been employed by the Crown—and all tell you that the possession of land is that which makes the difference between existing and starving among the, peasantry and that, therefore, ejections out of their holdings are the cause of violence and crime in Ireland. In fact, it is no other than the cause which the great master of human nature describes when he makes a tempter suggest it as a reason to violate the law:—
>
> "'Famine is in thy cheeks,
> Need and oppression starveth in thine eyes,
> Upon thy back hangs ragged misery.
> The world is not thy friend, nor the world's law;
> The world affords no law to make thee rich:
> Then be not poor, but break it.'"
>
> —(3 *Hansard*, [87] 507-8.)

That was the language of Lord John Russell. Now, Sir, the English Parliament, from the time of the Union until the year 1870, passed many and many a Statute in favour of the landlord, but never lifted a finger in favour of the Irish tenant. It was the legislation of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian—so bitterly opposed by the Irish landlords, so violently denounced by the Tory Party, so mauled and mangled by the House of Lords—which was the first attempt on the part of the British Parliament to do its duty towards the country it had undertaken to govern. It is true, then, as Sir Redvers Buller said, that what law there was in the country was a law, not for the poor, but for the rich. And that sentiment was expressed by a man who knew Ireland better than Sir Redvers Buller—I mean the late Lord Clarendon. Everyone who had the happiness of knowing Lord Clarendon knew that he was a man of the highest and most generous sentiments. He had been Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; and in 1867, the last year of his honoured life, he described the acts of the landlord in the confiscation of the tenants' improvements as "felonious acts." That is a perfectly true description; and I am sorry to say that, in this Blue Book, too, there is a great deal which deserves the same epithet. In 1879 there came a period of great distress. That gave birth to the Land League; it gave origin to the Land Act of 1881. But what did these Land Acts mean? They showed that you could not trust the Irish landlord to deal with the Irish tenant. You have not legislated for fixity of tenure and fair rents in England. Why? Because it is not necessary. You have established fair rents in Ireland because you cannot allow the Irish landlord to fix a fair rent. But if circumstances have shown that the rent is not a fair rent, is it not the bounden duty of Parliament to see that the circumstances which led to that error should be corrected? Unfortunately, the persistent ingenuity of the landlord has defeated all attempts on the part of the Legislature to do justice to the tenant. In 1870, after the Land Act was passed, they forced, as this Blue Book will show, leases upon the most unjust terms on the tenants in the North of Ireland. We had a speech from the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) to-night, and how did he speak? He said that unless a very drastic measure of land reform were introduced and carried for Ulster, the tenant farmers of that Province would be destroyed. The Blue Book proves three things—first of all, that the rents are impossible; and it also proves, by the mouth of many witnesses, that where fair abatements of rent have been made, the tenants have been willing to pay. That is almost universal in Ireland. It shows, also, that even the tenant-right—the most valuable possession of the tenant—has been either destroyed or greatly lowered in value by the fall in prices; and, I am sorry to say, that page after page is full of examples of the harsh and cruel treatment of the tenants under the existing law. We have heard of the pressure of the Government upon the landlords. It is not necessary for the English Government to exercise pressure upon the English landlords. Why was it necessary in Ireland? We have heard of the pressure put upon the tenants by the League. This Book shows, and I deeply regret it, that throughout the length and breadth of Ireland, in most cases, the full judicial rents have been exacted. In my opinion, this is a monstrous injustice. Now, this Bill—I do not say in its intention, but certainly in its effect—will be to give the landlords greater power to enforce those rents. ["No!"] You cannot deny that. ["Yes!"] Well, how can you deny it? What is the evil which you are aiming at and striking against? Is it the difficulties which now exist in the way of collecting those rents? Then, if you proceed with this measure, and until you have amended the law, it is perfectly plain that the effect of your legislation will be to give greater facility for the collection of those rents. The inevitable result upon the Irish tenants will be, in my opinion, to inflict the greatest and the cruellest injustice. They have suffered a great deal already. They will suffer a great deal more. Who has demanded this legislation at your hands? I am very much afraid that your principal inspirers have been the Irish landlords. [*Cries of* "No!"] Yes; I very much suspect it, because we have seen the demand made in the evidence of Captain Hamilton, the Honorary Director of the Property Defence Association. He tells us that what is wanted to restore peace in Ireland is that you should leave the tenant no hope. The whole case is summed up in that single sentence; and, in my opinion, if this Bill is passed, it will leave the tenants no hope. If you ask me whether I approve those combinations as the methods of giving some hope to the tenants, I tell you "No." I do not approve combinations, and I do not approve the pressure of the Government. That is not the way to deal with the matter. It is the duty of Parliament to give the tenant hope. It is the duty, and the first duty of Parliament, before everything else, to give the tenants hope and to give them justice, and that is what is demanded in the Amendment. We say, "Before you take measures to enforce unjust rent, there is a far higher and a prior duty, and that is to provide against their use for the purpose of injustice." Then, I say, there is no case for coercion. You have made out no such case. I challenged a comparison, and the Government evaded that comparison between the case made out for coercion on former occasions and the case now. If you refer to *The Times* of 1882, my answer to my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) is that it is idle and absurd to compare the conditions of 1887 with the conditions of 1882. The case for outrage is so faint, that *The Times* newspaper—the great organ of coercion—is obliged to invent one, and when it has invented the outrages, it can always find the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) ready to endorse them. As far as I know, there is only one part of Ireland which can be justly described in the strong language which has been employed by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and that is the Protestant City of Belfast. That is a city in which there is constant and violent disorder; and if the Government came forward and said that the state of Belfast was such that we must have a Coercion Bill there, on the ground that we cannot trust the juries, that the police are being attacked, and every sort of violence is going on there, I confess that I should have thought they had made out a strong and plausible case. I fully admit that there are difficulties in the way of the enforcement of the law in Ireland; but I do not want to remove those difficulties by coercion, if I believe, as I do believe, that in remedying the evils from which those difficulties arise, you would not require coercion at all. That is our plain and simple case. You may not believe the facts as we put them before you; but you will find them in the evidence and in the finding of your own

Commission. Our case is simply this. We believe that whatever may be the amount of disturbance and crime, happily, the amount of crime and outrage in Ireland is not large. The Member for South Tyrone used a very singular argument on this point. He said—

> "I know that there has been no crime, but that is because of the alliance of the Members for Ireland with the Libera Party."

Well, if we have done nothing else, we have done more than your Coercion Bill will do. We have put down outrage and crime in Ireland already; but we say that there is no evidence of crime or disturbance, or resistance to the law, except that which arises immediately out of unjust rents. Then, surely, if you make those rents just, if you remove the cause from which the crime immediately proceeds, if you remove the cause of grievance, and remove it at once, you do not need any Coercion Bill at all. The work the Commission was constituted to perform will have been accomplished, and your Coercion Bill will be totally unnecessary. That is the case upon which we press this Amendment. You state that there is an urgent demand for coercion. We say "No;" we believe that the cause of the evil is to be found in a particular thing, which particular thing you may remove, and ought to remove at once, and that if you will only do that first, then coercion will be unnecessary. It is for that reason that I support the Amendment, and oppose the Motion of the Government.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Mr. Speaker, the most interesting part of the speech of the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) seems to me to be the exhibition of the changes which the whirligig of time has produced in the opinions of the ex-Home Secretary and the present Parliamentary Counsel of the National League. I was deeply interested in the view which the right hon. Gentleman took of the duties of this House and of the country with regard to the maintenance of law and order, and I reverted to the time when the right hon. Gentleman himself was Home Secretary and when he had the support of both Parties in this House in maintaining law and order. [*Interruption.*] I think that hon. Members from Ireland and hon. Members below the Gangway opposite will admit that it is the bounden duty of the Government to speak on this occasion. They would not be doing their duty, and would be wanting in courtesy to hon. Members, if they neglected to answer the speeches which have been delivered. Therefore, although I have no wish to appeal for the indulgence of hon. Members below the Gangway, I think it would conduce to the proprieties of debate if the Representatives of the Government were permitted to state their views on this subject. We owe it to hon. Members from Ireland, we owe it to the House itself, to speak fully upon this occasion; and if we have not risen in great numbers from these Benches, it is because we have been anxious to give every facility to every quarter of the House to take part in the debate on this most important subject. Great changes have been produced in the attitude of my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby. He wishes that the laws should be maintained in proportion as they are considered just by those who live under them. I believe I am rightly interpreting the right hon. Gentleman. When he was Home Secretary did he think that the laws he was engaged in administering and the rents which were collected during that time, were considered to be just by the Representatives of Ireland? Does he not see that the complaint made against the laws which he administered was essentially the same as that now made against the laws which the Government are administering? The two cases are precisely alike. Just rents, the right hon. Gentleman says, are to be established. Who is to define what is a just rent? Does the right hon. Member for Derby agree in his estimate of a just rent with hon. Members who sit not far from him? Does he believe that if he were to say what he considers to be a fair rent he would gain the assent of the majority of the Representatives of Ireland? He spoke of just rents and he spoke of reductions; but he gave no hint of any standard except the fluctuating standard of the popular feeling at any given moment, and he refuses to assist the Executive Government in maintaining the law whenever it does not coincide with that fluctuating standard of justice. That is the attitude of my right hon. Friend the Member for Derby. I should like to be permitted, if the House even at this late hour will give me its attention, to reply to some of the speeches which have been made, and especially to the charges which the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition has brought against Her Majesty's Government. The first of these charges, as I gathered from the right hon. Gentleman, was that the Government, having wasted the time of the Session up to this moment, are now proposing to suppress the individual initiative of hon. Members. May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if it has been the fault of the Government that individual initiative has been suppressed up to this time? [An hon. MEMBER: Yes.] I presume that "Yes" comes from an hon. Member who has been present during most of the discussions, and who, therefore, has an advantage over the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, who has not yet been able to honour us with a sufficient amount of his presence in this House to render us the aid of his authority in making more progress. We are charged with suppressing individual initiative. How were the first three weeks of the Session spent? Were they spent by Her Majesty's Government in prolonging debate? Sixteen days or more were spent on the Address in deference to the views of private Members who wished to prolong that debate. What was it that we were next engaged in? We are charged next with having engaged the attention of the House in the consideration of Rules of Procedure—Rules of Procedure which had the assent, I believe, of the Front Bench opposite, and to which they once attached so much importance that they considered it necessary to devote a Supplementary Session to the subject. Does the right hon. Gentleman really consider that the Government are to blame because at this stage—a stage which, we admit, is late, and which we deeply regret that we have not been able to arrive at sooner—we are obliged to ask for the whole time of the House to press on the Business of the Government? We contend that the blame rests on other shoulders. We complain, and we complain with justice, that we have received no assistance from the regular Opposition in getting on with our work. [Mr. GLADSTONE made an observation which did not reach the Gallery.] My right hon. Friend gives me an enthusiastic cheer. I thought it was a tradition of the regular Opposition that they should assist Her Majesty's Government—the Executive Government of the day—in promoting the Business of Parliament. But, however that may be, I throw back upon the Opposition the charge which they have levelled against Her Majesty's Government, that it is by our action that individual initiative has been suppressed; and if we now ask, as we are entitled to ask, the House now to make that great sacrifice of time which we regret having to ask for, it is because that sacrifice is indispensable in the public interests. To hear the right hon. Member for Derby speak, one would think the state of Ireland was not at this moment what we may all call intolerable. He seemed to view with indifference the state of things in Ireland at the present moment. Both the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian and the right hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley), as well as the right hon. Member for Derby, speak of the diminution of crimes and outrages. They seem only to be able to read crimes when they are written in letters of blood. They do not seem to realize the fact that the administration of justice is almost entirely suspended at this moment in certain portions of Ireland. They seem to have no sense of this, and they seem not to think it of much moment that jurors can scarcely go into the box without having to make their choice between perjury and ruin. Look at the jurors. [*Cries of* "Hear, hear!" *from below the Gangway.*] Yes, now there comes a cheer. The administration of justice is discredited in Ireland at this moment. [An hon. MEMBER: Packed juries.] Yes, you complain of packed juries; others complain of juries who will not convict, although the evidence of guilt is strong and conclusive. The position of the administration of justice—the position of juries in Ireland—is that in some cases they do not command the confidence of the Representatives from Ireland, and in other cases they do not command the confidence of the public generally. We see, therefore, that trial by jury in Ireland is discredited, even in the eyes of hon. Members who interrupt by speaking of packed juries. Have you confidence—["No, no!" *and* "Name!"]—have you confidence in the administration of the law by juries in Ireland? [*Cries of* "No!"]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. GOSCHEN: If not—and you cannot deny it when I ask you—then I say that the moment has come when the Government must deal with the matter, and must restore to Ireland that fair administration of the law which shall command the confidence of the public generally. The House will have noticed how, from point to point, hon. and right hon. Members on the other side have spoken as if the object of this Bill were simply to provide better means of enforcing rents. That is not the view of Her Majesty's Government. It does not approach, in any degree, the views of Her Majesty's Government; but I should be surprised to learn that an ex-Home Secretary and an English lawyer was content with the present administration of the law in Ireland. My right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian made a further charge against Her Majesty's Government. He pointed out to us the extraordinary difference that there was between the present position and the present demands of Her Majesty's Government and those to which he was a party in 1881 and 1882. [MR. GLADSTONE: I said 1881.] In 1881—and he asked us in his solemn tones—and his demand was repeated by the right hon. Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) and others—whether we were prepared to face the fact that now, contrary to what was the case in 1881, we should pass a law of this kind in the teeth of 85 Representatives from Ireland, and in face of the further fact—I admit that it is a most significant one—that the regular Opposition also were opposing us. Well, now, as regards the representation of Ireland; is it contended by the right hon. Gentleman that if the great majority of the Representatives of Ireland are opposed to a measure which is necessary for the due administration of justice, we are, on that account, to flinch from our duty? This is the point which is put to us. You have 85 Members from Ireland. They will oppose your Bill. Therefore you ought not to propose it or else you are sinning against the first articles of the Liberal creed. Well, suppose my right hon. Friend were in power, and that the law were grossly disobeyed in Ireland, would he consider that the presence in this House of a majority of Irish Members, who were opposed to it, would constitute a bar to proceeding with a measure of this kind? If not, why then does he urge that against us, as at the present moment? But he has another argument, which is a more formidable argument, I admit. He says—

> "Have the Government realized that there will be three-sevenths of the whole of this House which may be opposed to a measure of this kind."

Yes, Mr. Speaker, the Government have realized that fact with the deepest regret, and with the fullest knowledge of the consequences which it implies. They see, for the first time, I believe, in the history of this country, ex-Prime Ministers and ex-Home Secretaries refusing. [*Opposition cheers and counter cheers.*]

MR. STOREY (Sunderland): Not before time.

MR. GOSCHEN: I did not catch that.

MR. STOREY: I said, "Not before time."

MR. GOSCHEN: It is time that those who have been charged, as Ministers of the Crown, with the administration of justice, with seeing that the laws are obeyed—it is time, says my hon. Friend below the Gangway, that they should desert the Government of the day, and range themselves under the standard of disorder. I admit that it would be unfair at this period of the debate to inflict many quotations on hon. Members; but in answer to the cry made below the Gangway—and in order to show the House and the country the real position of this matter—I entreat the House to listen for a moment to the words of my right hon. Friend. The House will see what we have to deal with now, and what he had to deal with in 1881. These are the words of my right hon. Friend, in 1881—

> "It is not with the people of Ireland that we are at issue. Our firm belief is that the people of Ireland, and especially that the mass of the

tenantry of that country, are earnestly desirous to make full trial of the equitable provisions which, with great labour, effort, and resolution, Parliament has introduced into the law of the land."

That is our belief also.

"That with which we are struggling"—

and I call the attention of the House to this point—

"is a power which presumes to go between the people and the law, and which tells them how far, when, and how, and upon what terms they are to have the benefits which Parliament intended for them all without restriction and without reserve."

That is our case. We, too, are struggling with a power which presumes to come between the people and the law, and tell them how far they shall go.

"We have, I repeat, no fear of the people of Ireland in the mass. What we have a fear of is lest some should be corrupted by demoralizing doctrines, and lest—and it is the greatest fear of all—more, and many more, should one by one be terrified out of the exercise of their just Constitutional rights, and unhappily induced through intimidation, and from no other motive, to make over their private liberty and the exercise of their civil rights into the hands of self-constituted dictators, and to place those rights under the unknown provisions of an unwritten law dictated by nothing but arbitrary will."

Well, Sir, what is the meaning of the Bill which we seek to introduce? It is to protect the people of Ireland, as my right hon. Friend wished to protect them, against arbitrary interference at every stage with their private affairs by self-constituted dictators who wish to exercise the "unknown provisions of an unwritten law." The occasion on which these words were spoken was the time when my right hon. Friend found it necessary to put into prison the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) lest he should frustrate the objects of the legislation of my right hon. Friend, who made the announcement of the arrest in these terms—

"I have been informed that towards the vindication of law, of order, and the rights of property, of the freedom of the land, of the first elements of political life and civilization, the first step has been taken in the arrest of the man who, unhappily, from whatever motives they may be—and I do not challenge these motives—motives which I cannot examine and with which I have nothing to do, has made himself, beyond all others, prominent in the attempt to destroy the authority of the law, and to substitute what would end in being nothing more nor less than anarchical oppression exercised upon the people of Ireland."

I have read this extract because it contains practically the case of the Government. What we have to do is to attempt to break down the oppression under which the people of Ireland are suffering, and to protect them from the self-constituted dictators who are now ruining the prosperity of Ireland. It has been said over and over again—and I regretted that my right hon. Friend should lend the countenance of his authority to such a statement—that the measure of the Government was intended simply to enable the landlords to enforce the payment of their rents; and I think he said to bring pressure to bear upon the tenants—I think that was the phrase. How did he know?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I quoted one of the witnesses—Sir Redvers Buller.

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes. I want to say a word on that point. My right hon. Friend quoted Sir Redvers Buller; but he never told us to what extent he agreed with the views of Sir Redvers Buller. He put Sir Redvers Buller into the witness-box.

Several hon. MEMBERS: You put him in.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: He is your man.

MR. GOSCHEN: The right hon. Gentleman says he is our man. The right hon. Gentleman knows as well as anyone that a Commission summons before it whomsoever it chooses. The Commission summoned Sir Redvers Buller to give his independent evidence. But curiously enough, my right hon. Friend said—"The views of Sir Redvers Buller are diametrically opposed to yours," and then he says—"He is your witness." Does my right hon. Friend mean to say he was our witness?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Yes.

MR. GOSCHEN: Oh! His views are "diametrically opposed" to ours, and yet he is "our witness." But I wish to call attention to the great dialectical skill with which my right hon. Friend dealt with that point. He put Sir Redvers Buller into the witness-box, and he quoted what Sir Redvers Buller said, to the effect that the law in Ireland looked after the rich and did not look after the poor. I hear a cheer from my right hon. Friend.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I read the words.

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes, you read those words; but you made no comment upon those words. It is dangerous ground. [*A laugh.*] Yes, but you will not laugh, I think, when I put the point to you. They are dangerous words to be quoted by my right hon. Friend, unless he intended either to endorse them or to differ from them. An hon. and gallant officer had said that that was the state of the law; but he was quoted by one who was a much greater authority than Sir Redvers Buller; he was quoted by one who was a party to the legislation of the last 20 years. I should like to know, and I think that this House and the country would like to know—and much more are the people of Ireland entitled to know—whether the right hon. Gentleman endorses the statement that the laws in Ireland have looked more after the rich than the poor?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!

MR. GOSCHEN: They have? And who but my right hon. Friend has been mainly in power, and has for 20 years past had the chief hand in making laws for Ireland. To make a point in debate my right hon. Friend was prepared to sink his own individuality, his own authority, his own experience, and his own knowledge, and simply to put forward suggestive quotations from one part of the evidence of one of the witnesses before the Commission, when he must have known that that evidence was contradicted by his own legislative acts. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] I hope, even at this time of the night, to clear up this point, because it is one which is likely, and naturally likely, to inflame the people of Ireland. I should like to know whether the right hon. Gentleman will endorse, on the floor of this House, the statement that the laws of Ireland have been made simply to benefit the landlords? Has not my right hon. Friend striven with the greatest energy and devotion to pass law after law on behalf of the tenants of Ireland? There was the law of 1870, there was the law of 1881, the laws of 1882 and of 1885, and now he wishes to allow the *dictum* of Sir Redvers Buller. [*Interruption.*]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I appeal to hon. Gentlemen to give a patient hearing to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MR. GOSCHEN: I regret that the hon. Member for Northampton does not think that I ought to be fairly heard.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I said, Sir, that Gentlemen opposite chose to talk exceedingly loudly to drown my right hon. Friend's speech.

MR. GOSCHEN: I have been for a good many years in this House, and it has never been my wish to intrude at great length upon the time of the House. But I have now a duty to perform, and with all respect to hon. Members opposite, I say I should not discharge it if I were to resume my seat. I know it is my duty to my right hon. Friend to take notice of his speech. Now, is it true? I want to know this—is it true that the laws have done nothing for the tenants of Ireland? Is it true that they have not looked after the tenants? What did my right hon. Friend say in 1881?—

> "It is commonly said that the iniquity of the Irish Land Laws is a main reason for legislating on Irish land. Equity and iniquity may be in great part comparative. But if we are to proceed on that principle of comparison it is an exaggeration to describe the Land Laws as iniquitous. The Land Laws of England are laws at any rate under which this country has lived and has been contented and remained prosperous, but the Land Laws of Ireland are chiefly different from those of England in the special conditions which they give on behalf of the tenants."

And these words of my right hon. Friend were spoken before the Land Act of 1881, before the Arrears Act, before the Purchase Act, which enables tenants to become the owners of their holdings while paying actually less than their present rent. It was not without reason that my right hon. Friend declared on a subsequent occasion, that—

> "A law had been passed for the sake of Ireland, with respect to the relations of landlord and tenant, as to which he might say that the civilized world did not record its equal."

This House has during the last 10 years done its best to improve the condition of the tenants in Ireland. And besides, the laws having been passed for the benefit of the tenants of Ireland, the laws have not been administered in a sense hostile to the tenants of Ireland. Would my right hon. Friend indorse the view that the interests of the tenants have not been looked after, when he considers the action of the Commissioners and the Sub-commissioners throughout Ireland

and the great reductions of rent which have been made? The tenants may now complain that these reductions are insufficient. But I maintain that the administration of the Act of 1881 has been, and has been intended to be, a boon to the tenants of Ireland; and it is not in such circumstances that my right hon. Friend is justified in quoting, without comment, the saying that the law of Ireland looks after the rich and does not look after the poor. I wish to protest in the strongest manner against the assertion that the legislation which the Government are now proposing is simply in the interests of the rich. I have read from the previous speeches of the right hon. Gentleman that it is the duty of the Government to relieve the people of the country from self-constituted dictators. It is that duty which we are seeking to fulfil. Our Act will aim at the suppression of the fearful curse of Boycotting which prevails still over a great part of Ireland, and not only in those unquiet counties of which the right hon. Member for Newcastle spoke. The right hon. Member for Newcastle minimized the quality of crime, as it is called by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, and the geographical area of crime. I do not know whether he has read the whole evidence of the Blue Book. But that Blue Book gives instances of labourers being obliged to refuse work when they were starving, because the farmer was Boycotted and might not employ them. I have evidence which I will put before the House at a more seasonable time to prove that every class in Ireland—tenants, farmers, shopkeepers, labourers, every class—suffer from the fearful tyranny which is at present existing and against which it is the bounden duty of this House and of Her Majesty's Government to make a stand. And it is a libel on our intentions to say that it is simply for the sake of enforcing rents that we are acting. We would wish and we hope to decrease the number of evictions. It will be our endeavour to accomplish that most essential object; but evictions have not only been due to the action of the landlords. Evictions have taken place with all their tragical accompaniments because agitators have prevented compromises between tenants and landlords; and then when they had broken down compromises, and when the evictions took place under tragical circumstances, they gloated over those tragical circumstances, and did their best to delude the people of England into the belief that it was simply to the action of the landlords that they were due. Remember the case where a priest spoke of his "poor slaves," and where he regretted himself that the compromises which had been offered had not been agreed to. [An hon. MEMBER: What did General Buller say?] I should like to read a few quotations from General Buller. My right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian said he did not flinch from reading the evidence of General Buller, but he did not read it all. There were some very significant points which I remember in General Buller's evidence. General Buller said, "Intimidation is rampant in this country." An hon. Member interrupted me by saying, "What did General Buller say," when I was speaking about evictions. He wanted to turn me from that delicate point, that it is due to the National League that many of these evictions have taken place. Their action is not to prevent evictions and to secure compromises between landlords and tenants, but to compel the tenants to take a course which many tenants, if left to themselves, would not take, but which, when taken, forces the landlord to evict. I heard of a case yesterday where the tenant went to the agent of his landlord and offered him his rent and paid it. [*Cries of* "Name!"] Name! I will tell you about the name presently. I will tell the case first. The tenant went to the agent of the landlord and said—

> "I will pay you the rent, but serve me with a notice of eviction. Send me all the legal notices which you have sent to my neighbours, because, otherwise, my life will be in danger."

And this tenant paid his rent; but he wanted to be served with a notice of ejectment lest he should be exposed to the dishonour of being known to pay his debt. [*Cries of* "Name!"] Yes, the name. I will give you the name when we have passed this Bill. When you have ceased to Boycott witnesses who tell the truth I will tell you the name; but I am not prepared to hand over the tenant to the tender mercies of the League. Our opponents are continually asking us for witnesses and for cases. Do they not know—have they not acquired sufficient experience during their term of Office to know—that in these cases to produce your witnesses is to expose them to the vengeance of the National League? It is the great disadvantage under which the friends of law and order labour. I admit it. Hon. Members opposite always cry "Name!" because they know that the entreaties of these men who wish to pay their rents is that their names may not be published. And why? It is in the Blue Book—lest they should be shot. It is against transactions of this kind that the action of the Government is directed. My right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle speaks of these combinations as spontaneous and natural, when, as a matter of fact, many tenants are notoriously coerced, and when a tenant the other day, who paid his money to the trustees under the Plan of Campaign, said that he never thought he should see a shilling of it back. You say these are spontaneous combinations. Then why are hon. Members opposite, why is Mr. O'Brien, rushing all over the country in order to stir up these spontaneous combinations? No! these combinations are no more spontaneous than the supposed cases of spontaneous generation. They are worked up by the agitators in Dublin, who have exercised that kind of coercion throughout Ireland which it is the intention and the bounden duty of the Government, if they receive the support of this House, to break down. We are asked why we do not, in the first place, produce our remedial measures? I think I can give a conclusive answer to that question. We may be guided in this matter by experience as well as by reason. We are guided by the experience that the ruling political forces in Ireland have always endeavoured to frustrate remedial legislation. And why? Because they have political, and not only agrarian, ends. I have already alluded to the fact that when my right hon. Friend had carried the remedial measure of 1881 the first step which he was compelled to take was to put the hon. Member for Cork into gaol lest he should frustrate the effects of that remedial measure. What security have we—that remedial measure having been succeeded by a No Rent Manifesto—that the most beneficial purchase scheme which we could pass would not be followed by a No Price Manifesto? The fact is this, and I wish the country to understand it, that the agrarian question is being utilized by the Nationalist Party in Ireland in order to dupe the democracy of England as to their ultimate aims. Matters were progressing fairly up to November last; but it does not suit the book of hon. Members from Ireland that there should be peaceable progress in that country. What have they to prove? They have to prove for the success of their scheme—and I entreat the House to bear this in mind—that Ireland is ungovernable by Saxon law. Therefore they produce disorder. And how can they best produce disorder? By constantly agitating the agrarian question. In order that they may produce this effect, they trade on the aversion to landlords, and disguise their schemes of Home Rule by putting that aversion prominently before the people of this country. The first stage in their programme is disobedience to the law. That is followed by disorder, and they know that disorder may be followed by despair, and despair they hope will be followed by separation. We have arrived at the stage of disobedience to the law; we have arrived, I am sorry to say, at the stage of disorder; but we on these Benches have not arrived at the stage of despair. We shall proceed with our remedial legislation, and we shall proceed, undeterred by the fear of those anarchical forces, strengthened though they may be now by the countenance of the regular Opposition—we shall proceed with the intention that these forces shall not frustrate our remedial measures, because we shall endeavour to take the necessary steps to defeat such attempts to frustrate them. We are told that our repressive measures will fail. That is one of the statements that we hear most frequently. But unless we first have the means of frustrating the endeavours which will be made to checkmate those remedial measures, it would be useless to undertake them at all. That is why we demand urgency for the reform of the Criminal Law, and that is the single reason why we proceed first with our demands for that which is not coercive legislation, but legislation to render remedial measures possible. But again, I ask, if we do not and cannot pass the measures we have in view, what is the alternative? I should like to know what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian the Leader of the Opposition—and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby think is the alternative if we cannot pass those measures? The alternative is the continuance of disorder, and if they are prepared to regard that alternative with equanimity, it is because they might point to triumphant disorder as a clenching argument for Home Rule. That is the point which is to be proved, as I said before, that we cannot govern Ireland. [*Irish cheers.*] I accept those cheers. It is to be proved that we cannot govern Ireland. The English democracy is to be told that we cannot settle the agrarian question. You do not wish the agrarian question to be settled by any remedial legislation. You wish the difficulties to continue; you wish the disorders to continue, and to make those disorders the argument for handing over Ireland to the Nationalist Party. I have heard of a Party who were described once as "marching through rapine"—[*Interruption by the Irish Members*]—"as marching through rapine"—[*Renewed interruption*]—"to disintegration." You cannot entirely dispute the truth of words which fell from your present Leader. Even those cheers, which seem to be sweet Celtic music in the ears of my right hon. Friend, cannot set aside the fact that the Nationalist Party were described as "marching through rapine to disintegration." Luckily they did not reach that goal; but where did they march to? Where are they now? They have marched with flying colours and beating drums into the camp of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and now, under his command, the allied forces intend to march, if they can, through disorder to Home Rule. But the voice of the country issued its command at the last Election. It had the Unionists to bar the way. That is the mandate we have received. The defence of order is the defence of the Union. What we ask of the House is to give us the necessary powers for the maintenance of both.

Mr. PARNELL (Cork): I rise, Sir, to make a protest, although I do not intend to make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House, in view of the fact that hon. Members from Ireland have been almost entirely shut out from this debate. [*Laughter.*] Well, I suppose hon. Gentlemen will admit that Members from Ireland have some interest in this debate—they will admit that the Irish Representatives are entitled to speak in this debate, though they have not taken any pains or trouble to allow us to speak, having, on the contrary, done their best, by the arrangements between the Front Benches, to prevent us from speaking. When I heard that the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had decided to close this debate on Thursday night, I made up my mind that it was useless for any Irish Member to attempt to intervene at all; but when the right hon. Gentleman was good enough, out of his great bounty, to extend the discussion to this evening, I thought it might be possible for my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) to have an opportunity of speaking. Well, Sir, it has been quite impossible for my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast to speak. I willingly gave up my claim to speak. My hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) also gave up his claim to speak. We did this because we were confident that my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast would have represented our opinions and vindicated our position even better than we could have done ourselves. But we are in this position to-night—that no prominent Member of our Party has been allowed to speak to-night, except the hon. and learned Member for North of Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy), who got up at a quarter to 12 o'clock last night, when almost every Member of the Conservative Party walked out of the House in a body. [*Cries of* "Sullivan!"] I call a debate, conducted under these circumstances, a mockery and a sham. When you talk about your desire to hear us, and to give us fair play—when you say you desire to hear an expression of our views before you strike us down—I say that I do not believe these protests and these expressed desires. Before you take this Division to-night, if I move the adjournment of the debate, I shall, I suppose, be told that I am interfering with the convenience of about 600 Members of the House, who have come down to divide on this question to-night, and I shall be told that it is impossible to allow me to interfere with their convenience in that way. Nevertheless, I say that we have not been heard, and that if this Division is taken to-night, and the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury refuses the Motion with which I intend to conclude, it is a very curious sample of your English fair play. You are in such a desperate hurry, either to get your Coercion Act, or to go on your Easter holidays—I do not know which—that you refuse us an additional night for the discussion of this important question, notwithstanding, as has been shown over and over again, that what you are proposing is in violation of all precedent, and that in the course of its consideration we have been treated to two voices, one from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who told us that nothing at all was to be done upon the Land Question, and the other from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain), who told us that a great deal was to be done upon the Land Question. I ask is it, or is it not, right that the discrepancy between these two right hon. Gentleman should be cleared up? I do not quite know what our position is. I shall not know what it is when we go into the Division Lobby. I do not know whether I ought to believe the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, or the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. I do not know, indeed, whether I ought to believe either of them. I do not know whether either of these Gentlemen has made up his mind on the question, and I do not know whether, having made up his mind yesterday or the day before yesterday, he has not unmade his mind yesterday or to-day, or that he will not unmake it to-morrow. Before we vote away the whole time of the House for Her Majesty's Government, they ought, following precedent, to have placed us in possession not only of the nature of their repressive legislation, but also of the nature of their remedial legislation. That was the course adopted in 1882. In that year, before the Government moved for precedence for the Crimes Act, the Crimes Act had been read a first time, and not only read a first time, but read a second time; and not only that, but the Arrears Bill had also been introduced, and the second reading of it had been moved, and one night's discussion had been taken upon that stage. But now you would hurry us into the Lobby without having regard to that precedent. You ask us to go and vote blind, and not only do you ask us to do that, but you ask your own deluded followers to go and do the same, and I suppose they will obey you. I suppose that the consciences of hon. Gentlemen opposite will be as elastic as the consciences of Members of large majorities usually are, and I suppose these Gentlemen will be satisfied to vote blindly upon this question without further inquiry. But that is not our position, and I submit that we are entitled to further information than that which has been given by the right hon. Gentleman. In view of the extraordinary discrepancy of statement between the two right hon. Gentlemen who have spoken, one from this side and one from the Treasury Bench, I submit that we are entitled to that further information of which we have not received a single atom in the heated harangue of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Therefore, Sir, as one of the Members from Ireland who has a right to speak upon this question, and who is interested in this question, I, on behalf of 86 Irish Representatives, only three or four of whom have, so far, been allowed to take part in the discussion, beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Parnell.*)

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I think the hon. Member must have anticipated the answer which it is my duty to give him. He will remember perfectly well that I rose on Wednesday evening and remarked on the silence of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. Hon. Gentlemen from Ireland have not availed themselves of the opportunities they had of taking part in this debate. [An hon. MEMBER: Opportunities on a Wednesday Sitting!] The hon. Member complains that opportunities have not been afforded to his Colleagues from Ireland to take part in the debate; but I have noticed that the hon. Member himself has been absent during the greater part of the debate. [An hon. MEMBER: So have you.] I have been here almost without exception, and I have remarked the absence of the hon. Member from the debate for the last four days.

Mr. PARNELL: It is very curious, Sir, but I have also noticed the absence of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I have not been absent from the House more than an hour during the whole of the debate, and I can say this—that neither the hon. Member himself, nor the hon. Member for West Belfast, has, at any time, risen during the last four days. If they had risen, Sir, and could have caught your eye, I should have exerted whatever influence I may have over Members on this side of the House to have induced them to give way to those hon. Gentlemen. Seeing that hon. Gentlemen from Ireland have not availed themselves of the opportunities they have had of speaking in this debate, and seeing that this is the fourth night of the discussion, I do not think it would be right or proper to permit further discussion at a period of the Session when progress is required in the interests of the Business of the country. We should not have proposed this legislation if we had not felt its necessity and importance. I have stated repeatedly that we feel it to be our bounden duty to ask the House to proceed, with as little delay as possible, with the consideration and disposal of this great and important question. We cannot, therefore, consent to further adjournment at this stage of the debate, and I must, therefore, ask the House to come to a Division on the question before it at once.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): It is following rather a dangerous course to make remarks upon the presence or absence of individual Members during more or less of the period occupied by political debates. When the right hon. Gentleman opposite has had more experience in his present position—["Oh, oh!" *and interruption.*] I wish to know, Sir, if I am disorderly in saying this? When the right hon. Gentleman has had more experience in his present position, he will find that observations of that kind are apt to be a good deal resented; they are liable to unintentional inaccuracy, and are not found to contribute to progress or harmonious debate. What I notice, as the result of much observation, is that there is much greater jealousy when these observations proceed from persons in great authority who are Leaders of the House. The hon. Member for Cork has observed that the Irish Members—the leading Irish Members—have not spoken in the debate beyond a very limited extent. I do not remember whether the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) and the Lord Mayor of Dublin (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) are the only Irish Members who have spoken; but the right hon. Gentleman says that others might have risen and taken their chance of coming into the debate. That is true; they might have done that if they had chosen to establish a competition for that purpose; but then the effect would have been to shut out English and Scotch Members; and I think it was quite natural on their part to wish that the cause of Ireland, as they view it, should be defended by English and Scotch Members as far as it possibly could be. I think it would be most to the convenience and advantage of the House that we should not divide on this Motion for Adjournment—that is to say, that it should not be pressed to a Division. It is always a sign of the thickness of the fray when there are hostile Motions made for the purpose of adjournment on one side and resisted on the other. I can perceive that the fray is about to be thick enough; and particularly, I must say, after the very remarkable charges which have been made in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury—not altogether against myself, or against my Colleagues on the Front Opposition Bench, but against what he calls the Representatives of the Irish National League. I should wish very much that the Motion should not be pressed to a Division; but I am quite sure there will be fairness enough in the House to bear in mind this fact—that, in considering the further stages of the Bill, the Irish Members have as yet been hardly heard on the subject, and that full opportunity should be afforded to them for expressing their views. We have spent a greater number of nights in the introduction of the Bill than happens in most cases. There have been few instances in which a greater number of nights have been consumed; but I am bound to say that, in this instance, that fact is entirely and exclusively due to the precedent set by Her Majesty's Government in asking the House for urgency, without letting us know, in some official form, what it is they propose to do. I trust that we shall do all we can to keep down the heat of the moment, and that this side of the House, especially hon. Members below the Gangway, will be content to allow the Main Question to be put, and will urge on a future occasion that which I think they are entitled to stand upon—namely, that up to the present time the voice of Ireland has been very little heard on this question.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House has, on this occasion, singularly and deplorably departed from what, in justice, I must admit is his usual courtesy. In my opinion, his reference to my hon. Friend the Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) was a violation of the ordinary rules of courtesy which are observed and allowed to opperate on Members of this House. The right hon. Gentleman has felt himself entitled to refer to the fact that, during a portion of the evening, my hon. Friend was absent from the debate. Now, I feel bound to say that, though it is a matter of common knowledge that the health of my hon. Friend has been far from robust, his attendance in the House, not only this evening, but since the debate opened, will compare most favourably with that of almost any Member of the Government, and of most Members of this House. It must also be borne in mind that, while my hon. Friend attends here voluntarily in the performance of a duty, his attendance will compare favourably with that of any highly-paid official of the Crown, some of whom have scarcely been seen here at all. What adds particularly to the incivility of the remark of the right hon. Gentleman is the fact that on a recent occasion, for an entire night, the Irish Members were expected to debate important Irish questions in the absence of the Ministers who ought to have been present to answer them. Not only were right hon. Gentlemen not here, but nobody could tell where they were. The right hon. Gentleman has done me the honour of making some personal reference to me. He has paid me a compliment which I do not deserve. He says that if I had risen to-night he would have used his influence—an influence which I am afraid, however, is not always effectual with his followers—to procure a hearing for me from the House. I did intend to speak this evening; but, certainly, what occurred early in the evening was not favourable to effective debate. The attendance after the opening speeches was extremely thin, and I had ascertained that my right hon. Friend the Lord Mayor of Dublin (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) desired to address the House, and I had no wish to put myself in competition with him, although, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) has told the House, in the remaining stages of the Bill it may be necessary for us to put ourselves in competition with English and Scotch Members. I also noticed the fact, which I have no doubt was noticed by hon. Members opposite, that a very able Member of the House—the hon. Member for the Cirencester Division of Gloucestershire (Mr. Winterbotham)—rose six times, and, although for obvious reasons a speech was expected from him, he failed to catch your eye, Sir. Under those circumstances, I did not feel that if I had risen I could have any certainty that I would be called upon by the Chair. I desired to address the House at a period of the evening when the House was full, and the minds of hon. Members were likely to be influenced by the arguments which might be adduced; but what did I find? We all know that what takes place in the dinner hour is only in the nature of an intellectual excursion, and has no practical bearing upon the real progress of Business. But I learned during the dinner hour that the right hon. and learned Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) was to speak; that he was to be followed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt); and that the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) was to close the debate. The whole time of the House was therefore appropriated, and under the circumstances I did not feel called upon to rise, nor did I feel any certainty that, if I had done so, I should have been called upon. But although a Division may be taken to-night—for I do not imagine, after the appeal which has been made to him by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, that my hon. Friend the Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) will press the Motion for Adjournment— the Irish Members will take very good care that on the next stage, and indeed upon all subsequent stages of the Bill, whether English Members rise or not, or whether we rise first or last, we shall be fully and effectively heard upon this question.

Mr. PARNELL: In asking the leave of the House to withdraw the Motion for the adjournment of the debate, in deference to the request of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, may I be allowed to explain, in regard to the statement of the First Lord of the Treasury respecting my absence this evening, that I distinctly stated I had given up my right to speak to my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton), and I fail to see what relevancy the remark of the right hon. Gentleman as to my absence during a portion of the evening has with the matter. As the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian thinks that a Division ought to be taken to-night, I ask the permission of the House to withdraw the Motion for Adjournment.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put.

The House *divided :*—Ayes 349; Noes 260: Majority 89.

AYES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ainslie, W. G.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, Colonel R. H. L.
Anstruther, H. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, G. S
Baggallay, E.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Balfour, G. W.
Banes, Major G. E.
Baring, Viscount
Barnes, A.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Bartley, G. C. T.
Bass, H.
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Beach, W. W. B.
Beadel, W. J.
Beaumont, H. F.
Beckett, E. W.
Beckett, W.
Bective, Earl of
Bentinck, Lord H. C.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W. de la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bickford-Smith, W.
Biddulph, M.
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H.
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Boord, T. W.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bridgeman, Col. hon. F. C.
Bright, right hon. J.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, Col. A. M.
Brooks, Sir W. C.
Brown, A. H.
Bruce, Lord H.
Burdett-Coutts, W. L. Ash.-B.
Burghley, Lord
Caine, W. S.
Caldwell, J.
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Chamberlain, R.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Charrington, S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Cochrane-Baillie, hon. C. W. A. N.
Coddington, W.
Coghill, D. H.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Corbett, A. C.
Corbett, J.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Courtney, L. H.
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, H. S.
Crossley, Sir S. B.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Currie, Sir D.
Curzon, Viscount
Curzon, hon. G. N.
Dalrymple, C.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
Dawnay, Colonel hon. L. P.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dixon, G.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Dugdale, J. S.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Ebrington, Viscount
Edwards-Moss, T. C.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Elliot, hon. H. F. H.
Elliot, Sir G.
Elliot, G. W.
Ellis, Sir J. W.
Elton, C. I.
Ewart, W.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Feilden, Lt.-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, W. H.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Fielden, T.
Finch, G. H.
Finch-Hatton, hon. M. E. G.
Finlay, R. B.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitzwilliam, hon. W. J. W.
Fitz-Wygram, Gen. Sir F. W.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Fry, L.
Fulton, J. F.
Gardner, R. Richardson-
Gathorne-Hardy, hon. A. E.
Gedge, S.
Gent-Davis, R.
Gibson, J. G.
Giles, A.
Gilliat, J. S.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hn. G. J.
Gray, C. W.
Green, Sir E.
Greenall, Sir G.
Greene, E.
Grimston, Viscount
Grotrian, F. B.
Grove, Sir T. F.
Gunter, Col. R.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hall, A. W.
Hall, C.
Halsey, T. F.
Hambro, Col. C. J. T.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord E.
Hamley, General Sir E. B.
Hanbury, R. W.
Hankey, F. A.
Hardcastle, E.
Hardcastle, F.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hastings, G. W.
Havelock-Allan, Sir H. M.
Heath, A. R.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Heaton, J. H.
Heneage, right hon. E.
Hermon-Hodge, R. T.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hill, A. S.
Hoare, S.
Hobhouse, H.
Holland, right hon. Sir H. T.
Holloway, G.
Holmes, rt. hon. H.
Hornby, W. H.
Houldsworth, W. H.
Howard, J.
Howard, J. M.
Howorth, H. H.
Hozier, J. H. C.
Hubbard, E.
Hubbard, rt. hn. J. G.
Hughes, Colonel E.
Hughes-Hallett, Col. F. C.
Hulse, E. H.
Hunt, F. S.
Hunter, Sir W. G.

Isaacs, L. H.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
James, rt. hon. Sir H.
Jardine, Sir R.
Jarvis, A. W.
Jennings, L. J.
Johnston, W.
Kelly, J. R.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenrick, W.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Ker, R. W. B.
Kerans, F. H.
Kimber, H.
King, H. S.
King-Harman, Colonel E. R.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, H. T.
Knightley, Sir R.
Knowles, L.
Kynoch, G.
Lafone, A.
Laurie, Colonel R. P.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir J. J. T.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lea, T.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Lees, E.
Legh, T. W.
Leighton, S.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Low, M.
Lowther, J. W.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Lymington, Viscount
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclean, J. M.
Maclure, J. W.
M'Calmont, Captain J.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Mallock, R.
Manners, rt. hon. Lord J. J. R.
March, Earl of
Marriott, rt. hn. W. T.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Matthews, rt. hn. H.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Admiral R. C.
Mildmay, F. B.
Mills, hon. C. W.
Milvain, T.
More, R. J.
Morgan, hon. F.
Morrison, W.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Mulholland, H. L.
Muncaster, Lord
Murdoch, C. T.
Noble, W.
Norris, E. S.
Northcote, hon. H. S.
Norton, R.
O'Neill, hon. R. T.
Paget, Sir R. H.
Parker, hon. F.
Pearce, W.
Pelly, Sir L.
Penton, Captain F. T.
Pitt-Lewis, G.
Plunket, right hon. D. R.
Plunkett, hon. J. W.
Pomfret, W. P.
Powell, F. S.
Price, Captain G. E.
Puleston, J. H.
Quilter, W. C.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Reed, H. B.
Richardson, T.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, rt. hn. C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Robertson, W. T.
Robinson, B.
Ross, A. H.
Rothschild, Baron F. J. de
Round, J.
Royden, T. B.
Russell, Sir G.
Russell, T. W.
St. Aubyn, Sir J.
Salt, T.
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. M.
Saunderson, Col. E. J.
Sclater-Booth, rt. hn. G.
Sellar, A. C.
Selwin-Ibbetson, rt. hon. Sir H. J.
Seton-Karr, H.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Sidebottom, T. H.
Sidebottom, W.
Sinclair, W. P.
Smith, rt. hn. W. H.
Smith, A.
Spencer, J. E.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stanley, E. J.
Stewart, M.
Sutherland, T.
Swetenham, E.
Sykes, C.
Talbot, J. G.
Tapling, T. K.
Taylor, F.
Temple, Sir R.
Theobald, J.
Thorburn, W.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Tottenham, A. L.
Townsend, F.
Trotter, H. J.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Verdin, R.
Vernon, hon. G. R.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Waring, Colonel T.
Watkin, Sir E. W.
Watson, J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Webster, R. G.
West, Colonel W. C.
Weymouth, Viscount
Wharton, J. L.
White, J. B.
Whitley, E.
Whitmore, C. A.
Wiggin, H.
Williams, J. Powell-
Wilson, Sir S.
Winn, hon. R.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wolmer, Viscount
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wright, H. S.
Wroughton, P.
Yerburgh, R. A.
Young, C. E. B.

### TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

## NOES.

Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, A. H. D.
Acland, C. T. D.
Allison, R. A.
Anderson, C. H.
Asher, A.
Asquith, H. H.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, J.
Balfour, Sir G.
Balfour, rt. hon. J. B.
Barbour, W. B.
Barran, J.
Barry, J.
Beaumont, W. B.
Biggar, J. G.
Blake, J. A.
Blake, T.
Blane, A.
Bolton, J. C.
Bolton, T. D.
Bradlaugh, C.
Bright, Jacob
Bright, W. L.
Broadhurst, H.
Brown, A. L.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Bryce, J.
Burt, T.
Buxton, S. C.
Byrne, G. M.
Cameron, C.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, H.
Campbell-Bannerman, right hon. H.
Carew, J. L.
Chance, P. A.
Channing, F. A.
Clancy, J. J.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Cohen, A.
Coleridge, hon. B.
Colman, J. J.
Commins, A.
Condon, T. J.
Connolly, L.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Corbet, W. J.
Cossham, H.
Cox, J. R.
Cozens-Hardy, H. H.
Craig, J.
Craven, J.
Crawford, D.
Crawford, W.
Cremer, W. R.
Crilly, D.
Crossley, E.
Davies, W.
Deasy, J.
Dillon, J.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dodds, J.
Duff, R. W.
Ellis, J.
Ellis, J. E.
Ellis, T. E.
Esmonde, Sir T. H. G.
Esslemont, P.
Evershed, S.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fenwick, C.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro-
Finucane, J.
Flower, C.
Flynn, J. C.
Foley, P. J.
Foljambe, C. G. S.
Forster, Sir C.
Fowler, rt. hon. H. H.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Fry, T.
Fuller, G. P.
Gane, J. L.
Gardner, H.
Gaskell, C. G. Milnes-
Gilhooly, J.
Gill, H. J.
Gill, T. P.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gourley, E. T.
Graham, R. C.
Gray, E. D.
Grey, Sir E.
Gully, W. C.
Haldane, R. B.
Hanbury-Tracy, hon. F. S. A.
Harcourt, rt. hn. Sir W. G. V. V.
Harrington, E.
Harrington, T. C.
Hayden, L. P.

Hayne, C. Seale-
Healy, M.
Healy, T. M.
Holden, I.
Hooper, J.
Howell, G.
Hoyle, I.
Hunter, W. A.
Illingworth, A.
Jacoby, J. A.
James, hon. W. H.
James, C. H.
Joicey, J.
Jordan, J.
Kay-Shuttleworth, rt. hon. Sir U. J.
Kennedy, E. J.
Kenny, C. S.
Kenny, J. E.
Kenny, M. J.
Kilcoursie, right hon. Viscount
Labouchere, H.
Lacaita, C. C.
Lalor, R.
Lane, W. J.
Leahy, J.
Leake, R.
Lefevre, right hon. G. J. S.
Lockwood, F.
Lyell, L.
Macdonald, W. A.
MacInnes, M.
Mac Neill, J. G. S.
M'Arthur, A.
M'Cartan, M.
M'Carthy, J.
M'Carthy, J. H.
M'Donald, P.
M'Donald, Dr. R.
M'Ewan, W.
M'Kenna, Sir J. N.
M'Lagan, P.
M'Laren, W. S. B.
Mahony, P.
Maitland, W. F.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Marum, E. M.
Mason, S.
Mayne, T.
Menzies, R. S.
Molloy, B. C.
Montagu, S.
Morgan, rt. hon. G. O.
Morgan, O. V.
Morley, rt. hon. J.
Mundella, right hon. A. J.
Murphy, W. M.
Neville, R.
Newnes, G.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J. (Kerry)
O'Connor, J. (Tippry.)
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Doherty, J. E.
O'Hanlon, T.
O'Hea, P.
O'Kelly, J.
Palmer, Sir C. M.
Parker, C. S.
Parnell, C. S.
Paulton, J. M.
Pease, Sir J. W.
Pease, A. E.
Pease, H. F.
Pickard, B.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Picton, J. A.
Pinkerton, J.
Playfair, rt. hon. Sir L.
Plowden, Sir W. C.
Portman, hon. E. B.
Potter, T. B.
Power, P. J.
Power, R.
Price, T. P.
Priestley, B.
Provand, A. D.
Pugh, D.
Pyne, J. D.
Quinn, T.
Rathbone, W.
Redmond, J. E.
Redmond, W. H. K.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Reid, R. T.
Rendel, S.
Reynolds, W. J.
Richard, H.
Roberts, J.
Roberts, J. B.
Robertson, E.
Robinson, T.
Roe, T.
Roscoe, Sir H. E.
Rowlands, J.
Rowlands, W. B.
Rowntree, J.
Russell, Sir C.
Russell, E. R.
Samuelson, Sir B.
Schwann, C. E.
Sexton, T.
Shaw, T.
Sheehan, J. D.
Sheehy, D.
Sheil, E.
Shirley, W. S.
Smith, S.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stack, J.
Stanhope, hon. P. J.
Stansfeld, right hon. J.
Stepney - Cowell, Sir A. K.
Stevenson, F. S.
Stevenson, J. C.
Storey, S.
Stuart, J.
Sullivan, D.
Sullivan, T. D.
Summers, W.
Sutherland, A.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Talbot, C. R. M.
Tanner, C. K.
Thomas, A.
Tuite, J.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Waddy, S. D.
Wallace, R.
Wardle, H.
Warmington, C. M.
Watt, H.
Wayman, T.
Will, J. S.
Williams, A. J.
Williamson, J.
Wilson, H. J.
Wilson, I.
Winterbotham, A. B.
Woodhead, J.
Wright, C.
Yeo, F. A.

TELLERS.
Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Morley, A.

Main Question again proposed.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Sir, I rise to move the Amendment of which I gave Notice at the commencement of this day's proceedings, which is that at the end of the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) the words "except on Friday" be added. The House has just agreed, by a considerable majority, to give the Government a large portion of our time for the consideration of a Coercion Bill for Ireland, and I now ask the House to consider in what position private Members are placed. The Session has already lasted about two months, during which time private Members have not had a single day at their disposal. It may fairly be estimated that the discussions on the Coercion Bill will last two months. I take that as the minimum, and during that time private Members will get no day. We are told that after this Bill is disposed of there will be remedial legislation for Ireland. It is my individual opinion, and that of hon. Members on this side of the House who support the Government, that this legislation will also occupy two months, and that the Government will probably ask for the whole time of the House for the purpose. Then we are told that the Government intend to bring forward the rest of the Procedure Rules. These will require for their discussion another two months, and then there is Supply, for which towards the end of the Session the Government invariably ask for all the remaining days. This will make a total of eight months, during which private Members are not to have a single day for their Motions. I think it is not advisable to stretch the rope too tightly, and therefore I hope that my Amendment will be accepted. On Fridays many useful Motions are brought forward; Motions become Bills which, having been read a second time, pass into law, and it is in this way that on

Fridays is sown the seed of future legislation. I observe that my right hon. Friend the Member for Berwick (Mr. Marjoribanks) has on the Paper a very useful Motion in connection with harbours, for which he has obtained next Friday by ballot; and another hon. Member has a very useful Motion to make on the same day with regard to divorces. It is obvious, however great may be the desire to facilitate the Government endeavours to crush out all our liberties, that we ought to take into consideration the position of our sailors and the wives of our people. I take it as proved, again and again, that when the rope is drawn as I have said too tight, by taking every single day from private Members, there is a tendency to produce anger in the minds of those who think they are unfairly treated. Surely one day in the week is not too much to ask for the use of private Members. I point out to the First Lord of the Treasury that we have still in our hands the power to move Amendments. The right hon. Gentleman must know that there are 40 Members who will stand out, and who, if he does not give us one day a week, may be under the painful necessity of moving the adjournment of the House. We have acted with unexampled generosity throughout this discussion. We might have divided the House again and again, and the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) has made it clear why he should demand the adjournment, in order to continue this debate on Monday; but we were generous, and allowed the Division to be taken. I hope that the First Lord of the Treasury will agree to this trifling modification of the Motion which I propose.

Amendment proposed, to add, at the end of the Question, the words "except on Friday."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. W. H. SMITH: I fully appreciate the generosity of the hon. Member for Northampton, and the extent to which he desires that the Government should have every possible facility for proceeding with the Business, as well as his anxiety to forward this debate. But I cannot think that it would be to the advantage of the House, nor would it be consistent with the spirit of the Motion which the House has already affirmed, that the exception which he suggests should be made. The feeling is that the House should proceed with their present Business *de die in diem*, and on that account I must resist the Amendment of the hon. Member.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): The hon. Member for Northampton, in making the Government an offer which would have allowed them to proceed with other Business on Friday, had no intention of testing their views with regard to Procedure; but, by refusing that offer with a sneer at the generosity of my hon. Friend, they have shown the true value at which they appraise the Procedure Rules. I trust the House will arrive at a perfect understanding on this point. We were told that the Rules of Procedure were the great object in the mind of the Government, and that they were all of them almost equal in importance. The Government having refused the proposal of my hon. Friend, and seeing that urgency is required for the discussion of Irish matters, I take it to be an invitation to Members on this side of the House to consider ourselves free to put in force such portion of the Rules of the House as yet give us the liberty to move the adjournment of the House at Question time in order to discuss matters relating to Ireland. I have not the slightest doubt, under the circumstances, that my hon. Friends will be most happy to avail themselves of the constructive liberty which has been so kindly and generously conceded to them by the Leader of the House, and on behalf of my hon. Friends I beg to tender the right hon. Gentleman my warmest thanks.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): I think there is a great deal to be said in favour of the proposal of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere); at the same time, I do not think there is much to be gained by taking another Division at this hour. There is, however, one consolation. I have sat in this House for some years, and I have arrived at the conclusion that the time of the House is not likely to be occupied so much with this Coercion Bill as we might have anticipated before the last Division. This Bill is aborted before it is formed. The legions of the Government are deserting; neither the Government troops nor the Liberal Unionist troops will face the guns of the constituencies. I believe this Bill—[*Cries of* "Order!"]—I am giving reasons against the continuance of this discussion, which I am entitled to do. I am really acting in the interest of the Government; I am extending to them my compassion. There was a great fear on this side of the House that this Coercion Bill would take up a large part of the Session. I do not now think it will. I think that, although we must go through the struggle, the Bill is practically dead. The Government may go on for a time with a sort of suspended animation; but the division of a Party which cannot count on their supporters to stand by them on such a Division as this must be approaching completion. Therefore, if I were in the position of my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton, I should take that consolation to heart, and believe that before long we shall be delivered from the phantom of coercion, and go at once to the remedial measures of the Government, when I think we may hope that the time of the House would soon be free.

**Mr. LABOUCHERE**: Having regard to the hour, Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put.

*Resolved,* That the introduction and several stages of the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill have precedence of all Orders of the Day and Notices of Motion, including the Rules of Procedure, whenever the Bill shall be set down for consideration by the Government as the first business of the day.

## BANKRUPTCY OFFICES (SITES) [CONSOLIDATED FUND].

### COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Plunket.*)

**Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR** (Donegal, E.): Sir, this scheme proposes, for the relief of the Treasury, to draw upon a fund created by the fees in bankruptcy proceedings. The result is that by appropriating money for the building of offices the fund will be depleted, and the fees charged in bankruptcy proceedings correspondingly raised. In that way the intention of the Legislature, in passing the Act of 1883, will be entirely set aside, and the proceedings under it rendered unsatisfactory by reason of unfair charges on the estates. I shall, therefore, oppose your leaving the Chair, Mr. Speaker, unless there is some assurance given by the Government that the amount lost to the creditors under this Bill will be made good.

**The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS** (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University): This is only a formal stage of the matter, although it is, of course, a necessary stage. The Bill resulting will go before a Hybrid Committee. I do not quite understand the objection of the hon. Member. [Mr. Arthur O'Connor: Where are you going to get the money?] The 11th clause of the Bill provides that—

> "All expenses incurred by the Commissioners under this Act shall be defrayed by the Treasury out of any surplus paid over to them out of the Bankruptcy Estates Account in pursuance of Section 76 of the Bankruptcy Act, 1883: provided that, if after any sum in respect of such expenses has been paid, the Board of Trade notify to the Treasury that an amount is required to answer the demands in respect of bankrupts' estates, and the securities and moneys held by the Treasury on the account mentioned in the said Section 76, are insufficient to pay the amount so required, the Treasury shall, for the purpose of meeting the deficiency, charge on, and pay out of, the Consolidated Fund, or the growing produce thereof, the sum expended in pursuance of this section, or such part thereof as appears to them to be required."

Money will be found out of these funds, and the Treasury will make good such sums as may be called upon.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Matter *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

*Resolved,* That it is expedient to authorise the grant, out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom, of a sum to meet any deficiency which may arise in the payment of the expenses of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Works and Public Buildings incurred under the provisions of any Act of the present Session for the acquisition of property and the provision of new buildings for the Bankruptcy Department.

Resolution to be reported upon *Monday* next.

## *MOTIONS.*

### METROPOLITAN POLICE PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State under "The Metropolitan Police Act, 1886," relating to lands in the Parishes of Leyton (Essex) and Coulsdon (Surrey), *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Stuart-Wortley and Mr. Secretary Matthews.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 208.]

### LICENSING LAWS AMENDMENT BILL.

*Considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

*Resolved*, That the Chairman be directed to move the House, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Licensing Laws.

Resolution *reported:*— Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Houldsworth, Colonel Bridgeman, Mr. Samuel Smith, and Mr. Whitmore.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 207.]

### STANNARIES ACT (1869) AMENDMENT BILL.

*Ordered*, That the Select Committee on Stannaries Act (1869) Amendment Bill do consist of Seventeen Members:—The Committee was accordingly *nominated* of,—Mr. Charles Acland, Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. Abraham, Mr. Seale-Hayne, Mr. T. W. Russell, Sir John St. Aubyn, Mr. Charles Hall, Mr. Gedge, Colonel Blundell, Mr. Elton, Mr. Mallock, Mr. G. Cavendish Bentinck, Mr. Hozier, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Clancy, and Mr. Conway; with power to send for persons, papers, and records.

*Ordered*, That Five be the quorum.—(*Mr. Charles Acland.*)

### MINING LEASES (DEVON AND CORNWALL) BILL.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Order for Committee on the Mining Leases (Cornwall and Devon) Bill be read, and *discharged:*"—(*Mr. Charles Acland:*)—Bill, by leave, *withdrawn.*

### ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Akers-Douglas.*)

MR. PARNELL (Cork): I should like to ask the hon. Gentleman what Business the Government propose to take first on Monday?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS): I understand the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) will introduce the Bill for the amendment of the Criminal Law in Ireland.

MR. PARNELL: I beg to give Notice that on the Motion for the introduction of the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill I shall move as an Amendment—"That this House will immediately resolve itself into Committee to consider the state of Ireland."

Question put, and *agreed to.*

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes after Two o'clock till Monday next.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Monday, 28th March,* 1887.

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MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First, Second, and Third Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 1) *, and *passed.*

*Report*—Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment * (10).

### IRISH LAND LAW BILL.

QUESTION.

THE DUKE OF ABERCORN: Seeing the noble Earl the Lord Privy Seal in his place, I would ask him a Question of which I have given him private Notice —namely, When the Irish Land Bill will be printed and circulated among the Members of your Lordships' House? Also, I desire to ask him, if he is able to state the time when the Government will take the second reading?

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Earl CADOGAN): In reply to my noble Friend I beg to say that, in pursuance of Notice already given, I propose to explain to your Lordships the Irish Land Bill of the Government on Thursday next. If it should be the pleasure of the House to read the Bill a first time, it will be printed and circulated immediately, and will, I think, be in the hands of your Lordships a day or two after that. In regard to the second reading, it is impossible for me to fix a day this evening; but I may say that it is the wish of the Government to proceed with the measure as soon as possible after the Easter Recess.

### ALLOTMENTS BILL.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF JERSEY asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether they would introduce the Allotments Bill in that House at an early date? The Bill had been promised in the Speech from the Throne, and if it was to be passed it would be well that it should be passed early in the summer, so as to enable necessary arrangements to be made before Michaelmas; but, from the flow of words in "another place," there did not seem to be much prospect of the Bill being brought forward there. He felt sure that their Lordships would entertain in a kindly and practical spirit a measure of this nature for the advantage of the labouring classes. It was very likely there might not be so large a demand for additional allotments as was sometimes supposed; but the introduction of a practical measure with fair and compulsory clauses, into their Lordships' House, would have a most beneficial effect in reducing the very high and, in some cases, extortionate rents which were exacted for allotments.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Viscount CRANBROOK): I am very sorry that the only answer I can give to my noble Friend's Question is that the Bill will certainly not be introduced before Easter. I cannot at present fix any particular day for its introduction.

THE EARL OF JERSEY: Will it be introduced into this House?

VISCOUNT CRANBROOK: I cannot answer that Question.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY) said, he could not foresee what the state of Business would be. It was necessary very much to arrange the introduction of Bills in this House in reference to the possibility of their being introduced into the other, and with reference to the possibility of their being passed in the other, and the time they would take in each House. The Government had not yet decided what course would be taken.

THE EARL OF JERSEY: I only asked the Question in order to get from the Government an assurance that the Bill will be introduced this Session under ordinary circumstances, and that there is no intention at present of shelving the subject.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I can assure the noble Earl that there is no intention whatever on the part of the Government to shelve the question.

## RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL—PETITION OF THE SOUTH EASTERN RAILWAY COMPANY.—MOTION.

LORD BRAMWELL said, that last Friday he presented a Petition from the South Eastern Railway Company, praying that the Company might be heard by counsel at the bar against the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill. He might take the opportunity of saying that his clients, he was about to say—[*Laughter*]—he would adopt the word—his clients the Railway Company, who were represented by him, and who desired to be represented by counsel, had not presented that Petition in a spirit of obstruction. The application he was now making had not been originally suggested by them, but by himself to them. He wanted to present, not an abstract, but a concrete case—the particular case of this particular Company—upon the subject upon which they were called upon to legislate. The Petition stated two facts, neither of which could be contradicted. One was that under an Act passed in 1836 they made their line, and were empowered to charge certain rates and tolls. The other fact, equally indisputable, was that the Bill proposed to take away the right to charge these rates. It seemed to him only necessary to state these facts in order to obtain a favourable answer to the Petition that his clients might be allowed to employ counsel before their Lordships against the Bill which proposed to interfere with their rights. The noble Lord in charge of the Bill had stated that there was a special reservation by Parliament of its right to revise these rates and tolls. But no lawyer would raise such a contention, as this reservation was only to be found in Acts of Parliament passed long subsequently to the Company's Act of 1836. As he had said, he had not been requested by the Company to bring this matter before their Lordships, but he had made the suggestion to the Company himself. As they would be affected by the principle of the Bill now before their Lordships, they ought, in all fairness and justice, to be heard against it. It was not to be supposed that the case of the South Eastern Railway Company was so bad that it was not worth while to hear them. That he denied, and no lawyer would contradict him. What would be thought of a tribunal or Judge that first decided a case was too plain to hear the party, and then without hearing, decided against him? The Company he represented would be seriously affected by the Bill; and in fairness, reason, and justice, they ought to be heard upon it. He therefore moved that the South Eastern Railway Company be heard by counsel against the Bill.

*Moved*, "That the prayer of the petition of the South Eastern Railway Company, presented on Friday last, praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill, be complied with."—(*The Lord Bramwell.*)

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Lord Stanley of Preston) said, that when he came down to the House, he was prepared only to speak to the point to which the noble and learned Lord (Lord Bramwell) had begun by calling attention, and that was whether or not it was expedient that this Bill should be argued by counsel at the Bar. He (Lord Stanley of Preston) was prepared to show that it was not expedient for the House to acquiesce in the Motion which the noble and learned Lord had made. Having consulted the practice of the House on former occasions, in order to see what precedents there were for counsel being heard against Bills in their Lordships' House, he found that it was at least 40 years since any Motion similar to that which the noble and learned Lord had made had been proposed in that House. He would not weary the House by going through the authorities; but there were at least ten or a dozen measures with regard to which this proposal had been made, the latest occurring between the years 1835 and 1840. No doubt, in very exceptional cases, counsel had been heard at the Bar in opposition to measures. An important debate took place in the House on June 10, 1850, with regard to a Petition concerning the Australian Colonies Government Bill, when it was ultimately decided by a sufficient, though not a large, majority that it was not expedient for the Petitioners to be heard by counsel at the Bar in opposition to the Bill. Sir Erskine May, in his *Parliamentary Practice*, laid down the Rules which had always prevailed with regard to the discussion of Bills of national interest, and stated that it had not been unusual, when particular persons were affected, to allow them to be represented by counsel. In making that observation Sir Erskine May was doubtless referring to the practice of hearing counsel before Committees. With respect to this Petition, the Company in question had not communicated with anyone in charge of the Bill upon any of the grievances which they alleged. There was nothing, he maintained, complicated about the question to need their Lordships hearing counsel upon it. He would point out that the Bill did not touch the revenue of the Companies; and that it did not deal in anything like the sweeping manner stated with the traffic arrangements. For instance, as regarded the question of the reduction of fares, he had expressly stated, in introducing the measure, that it did not attempt to deal with them in any comprehensive manner. The noble and learned Lord would probably not contend that Parliament, in these latter matters, had reserved to itself the right of dealing with them on the grounds of general policy, bearing in mind, of course, the interests of the public on one hand, and those of the Companies on the other. As regarded this particular Petition, it was not presented till Friday evening before the debate. He had no doubt their Lordships would give it full consideration; but there was nothing about the case to induce them to reverse the uniform practice of the House for at least 40 years. Not only would the course proposed be exceedingly inconvenient; but it was difficult to see how the Petitioners would benefit by its adoption, inasmuch as there were very few counsel who would be so well able to lay their case before the House as the noble and learned Lord. The measure was, he thought, in the general feeling of the House, a useful and workable one; and the Company, as he had said, had not made any communication to those who were in charge of the Bill. He trusted the House would not accede to the Motion of the noble and learned Lord, for its effect would be only to lead to delay. It would not be productive of any advantage to the Companies, and it would be extremely inconvenient to the practice of their Lordships' House.

Lord BRAMWELL said, he should like to point out that the South Eastern Railway Company could not petition against the second reading of the Bill. What they asked was to be heard on clauses which particularly affected them. The noble Lord the President of the Board of Trade based his argument on the assumption that the Bill would not affect the revenue of this Company. If the Company had a guarantee to that effect from the noble Lord, of course they would desire nothing more, and would be satisfied. They, however, believed that it would affect them; and, in the name of justice, those who were going to be injured by this legislation should be heard before the injury was done. He did not understand Sir

Erskine May to say that such a Petition as that should not be heard. He asked, as a matter of right, that the Petitioners should be heard.

Motion *disagreed to.*

## COLONIES (NAVAL AND MILITARY SERVICES).

### MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

*Moved* for, "Address for Report of the Committee appointed last year to consider the position of officers in receipt of pensions and desirous of entering upon military or naval service in the Colonies; also the Correspondence resulting from that Report between the Committee and the Lords of the Treasury."—(*The Viscount Sidmouth.*)

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of ONSLOW) said, there would be no objection on the part of Her Majesty's Government to lay upon the Table of that House the Report of the Committee or the Correspondence which followed; but he would point out that, in the latter case, the documents were not yet quite complete. The Government, however, would consider what Papers could be laid before the House. He would state the result of what had been agreed to. It was manifestly in the interests of the Empire that no obstacle should be thrown in the way of the Colonies organizing their own defences in such a way as to become a source of additional strength to the Empire, and the Government, therefore, had always been anxious to further the efforts of the Colonial Authorities in that respect. Many retired officers of the Army and Navy were at present forced to live a life of idleness, and it would be a great advantage to the Colonies that they should have the advantage of the services of those experienced officers. In that way the forces of the Colonies might be rendered efficient and trustworthy in case of emergency. What had been arranged was this—that a naval officer on the Active List would not draw his half-pay from the Imperial Government, but would look wholly to the Colonies for his remuneration; but, on the other hand, his services would count for increased pay and retirement allowance, and also for promotion. An officer employed an an engineer or torpedoist would be deemed to be in naval or military employment. Present holders of appointments in the Colonies would be given a month to decide whether they would hold under the old or the new arrangements. Any Army officer might count his time in the Colonial Service for pay and half-pay. It was hoped the effect of these regulations would be to give the Colonies the advantage of the matured experience of the officers of the Imperial Service. The present more rapid system of promotion caused by retirement after a certain length of service would give the Colonies more opportunities of availing themselves of the services of retired officers than they formerly had. It was not always convenient to present Papers which were not complete, and in ordinary circumstances it would probably have been better to wait; but, in view of the meeting of the Colonial Conference, he thought it would be very desirable that such Papers as were ready should be presented as soon as possible.

Motion *agreed to.*

## LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACTS—REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

### QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN, in asking Her Majesty's Government, When it is proposed to issue an analytical index to the Evidence of the Royal Commission on the Irish Land Acts? said, there had recently been presented to their Lordships House a very voluminous Blue Book, containing the evidence given before the Land Commission, of which he had had the honour of being a Member; but the importance of that volume as a book of reference was extremely diminished by the absence from it of an analytical Index, one of the consequences being that anyone who desired to find out what the general opinion was upon a particular point was involved in a difficulty similar to that of the individual who searched for the proverbial needle in a bundle of hay. That there was an Index he was aware, because the excellent and painstaking Secretary to the Commission had begun to prepare it some weeks ago; and he (the Earl of Milltown) was certain it was not the fault of this gentleman that the Index was not printed at the same time as the Report. He hoped the noble Earl the Paymaster General (Earl Beauchamp) would be able to state that the fault was not with the Government Departments in having neglected to supply the Secretary to the Commission with the necessary assistance. Most mischievous results might follow from quoting isolated passages from the evidence of particular witnesses; and it was only by seeing how the general consensus of evidence went that an opinion could be safely arrived at as to the point to which the evidence tended. As he was on the subject of the Commission, he might be allowed to say a word on a personal matter. He saw by the newspapers that the other day a gentleman, in making a very furious onslaught on the Commission in general, elsewhere described him (the Earl of Milltown) as one of the most malevolent and persistent rack-renters in Ireland. All he could say was that, if he was a type of the rack-renter at large, the Irish tenant had not very much to complain of, for he had never in his life raised a rent, nor had ever a dispute with a tenant; nor did he deserve much credit on that ground, because the whole of his patrimonial estate—so far as the agricultural part of it was concerned—was let in leases for ever in the early part of last century. It would puzzle even the ingenious gentleman who had made the onslaught on him to demonstrate how he could possibly raise his rents, as these rents were at present less than a quarter of the prairie value. If this gentleman would make the discovery, he should be very much obliged to him if he would communicate it to him.

THE PAYMASTER GENERAL (Earl BEAUCHAMP), in reply, said, that neither the Home Office nor the Treasury had any answer to give to the noble Earl in this matter. He (Earl Beauchamp) could only give an answer similar to that tendered under similar circumstances by the Secretary of State—namely, that Her Majesty's Government had no authority or control whatever over a Royal Commission when once appointed. The noble Earl who asked for an acceleration of the work of preparing the Index must apply to the Chairman of the Commission, or the Secretary who had the work under his control.

House adjourned during pleasure.

House resumed—The Lord Kintore chosen Speaker in the absence of the Lord Chancellor and the Lords Commissioners.

### CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 1) BILL.

Brought from the Commons and read $1^a$: Then Standing Order No. XXXV. having been dispensed with for the remainder of this day's sitting, *moved* that the Bill be now read $2^a$; *agreed to;* Bill read $2^a$ accordingly; Committee *negatived:* Bill read $3^a$ and *passed.*

House adjourned at One o'clock A.M., till a quarter past Ten o'clock.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Monday, 28th March, 1887.*

MINUTES.] — NEW MEMBER SWORN — Sir Balthazar Walter Forster, knight, *for* Derby (Ilkeston Division).

PUBLIC BILLS—*Leave*—Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) [*First Night*], *debate adjourned.*

*Ordered—First Reading*—Metropolis Management Acts Amendment (Westminster) * [208].

*First Reading* — Christchurch (Southampton) Charter (Correction of Error) * [209]; Pharmacy Acts Amendment * [210].

*Committee* — Metropolitan Open Spaces Act (1881) Extension [171]—R.P.

*Third Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 1) *; Army (Annual) * [202]; Isle of Man (Customs) * [199], and *passed.*

## *QUESTIONS.*

### NATIONAL BOARD OF EDUCATION (IRELAND) — EXAMINATIONS FOR WORKMISTRESSES.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether in examinations for workmistresses, under the National Board of Education, it is usual to forward work done in presence of the Inspector of Schools to the Education Office in Dublin, in order to have it further examined; and, if he will state the general practice in such cases?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Commissioners of National Education inform me that for some time past the practice has been as stated, the object being that the work may be tested by a competent female authority.

### LAND ACT (IRELAND)—MR. WRENCH, A LAND COMMISSIONER.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord

Lieutenant of Ireland, On whose recommendation was Mr. Wrench made a Land Commissioner; to how many landlords was he agent, and who were they; is he the same Mr. Wrench whose conduct was condemned by the Court of Appeal, in December, 1885, for refusing to weigh for certain Catholics in Clones, where a sole right of weighing pork is asserted by the landlord to whom he was then agent; and, did the Government ascertain how many tenants had judicial rents fixed on the properties with which the new Land Commissioner was connected?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The office is not in the gift of the Irish Government. I have no information on the second and fourth paragraphs. With respect to the third paragraph, I am informed that Mr. Wrench's conduct was never condemned by the Court of Appeal. The action referred to was one in which no question of religion was involved, and turned solely upon the rights of a patentee of fairs and markets, whose agent Mr. Wrench was. The Court merely decided on certain questions of law, holding that the patentee could not sustain his rights to the extent claimed by him.

## EVICTIONS (IRELAND) — THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE'S ESTATE, QUEEN'S COUNTY.

MR. LALOR (Queen's Co., Leix) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true, as stated in *The Times* of the 23rd instant, that the Marquess of Lansdowne, Governor General of Canada, commenced the eviction of his Luggacurran, Queen's County, tenants on the 22nd instant, when he evicted Mr. Denis Kilbride; whether he is aware that Mr. Kilbride's rent is £760, and his valuation only £424, which leaves his rent 80 per cent over his valuation; whether the Marquess of Lansdowne only offered a reduction of 20 per cent on Mr. Kilbride's rent, which would still leave the rent 44 per cent over the valuation; whether Mr. Kilbride has a lease of his holding, and is thereby precluded from the benefits of the Land Courts; and, as many of the other tenants are in a worse position, will he continue to employ the Forces of the Crown in the eviction of those people?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I do not consider it any part of my duty to make inquiries as to particular transactions between individual landlords and their tenants, or to test the accuracy of every newspaper paragraph on such subjects. I think it right to state, however, that information has been voluntarily supplied to me which would seem to show that, while Griffiths' valuation was intended to be below the fair rent, the Marquess of Lansdowne actually receives less than Griffith's valuation, if interest on landlord's outlay be taken into account. The changes in the law which the Government are prepared to recommend will be announced on Thursday next in the House of Lords.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman state from what source he received the information?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No; I cannot give the hon. Gentleman the source; but it is one in which I have confidence.

## LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—GRAND JURIES, CO. DOWN.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Grand Jury empanelled for the County of Down, at the recent Spring Assizes, consisted of 12 landlords, and eight other gentlemen who are the agents of landlords; whether, in Ireland, Grand Juries are usually constituted in like manner; whether Grand Juries, in Ireland, are the only Bodies (save Coroners' Juries) that can ignore or find true bills against persons sent forward for trial before a Judge of Assize; whether these Grand Juries have power to present or reject all applications respecting the making and repair of roads, fences, bridges, and all other works to be undertaken by the county, besides the applications for compensation for malicious injuries, and presentments for the salaries of the County Treasurers, Clerks of the Crown, Clerks of the Peace, Secretaries to Grand Juries, Coroners, Sheriffs, Medical Officers to Prisons, and other county officials; whether the Baronial High Constables appointed for the collection of the assessments made by the Grand Juries are paid out of the county cess; whether the Grand Juries appoint the Baronial High Constables; whether they have power to appoint, and do appoint, certain persons to the office, notwithstanding that other candidates frequently offer to collect the cess at lower rates, and to give the security required; and, whether, under the circumstances, the Government will make provision, in their promised legislation on the Irish Land Question, to secure to the cess-paying tenant, by proper representation on the Grand Juries, a voice in the expenditure of the county monies paid by them?

COLONEL WARING (Down, N.) said, before the right hon. Gentleman answered that Question, he wished to ask him, whether it was not a fact that all presentments which came before the Grand Jury were originated at Baronial Presentment Sessions; and, whether the powers of the former Body were not limited in almost all cases to refusing, rejecting, or confirming the presentments sent up to them by the latter?

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Limerick, W.) asked the right hon. Gentleman, whether he was aware that the Grand Jury of the County of Down was composed exclusively of Protestants?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am afraid I cannot give any information on that point. The empanelling, the duties, and the functions of Grand Juries are all regulated by Statute; and I am advised that any illegality or irregularity connected therewith would be at once corrected by the Judge of Assize on the matter being brought to his notice. The Government recognize that some change in the law is desirable as regards these subjects; but this, as well as other very important questions connected with Local Government, must stand over until more pressing matters are dealt with.

## THE COLONIAL CONFERENCE—IMPERIAL FEDERATION.

SIR SAMUEL WILSON (Portsmouth) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether, during the visit of the Colonial Representatives to the approaching Colonial Conference, the Government will take into consideration the question of arranging for a special Conference between Representatives of the United Kingdom, and of the principal Colonies of the Empire, on the question of Imperial Federation of the United Kingdom and the Colonies in its political aspect?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): I understand that there is no necessity for any special arrangements for the discussion of the question of Imperial Federation, as that will be provided for, independently of the Colonial Conference, by those influential persons who have taken an active interest in the subject; but, in any case, the terms of the despatch inviting the Colonies to the Conference preclude Her Majesty's Government from taking the action suggested.

## POOR LAW (IRELAND)—GUARDIANS—COUNTY COURT JUDGES.

MR. MAURICE HEALY (Cork) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that Mr. William Newell Barron, Q.C., County Court Judge for County Monaghan, is on the list of *ex officio* Guardians for the Carrick-on-Suir Union for the year 1887; and, whether the Local Government Board have sanctioned this, having regard to the fact that, under 1 & 2 *Vict.* c. 56, s. 23, County Court Judges are disqualified from acting as *ex officio* Guardians?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Several years ago the then Law Officers of the Crown advised that the section mentioned in this Question does not disqualify a County Court Judge from acting as an *ex-officio* Guardian of a Union in a county in which he does not preside as Judge. No part of the Carrick-on-Suir Union is in the County of Monaghan; and Judge Barron is, therefore, according to the legal opinion which guides the Local Government Board, not disqualified from acting as an *ex-officio* Guardian in that Union.

## DOMINION OF CANADA — ARMED CRUISERS.

MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is correct that the Dominion Parliament possesses authority to purchase and direct the operations of armed cruisers in Dominion waters, without the consent of the Imperial Parliament; if so, will he be good enough to inform the House the statute under which such authority was granted?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): By a reference to the 91st section of the British North American Act, 1867, it will be seen that the Parliament of Canada has power to legislate upon all questions of Militia, Military, and Naval Service and Defence. But I may add that in 1884 Her Majesty's Government were advised that all Colonies possessing responsible Governments are at liberty, independently of an Act of the Imperial Parliament, to provide and equip armed vessels for harbour defence and police, and other like purposes, within the waters of such Colonies respectively; their use being limited to those waters. It follows that the Dominion Parliament possesses the authority referred to in the Question without the consent of the Imperial Parliament.

### FACTORIES ACTS — WORKING MEN INSPECTORS.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, with regard to his statement on the 9th September, 1886, on the Vote for the Home Office, that he should always be disposed to exercise his powers in favour of appointing efficient and competent working men as Inspectors of Factories; whether he had acted in accordance with that statement in the case of the two recent appointments made by him; whether, in the future, as vacancies arise, he would be disposed to consider the claims of competent working men to those appointments; and, whether provision has been made in this year's Estimates for an increase in the staff of Sub-Inspectors of Factories?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have acted in accordance with the statement referred to, and the two appointments recently made by me were of competent working men with a practical experience of factory work and life. I have stated, more than once in this House, that it is not my intention to increase the existing staff of Sub-Inspectors of Factories.

### DWELLINGS FOR THE WORKING CLASS — THE PEABODY TRUSTEES — THE PROPERTY TAX.

MR. MORRISON (York, W.R., Skipton) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he is aware that, as disclosed by a recent Report of the Trust, the buildings erected by the Peabody Trustees (in respect of which Property Tax is remitted on the ground of charity) are let at profit rentals to skilled artizans—such as engineers, brass-finishers, bricklayers, carpenters, printers, compositors, and other persons of the good wage class, as postmen, policemen, &c.—and if he will remit the Property Tax in respect of the dwellings of the Societies established to provide improved dwellings for that class, or discontinue the remission to the Peabody Trustees, so as to preserve, as far as possible, equality in the taxation of the working classes?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, the exemption of the Peabody Buildings was due to the fact that any surplus which might arise out of the rentals of these houses was invested again in new buildings for the working classes, and that no person derived any profit from them. It was on that ground that they were exempted; and that exemption would, no doubt, equally apply to any other Societies who put themselves in the same position. The Societies which were now taxed were those which did derive a certain amount of profit.

### PUBLIC WORKS (IRELAND)—REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the Royal Commission on Public Works, Ireland, is expected to make its Report; and, when does Government propose to provide for payment of the additional expenditure incurred in unions scheduled under "The Poor Relief (Ireland) Act, 1886?"

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I was enabled to state last week, in reply to another hon. Member, that the Royal Commissioners had informed me that they are at present preparing their Report on Arterial Drainage.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid) asked if it was true, as stated, that the members of the Royal Commission were paid ten guineas a-day, or any other such sum?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, the same rule applied to them as to the members of any other Royal Commission.

### LAND ACT (IRELAND)—A COMMISSION COURT, CO. WEXFORD.

Mr. J. E. REDMOND (Wexford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that the arrangements for the holding of a Land Commission Court in Gorey, County Wexford, during the present month, have been altered, and that no such Court will now be held until July next; whether he is aware that this change of plan has caused grave inconvenience, owing to the number of cases awaiting judication; and, whether he can state the reason for this change?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The hon. Member appears to have been misinformed. The Land Commissioners state that no arrangement was made for the sitting of a Sub-Commission at Gorey during the present month, and no change has been made.

### ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—BARRACK IN COOKSTOWN, CO. TYRONE.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is contemplated to remove the police barrack in Cookstown, County Tyrone, from its present position to a comparatively remote and inconvenient site; whether he is aware that at certain periods of the year Catholics find it difficult to pass through the Orange quarters owing to Party turbulence, and that by the removal of the police barrack they are left unprotected; and, whether, having regard to the peculiar physical shape of the town in question, he will take into consideration the advisability of establishing police stations at either end?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The police are obliged to remove from their present barrack in Cookstown, as the owner of the house requires it for other purposes and has given them notice to quit. There is no intention of taking a house in a remote or inconvenient site. On the contrary, efforts are being made to obtain one in a central situation, which would place the police in a better position than they now occupy for the protection of both parties in the town. It is not considered necessary to incur the additional expense of a second barrack.

### ADMIRALTY—DOCKYARD OFFICIALS—LORD BRASSEY'S "NAVAL ANNUAL."

Mr. DWYER GRAY (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, with reference to the disclosures in connection with the recent trafficking at Chatham Dockyard in Admiralty documents containing private information, Is it a fact that certain Admiralty officials of position are in receipt of yearly money, or certain donations of money, from Lord Brassey for the purpose of editing, or assisting in editing, his *Naval Annual*, which contains information drawn from Admiralty private and confidential documents, to which these officials have access?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): I understand that a gentleman connected with the Admiralty assisted Lord Brassey in the work of editing his *Naval Annual.* He had nothing to do with the supply, or collection, of the information, or with the matter it contained. The assistance given was altogether of a private nature, and in no way connected with office hours or public duties.

### POST OFFICE—THE REGISTERED LETTER BRANCH.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is the fact that on the midnight duty, in the registered letter branch of the General Post Office, the "hand to hand" check system is not pursued; whether, during the last six months, several registered letters have been lost on that duty; whether it is the case that a junior sorter, named Cox, was required to perform a sorter's duty, without any pecuniary consideration being granted to him for the increased responsibility thereby entailed upon him, and was made responsible for the loss of a registered letter, and fined 10*s*., notwithstanding the fact that there was no proof of it having ever been in his possession; and, whether he will take steps to insure the safer transmission of registered letters, in the interests of the public, and in justice to the Post Office officials?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that when large numbers of registered letters are dealt with, it is impossible to make the charge and discharge in writing for each individual letter; but the acceptance of a certain number of registered letters by one officer from another officer without question is held to discharge the latter from further responsibility. It was the duty of the officer named by the hon. Member to ascertain the number of registered letters which he had to take over, and to check this number at the actual time he received them by the entries in a certain book. This he neglected to do; and when he subsequently checked the registered letters charged to him, the one now lost was missing. For this neglect of duty he was fined. The officer in question was paid an additional allowance of 2*s.* a-week in consideration of his employment on registered letter duty. The Regulations for dealing with registered letters are sufficient if properly carried out.

### LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—MR. FERRITER, OF DINGLE.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Ferriter, of Dingle, is still in prison on the charge of having called out "Harvey Duff" and "Stringer" at a public meeting in Dingle on the 16th January last; how long he has been in prison; whether, considering that on the hearing of the case no evidence whatever was adduced to prove that the peaceable conduct of the meeting was in any way disturbed by Mr. Ferriter, or the least indication of an attack upon either the Government Reporter or the police was manifested, he will order his release; and, whether he will enable the hon. Member for the Camborne Division of Cornwall, who was present at the meeting in question from first to last, to give him information as to what actually took place?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Owing to the shortness of the Notice given, I have not been able to receive replies to the first three paragraphs of this Question. As regards the last paragraph, I shall be happy to receive any information which the hon. Member may be good enough to furnish me with on the subject.

### LANDED PROPRIETORS (IRELAND), 1886—RETURN.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will consent to a Return of Landed Proprietors (Ireland) for 1886, in the same form as that ordered to be printed 23rd April, 1872, No. 167?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Return referred to was compiled mainly through the agency of the Inspectors under the Local Government Board; and these officers are now so fully occupied that, without an increase to their numbers, the preparation of a similar Return could not be undertaken at present. I am not satisfied that there is any such necessity for the information as would justify me in asking the House to agree to a special Vote for the purpose.

### POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTIONS IN COOTEHILL—THE RETURNING OFFICER.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true that Mr. Graham, senior, is acting as Returning Officer for Poor Law elections in Cootehill, Mr. Graham, junior, being at present clerk to the Guardians; and, if the facts are as stated, will he cause the Local Government Board to remedy the irregularity?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Mr. Graham, junior, Clerk of the Union, reports that, though his father was present and assisted him by opening the papers, he personally acted as Returning Officer, as he was bound to do, deciding each case himself, and recording the votes for the candidates. So far as the Local Government Board can form an opinion from the information at present before them, no irregularity took place in the proceedings.

### EGYPT (ARMY OF OCCUPATION)—HEALTH OF THE TROOPS AT ASSOUAN.

MR. EDWARDS-MOSS (Lancashire, S.W., Widnes) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, in view of the general tranquillity of the Soudan and Upper Egypt, it is intended to keep any British Troops at Assouan during the approaching summer; and, whether, if forces are needed at Assouan, it would be possible to relieve the present British Force by Egyptian troops during the summer months, in view of the great mortality among the British soldiers there during the hot weather last year?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Her Majesty's Government are fully alive to the danger to the health of British troops which may be caused by keeping them at Assouan during the hot weather, and I hope that the condition of affairs on the frontier may be such as to enable us to reduce this risk to a minimum.

### EVICTIONS (IRELAND) — TRIAL OF HANNAH O'DONNELL AT LIFFORD ASSIZES.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) (for Mr. O'DOHERTY) (Donegal, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the information before, and the evidence at, the trial of Hannah O'Donnell, at Lifford Assizes, for alleged forcible entry, and the informations in several similar cases, disclose the fact that the police entered the houses of the defendants, interrogated the inmates, asked them to quit, and that, for over a month, they had been watching the houses from which these defendants had been evicted; whether the houses were for most of that time lying open; whether any bailiff or other person, on behalf of the landlord, was in possession, or watching the houses; whether anything was done from the day of the eviction by the landlord to secure the possession; whether the houses were built by the tenants; whether their time for redemption, after eviction, had expired; whether the police receive any remuneration for their services from the landlord in such cases; whether Sergeant Mahony was directed by the Lord Chief Baron to say if he had a Circular of Instructions for doing as above, and whether he claimed privilege for not producing it through claiming that he acted under a Circular issued several years before; and, whether he will call for further explanations as to this case?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): From the reports submitted to me, it appears that the police entered the house referred to, spoke to the persons whom they found trespassing there and requested them to leave. The period of redemption had not expired at the time. The police did not specially watch these houses, but acted as above mentioned, when passing through the locality in the ordinary discharge of their duty. They do not act as bailiffs, or receive any remuneration from landlords for any such services. Sergeant Mahony was not directed by the Judge to say if he had a Circular of Instructions; but he stated, in cross-examination, that he acted under a Circular issued some years ago, for the non-production of which he claimed privilege. As I have already intimated, the purport of that Circular was not correctly stated in the newspaper report recently quoted by the hon. Member.

### LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—ALLEGED ILL-TREATMENT OF CONVICTS.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the article in *The Essex Weekly News* of 17th March with reference to the alleged ill-treatment of convicts; and, whether he will cause an inquiry to be made into the matter?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, he had obtained a Report from the Governor of the prison at which the convicts were alleged to have been ill-treated, and he was informed that the prisoners had greatcoats, and that the medical officer stated that they had not received any injury from their journey, although the weather was very inclement. He, however, intended to make further inquiry into the subject.

### BURIAL FUNDS — PARISH OF LLANFROTHEN, MERIONETHSHIRE.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the lady who presented the additional portion of the burial ground of the parish of Llanfrothen, Merionethshire, made any stipulations, when the presentation was made 20 years ago, that no burials should be conducted within it except with the services of the Church of England; whether, at the presentation of the ground, the then rector of the parish solicited and obtained subscriptions from the Nonconformists of the parish towards raising the wall of the new portion of the burial ground; whether there is any pathway or other mark to distinguish between the portions where the Burials Act of 1880 is or is not applicable; whether the deed, by which the present rector refuses to Nonconformists the benefits of the Burials Act of 1880, was made after the passing of that Act; whether, at the vestry of the parish held last Saturday, 20th March, the rector said that this new portion of the burial ground is as much the property of the parishioners as the highroad; and, whether he can take steps to prevent the rector from refusing to his parishioners the right of availing themselves of the benefits of an Act of Parliament, on what is admitted to be their common property?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a further communication from the rector of Llanfrothen on this subject, who informs me that he is unable to state what took place 20 years ago; but that when the land was conveyed in 1881 it was the wish of the lady that the funeral services should be conducted according to the rites of the Church of England. The rector is told that the parishioners did promise subscriptions towards building the walls; but he believes that all the expenses fell upon the rector and the churchwardens. The wall of the parish churchyard—the foundation of which is untouched—divides the two portions of the burial ground from each other. The deed was made subsequently to the Burials Act of 1880. The rector said at the vestry, in answer to an observation from some one, that the new burial ground was not his private property, that he was only a trustee, and that it was as much the property of the parishioners as the highroad on certain conditions, one of them being that funerals should be conducted according to the rites of the Church of England. I see no reason to interfere with the conduct of the rector in this matter.

## INDIA (MADRAS)—FRAUDS ON THE REVENUE.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the senior Member of the Madras Board of Revenue recently reported that he believes the Government to be regularly defrauded by its own servants of 20 per cent of its annual income; and, whether the Secretary of State will cause inquiry to be made into the whole system of revenue administration in the Madras Presidency?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): No; the loss of revenue reported as arising from improper remissions was not 20 but 0·3 per cent. The Secretary of State does not consider an inquiry into the "whole system of revenue administration in the Madras Presidency" necessary. He has, some time ago, directed an inquiry into the special point of precautions to be taken in the remission of land revenue.

## INDIA (MADRAS)—OUTBREAK IN THE GUDEN DISTRICT.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether, in the outbreak in July last in the Guden District, Madras, the police defended their station before it was burnt; how many police were engaged; what was the total of casualties on each side; and, who inhabited the two bungalows burnt by the rebels?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): There were 10 or 11 police at the station; but they allege that they were surprised while asleep, and they made no resistance. There were no casualties on either side. The two bungalows burnt were the property of the Government; but I cannot say whether they were inhabited at the time, or by whom.

## CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—DUTCH CATTLE.

MR. MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel) asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, If information has been received from Holland to the effect that Dutch cattle are free from contagious diseases; whether the Regulations in force in Holland are sufficient to satisfy the requirements of the Veterinary Department of the Privy Council, so as to allow the free importation of Dutch cattle into this country; whether any application has been made by the Dutch Government, during the last year, to place Dutch cattle on the same favourable footing as now exists with respect to cattle imported from Scandinavia; and, whether he will remove the present restrictions, so that Dutch cattle need not be slaughtered at the place of landing?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY (Lord JOHN MANNERS) (Leicestershire, E.): Information has been received from the Dutch Government to the effect that Dutch cattle are free from contagious disease; and an application was recently made to the Privy Council to permit the landing of Dutch cattle without being subject to slaughter or quarantine. In reply they were informed that the Regulations in force in Holland, under which German sheep are allowed to pass through the Netherlands to be shipped at Dutch ports, were not considered to be satisfactory, and that, in the circumstances, the Government do not deem it expedient to relax the restrictions on Dutch cattle. We have not received any reply to this communication.

## IRELAND—DUBLIN HOSPITALS—THE COMMISSION ON GRANTS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Commission on Grants to the Dublin Hospitals concluded its sittings a year ago; and, when the Report will be published?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The Commissioners concluded their sittings a year ago, as stated. I understand they have had great difficulty in coming to any agreement on the subject of their Report; but it is now expected that it will be submitted to the Lord Lieutenant this week.

## CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—THE CATTLE TRADE WITH IRELAND.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) (for Mr. O'DOHERTY) (Donegal, N.) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether the attention of the Board has been called to the state in which Irish cattle are landed at British ports from cross-channel steamers; whether he will inquire into the cause of their arriving in worse condition, after eight or 10 hours at sea, than American cattle, after 10 or 12 days on the Atlantic; whether the Board's Regulations provide for ventilation and sufficient air space, or only deal with standing room; and, whether the Board will, in conjunction with the Privy Councils of Great Britain and Ireland, cause a Departmental inquiry into this important matter, with a view to meet the complaints of those interested in the trade on both sides of the Channel?

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth), in reply, said, the subject of this Question did not relate to the Board of Trade, but to the Privy Council.

## ADMIRALTY—(CHATHAM DOCKYARD) —MR. YOUNG TERRY.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S. W.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the statement taken from *The Standard* newspaper of the 25th instant is correct—

> "Instructions from Whitehall have been received at Chatham Dockyard, directing that the son of Mr. Young Terry, as a consequence of his father's offence, be reduced from the rank of junior draughtsman, and transferred to Devonport to work as a mechanic?"

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): No, Sir. The statement in the Question is not true. The son of Mr. Young Terry has not been reduced, nor has his rank been in any way affected; but, with his assent, an arrangement has been made by which he will be transferred from Chatham to another Dockyard.

## HARBOURS OF REFUGE.

ADMIRAL MAYNE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether the Board of Trade is prepared to recommend, at once, the construction of Harbours of Refuge in such positions as are considered most advantageous, with a view to saving the enormous loss of life and property which now takes place annually on the coasts of the United Kingdom?

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): I am afraid I cannot modify the answer I have already given my hon. and gallant Friend on this subject. I can only say that, while recognizing its importance, I must point out that, as the matter would necessarily involve a large outlay, it concerns those who make the financial arrangements of the country, as well as the Board of Trade.

**Admiral MAYNE** asked, whether the hon. Gentleman would recommend the matter to the attention of the financial authority?

**Baron HENRY DE WORMS** said, he could give no answer; the matter was receiving the consideration of the Board of Trade.

### ARMY—THE AMBULANCE SYSTEM—SURGEON MAJOR SANDFORD MOORE.

**Dr. TINDAL ROBERTSON** (Brighton) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the case that Surgeon Major Sandford Moore, who originated and introduced into the Army the present ambulance system for the removal of the wounded from the field of battle, has been obliged to retire on the lowest rate of pension, in consequence of total and permanent blindness, induced, in the opinion of a Medical Board, by his extra literary duties; and, whether, under these circumstances, he would take into consideration the justice of granting to this officer some additional pension, to meet the increased expenses necessitated by his disability?

**The SECRETARY of STATE** (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The case of Surgeon Major Moore is a very sad one; and I can assure my hon. Friend that there was every disposition to approach it with the utmost possible indulgence. But I regret to say that I found myself unable, after very careful consideration, to grant an additional pension to an officer whose ill-health takes the form of loss of eyesight.

### EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE EXETER TRAINING COLLEGE—THE RECENT OUTBREAK.

**Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON** (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether, seeing that the students of the Exeter Training College still believe that those students who are suffering punishment for the outbreak which occurred have been punished unjustly, he will now cause an immediate inquiry to be made by Her Majesty's Inspector of Training Colleges into the circumstances of the outbreak; and, whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the detailed statement received by him from the Principal of the Training College?

**The VICE PRESIDENT** (Sir William Hart-Dyke) (Kent, Dartford), in reply, said, that an Inspector would visit the College in the course of a month, and the strictest investigation would be made into the cause of the outbreak. Pending that inquiry, he could not make public the statement he had received from the Principal of the College; but the statement would be handed to the Inspector who would conduct the inquiry.

### THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881, AND THE PURCHASE OF LAND (IRELAND) ACT, 1885.

**Mr. T. M. HEALY** (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it intended to adopt the recommendations of Lord Cowper's Commission as to extending the benefits of the Land Act of 1881 to holders of town parks and pasture lands, as well as to leaseholders; if not, will he now, or in the course of debate, explain the reason of the non-adoption of the Commissioners' Report on these points; and, can he give any estimate of the number of town park and pasture holders now excluded from the Act of 1881, and say on what data such numerical estimate is based?

**The CHIEF SECRETARY** (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The hon. Member will excuse my declining to make a premature statement as to the intentions of the Government with regard to land legislation, a Bill on the subject being announced to be brought forward on Thursday. As regards the number of the holders referred to, I have no reliable information before me.

### INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT (IRELAND)—ENGLISH OFFICIALS.

**Mr. J. E. REDMOND** (Wexford, N.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, with reference to the allegation that the principal posts in the Inland Revenue Department in Ireland were filled by Englishmen, most of them transferred from minor positions in London to the Dublin Office, and promoted over the heads of the Irish Civil Servants, Whether the Controller of Stamps in Dublin, Mr. W. E. Phelps, was promoted from a minor clerkship in Somerset House to the head of the Dublin Office; whether the Controller of Legacy Duty, Mr. E. Freeth, was promoted within the past two years from a minor clerkship in Somerset House to the head of that Department in Dublin; whether the two Inspectors of Taxes for Ireland are Mr. Tarlton and Mr. Smith; whether all these officials are Englishmen, and fill the principal posts in the Irish Inland Revenue Service; whether there is a single member of the Board of Inland Revenue an Irishman; and, whether there is any instance of an Irishman having ever been promoted to an important position in that branch of the Public Service?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): I am informed that the answer to the first Question is "No," and also to the second Question. The answer to the third Question is "Yes." The officials named are Englishmen; but it is not correct, as has been said, that Englishmen fill the principal posts in the Irish Inland Revenue Service, the principal offices of solicitor and collector being ably filled by Irishmen. With regard to the other Questions, I am informed that there are many instances of Irishmen having been promoted to important positions in the Inland Revenue and other Departments of the Public Service.

Mr. J. E. REDMOND asked, if the hon. Gentleman had any objection to state under what circumstances the two Englishmen mentioned were promoted to their present position?

Mr. JACKSON said, he had the information; but he thought the answer he had given would have satisfied the hon. Member. Mr. Phelps was not promoted from a minor clerkship in Somerset House to the head of the Dublin Office. He was appointed Assistant Controller in Dublin in 1871, having previously been a clerk in the Department of the Accountant and Controller General of Somerset House for 14 years, and was made Controller in 1875. In reference to Mr. Freeth, he might point out that he was not the Controller of Legacy Duty. There was no Controller of Legacy Duty in Dublin; but a Deputy Controller—a clerk of high standing and special qualifications in Somerset House—was appointed more than three years ago, because there was no one in the Office in Dublin who was considered competent to perform the duties.

Mr. J. E. REDMOND: Am I to understand that the inference from my Question is correct, that these two English officials from Somerset House were promoted over the heads of the Irish Civil Servants in the Irish Office?

Mr. JACKSON: I have endeavoured to answer the Question as put, because the inference which is possible to be drawn from the first Question, that Mr. Phelps was promoted from a minor clerkship in Somerset House directly to the head Office in Dublin, is not correct, as I have stated.

Mr. J. E. REDMOND: That is not the point which I asked. The point which I asked was, whether these two Englishmen were promoted over the heads of the Irish Civil Servants in the Irish Office?

Mr. JACKSON: I am afraid I cannot give the hon. Member any more information than I have already given. I have already stated that the inference to be drawn from the first Question was not correct under the circumstances under which these men were promoted.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): May I ask whether there is a member of the Inland Revenue Board in Ireland?

Mr. JACKSON: I believe that this Question does not refer to the Board of Inland Revenue in Ireland, but to the Board of Inland Revenue in this country. I believe there is no Irish member upon that Board, so called; but I think the House will agree with me that many of these offices have been filled, and filled with great ability, by Irishmen.

## EXCISE—BREWING LICENCES—COTTAGE BREWERS.

Mr. AGG-GARDNER (Cheltenham) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in order to protect the Excise, and to enable the formation of an accurate estimate of the amount of beer consumed throughout the United Kingdom, he will cause such cottage brewers as are exempt from the payment of brewing licences to register their names, together with the quantity of beer produced by them, once in every year?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square), in reply, said, the information that would be derived from the adoption of the suggestion was not likely to be so trustworthy or so complete as to make it worth while to impose such an obligation on the cottage brewers, or the additional duty on the Excise officers.

### LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—CONVICTION OF —— WALKER FOR MANSLAUGHTER.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, now that the elder Walker (who murdered a policeman and soldier in Belfast, and shot a second policeman) has only been convicted of manslaughter by a Belfast jury, Can he state was the report correct that Judge Lawson on the former trial told the Tyrone jury, which disagreed, that they were bound to convict Walker of murder, and that he would not accept a verdict of manslaughter; or can he say what exactly took place on this subject, and what language the learned Judge used?

MR. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) asked whether, in view of the imputation which had been cast upon Protestant jurors, the result of this trial was not sufficient to show that those imputations were unfounded?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University): Judge Lawson charged the jury that if they believed the evidence, they would be bound to convict the prisoner for murder. The Judge did not say that he would not accept a verdict of manslaughter, because that point was never raised, as the jury did not agree, and stated that there was no probability of their coming to an agreement. With reference to the Question of my hon. Friend (Mr. Johnston), the result of the trial has been already published in the newspapers.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): In consequence of the answer of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, I beg to give Notice that I shall, at the earliest moment, call attention to the scandalous conduct of the Crown in reference to the trial of these two men.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. and learned Gentleman is well aware that that term would not be permitted in a Motion or Question.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to give Notice that, at the earliest moment, I shall call attention to the conduct of the Government in relation to the trial of these two men, and shall charge them with deliberately conniving at the escape of these two murderers from justice.

### POST OFFICE—ELECTRIC CABLE BETWEEN GUERNSEY AND ALDERNEY.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is true that the cable between Guernsey and Alderney has been broken for some months past; whether there are, besides the 2,000 inhabitants of the island, a half battalion of Her Majesty's troops (the Gordon Highlanders) and a battery of the Royal Artillery stationed there; whether the Island is within a few miles of the French Coast, and might be captured and in the possession of an enemy for some days (Wednesdays to Mondays) before information could reach Guernsey and England; and, whether he will take immediate steps to have the cable repaired?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The telegraph cable between Guernsey and Alderney was broken in December, and will, it is hoped, be repaired early in May. The delay in restoring communication is due to the danger of employing a cable-repairing ship in such sea during the stormy weather of the winter.

### CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIOTS AT BELFAST—MR. W. M'HARDY, CHIEF CONSTABLE OF LANARKSHIRE—PRINTING HIS REPORT.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, during the past two months, constables have been employed in watching printers at Messrs. Aird and Coghill's, Glasgow, and at the office of *The Hamilton Advertiser*, Hamilton, whilst the printers have been engaged in setting up the Report of Mr. Wallace M'Hardy, Chief Constable of Lanarkshire, on the subject of the Belfast riots; and, if so, by whose orders the constables were thus employed; how many of them were so employed; and how their pay for this work, and the cost of printing the Report in this manner, will be provided?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) (who replied) said, it is not the fact that constables were employed during the last two months in watching printers at either of the places mentioned while the printers were setting up Mr. M'Hardy's Report. It is the fact that during the printing off of the Report, which occupied a few hours, Mr. M'Hardy and one of his constables were present to prevent any copies being surreptitiously removed and published before it was officially issued.

MR. SEXTON: Has the Report been presented?

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I am not aware.

### ORDER—THE HALF-PAST TWELVE O'CLOCK RULE—BLOCKING.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If the notices of opposition, set down against several Bills and Motions of much public interest and importance by the Junior Lord of the Treasury, are to be taken as the dissent of Her Majesty's Government to the principles of such Bills or Motions, or only to the time of night at which they may be brought forward for discussion?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): My hon. Friend will understand that it is impossible for me to give a categorical answer to his Question. In some cases the Government object to the principles involved in the Bills or Motions which stand for consideration; but in by far the greater number they are of opinion that the importance of the questions involved requires that they should be dealt with by the House at an earlier hour than 12.30. I wish it was possible to secure that important questions should not be taken at an hour that would not insure for them full consideration without putting a block against them.

### THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE CELEBRATION —THE PUBLIC HOLIDAY.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, as only one public holiday is to be observed in celebration of the 50th anniversary of Her Majesty's accession, the Government have finally decided to fix such holiday for Tuesday, 21st June; and, whether Monday, 20th June, which is actually the date of such anniversary, would not be a more convenient day for the public generally?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The question raised by my hon. Friend has engaged the serious consideration of Her Majesty's Government; but they find it necessary to adhere to the arrangement they have already made, that Tuesday, the 21st of June, shall be observed in celebration of Her Majesty's Jubilee.

### REGISTRATION OF PARLIAMENTARY VOTERS—LEGISLATION.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will grant facilities for the discussion and amendment of the alleged unsatisfactory laws relating to the qualification and registration of Parliamentary voters; and, whether he is prepared to assent to the appointment of a Select Committee to consider and report on the amendment and codification thereof?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster), in reply, said, he would not enter into any engagement with regard to Parliamentary Business until progress had been made with the Irish legislation which the Government had announced to the House.

### PARLIAMENT — ADJOURNMENT AND SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE — THE EASTER RECESS.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S. W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the statement which has appeared in the public Press is correct, that the Government propose to—

> "Continue the sitting of Parliament right through Easter, if the Second Reading of the Criminal Law (Ireland) Bill be not taken before Good Friday;"

and, if this statement is not correct, whether he will now state, for the convenience of the House, when the Easter Recess will begin and end?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): Her Majesty's Government are most anxious to consider and to meet the convenience of all sections of the House; but they feel it to be their duty to ask the House to give the Bill for the Amendment of the Criminal Law (Ireland) a second reading before they can propose the usual Easter holiday—["Oh!"]—and I say this, expressly disavowing any menace or threat to any hon. Member; but the House will understand that a measure which the Government regard as vital to the maintenance of law and order in Ireland—[Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Why don't you hang the Walkers?]—and on which they stake their own existence, cannot be postponed even for the usual holiday, much and sorely as it may be needed.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked, whether it was intended to read the Land Bill in the House of Lords a second time before that Assembly adjourned for the Easter holidays?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I am not able to give the hon. and learned Gentleman the information which he requests; but I will undertake to say that progress will be made very rapidly with that Bill in the House of Lords, and I expect it will reach this House before the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill has left it.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) wished to know whether, in the event of the second reading of the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill not being taken out before that time, the House was to sit on Good Friday?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I hope, Sir, it is not necessary to make any statement with respect to that day.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that it is stated in the public Press that it has been arranged that the House of Lords shall rise the day after the introduction of the Land Bill until the 18th of April?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I am sorry to say that I have not been able to acquaint myself with the statements in the ordinary organs of public information, nor do I know what the arrangements of the House of Lords are.

MR. W. H. JAMES (Gateshead) asked whether there would be any, and if so, what interval between the introduction and the first reading of the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill and the second reading?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I hope there will be sufficient interval to allow hon. Members to acquaint themselves with the contents of the Bill.

### CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT (IRELAND) BILL—THE DIVISION ON THE MOTION OF URGENCY.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked, Whether the attention of the Speaker had been drawn to the fact that the number of votes in the Division List of last Friday was given as 349; whereas only 348 names appeared in the list, and whether the record would be amended in that respect?

MR. SPEAKER: If that is so, the correction will be made in due course of time.

## *MOTIONS.*

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### CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT (IRELAND) BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE. FIRST READING.

[FIRST NIGHT.]

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) in rising to move for leave to introduce a Bill—

> "To make better provision for the prevention and punishment of crime in Ireland, and for other purposes relating thereto,"

said: I rise, Sir, to perform with what success I may, a difficult and responsible, and in many respects a painful task, under Parliamentary circumstances somewhat different from those which have usually attended those who have had similar tasks before in previous Parliaments. [*Cries of* "Hear, hear!"] I do not allude to the fact, which I presume hon. Gentlemen had in their mind when they gave me that cheer, that for the first time we have, at all events, the legitimate Opposition against us. I allude rather to the circumstance that this debate has been preceded by a discussion on more or less the same subject which has extended over four nights. During that discussion we have had a remedy for the state of things existing in Ireland which I shall have to put before the House—we have had a remedy proposed for it by the legitimate Opposition; and though I do not mean to discuss that remedy now, I wish the House to have it in their minds, when they listen to the statement I have to make, and to compare it and its probable efficacy with the difficulties it is intended to meet. Right hon. Gentlemen opposite are of opinion apparently that at this moment if we could alter those judicial rents which were fixed before the recent fall in prices we should so completely remove all the causes of disorder in Ireland that we might indefinitely postpone the measures which I am going to ask the House to consider. I would ask the House to recollect, in the first place, that we also have proposals which we mean to make to the House at the earliest opportunity, dealing, as we think, in a far larger spirit with the land difficulties in Ireland. I would ask them also to recollect, what I before stated to the House that, with the same state of facts before them, the Gentlemen who brought forward the Amendment last Tuesday refused to touch judicial rents in 1885 or 1886; and I ask them further to recollect that even if the measure which they propose was carried out to its fullest extent, it must do very little to diminish the evictions of which they complain; and that, if I might remind them of a concrete case, it would do nothing whatever to prevent such occurrences as the Glenbeigh evictions, and the events which occurred on Lord Clanricarde's property. These occurrences produced the most painful impression on the public mind in connection with evictions in Ireland. That is all I can say about the remedy proposed for the present disorders in Ireland which the right hon. Gentlemen opposite have made themselves responsible for. There is an Amendment down on the Paper to-day—not put down and not standing in the name of any Member of the legitimate Opposition. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Well, I believe I was wrong. I believe we must now count among the legitimate Opposition the hon. Member for Cork and his followers. But there is an Amendment now standing on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) which asks us, before we proceed to consider this measure, to make further investigation into the state of Ireland. I am afraid that the House is already but too well acquainted with the state of Ireland, and if anybody entertains doubts as to the condition of that country, surely it is not the hon. Member for Cork and his Friends. They, at all events, if no other hon. Members of this House, should know to what an unhappy state that country is reduced. They should know the condition of Ireland as an artificer recognizes his own handiwork. If I may judge from the tenour of the speeches which were delivered by right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench in the course of the debate which concluded on Friday, they are of opinion that we have no case for the Bill we are to introduce, because, as they think, the statistics of crime in Ireland do not show a state of affairs so grave that any strong measure of Criminal Law Amendment is justified. I stated before, and I state again, that we do not rest our case upon statistics of agrarian crime in Ireland. We take the view now that was taken by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone)—

> "That you must not only consider the amount of crime, but you must take that amount into consideration in conjunction with its source, with its character, and with what it indicates and what it means."

That opinion, which I have already quoted to the House—and which the right hon. Gentleman thanked me for having quoted—I now repeat as exactly indicating the frame of mind in which Her Majesty's Government approach this question. We do not think that the amount of crime in Ireland is, taken by itself, a trustworthy indication of the state of the country. Much of that crime is merely in the enforcement, as everybody knows, and as was stated over and over again last week, of a system of intimidation and terrorism which there prevails. The amount of that intimidation and the amount of that terrorism is no more indicated by the amount of crime necessary to keep it in force, than the security which we derive from the law in respect of murder is indicated by the number of men whom it is annually necessary to hang in order to preserve our lives. But do not let hon. Gentlemen suppose because I preface my statement with these remarks that statistics in Ireland indicate a favourable contion of affairs in that country with regard to the operation of the Criminal Law. It is not so. Since 1845—the year in which the statistics of agrarian crime were first collected—there have been only seven years in which the present melancholy list of crimes has been exceeded in amount. In every one of those years was exceptional legislation in existence for the enforcement of the Criminal Law, except in 1880. It is true that in 1880, 1881, and 1882 the amount of agrarian crime was largely in excess of any that prevails now. But, Sir, though it is true of those three years that they were in excess, the statistics of crime show not only a most formidable list of such crimes, but a steady increase during the last three years. I do not think I have the statistics with regard to the last three years. In any case, hon. Gentlemen will readily take it from me. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] They will hardly deny the statistics which are in the hands of every Member of the House—I shall not doctor them—they will hardly deny that the statistics of crime at this moment, for the 12 months, show an excess over the previous years, and that that excess shows no sign of diminishing. I am going to give hon. Gentlemen the statistics. But those statistics on the Table of the House are not the only statistics which are of interest as showing the amount of crime, and the failure of law in Ireland. At this moment, 498 persons in Munster, 175 persons in Connaught, 221 persons in Leinster, and 23 persons in Ulster are under special police protection. The number of policemen required to carry out the special police protection is 770, and some idea of the additional cost thrown on the taxpayers of the country by the condition of Ireland may be indicated by the fact that each of these policemen costs, on an average, £70; and that the total cost, therefore, for extra police required to give the necessary protection to individuals amounts to no less a sum than £55,000 a-year. So much for statistics. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] I am afraid if hon. Gentlemen resent the shortness of time which I have taken over an argument on which I do not rely, they must be conscious of an enormous fund of patience if they contemplate the appalling length of the speech I shall make on arguments on which I do rely. We have two things to prove before we ask the House to assent to this Bill. We have first to prove that the law is not enforced over a large and important part of Ireland; and, secondly, we have to show that the vacuum left by the absence of the ordinary law is filled up by law which is not that of the Crown, and which is not that of Parliament. In order to prove the first of these propositions—namely, that over a large part of Ireland the existing machinery of the law is inadequate, I will ask the House for a moment to confine their attention to the West and South West of Ireland, the Counties of Mayo, of Galway, of Clare, of Limerick, of Kerry, and of Cork—an area of about one-third of the whole of Ireland, and, roughly speaking, of about half of that part of Ireland exclusive of Ulster. I shall make as few quotations as I can, but I am afraid I cannot explain matters without making more than I could wish. I shall read some extracts from the charges of the Irish Judges delivered at the Assizes in the counties which I have named. I shall present them in geographical order, beginning at the North. I take first the charge of Judge Lawson in the County of Mayo. The learned Judge said—

"He regretted to say that on this, the first occasion on which he had the honour of presiding in this Court of the County Mayo, he could not say anything to them in favour of the state of things which existed in that county. In his opinion, judging from the official reports laid before him, he regretted to say the county was in a state of great disorganization. It was very hard to say how long that state of things would continue, or if there would be any remedy found to put an end to it. The present state of things was morally unsatisfactory, and, according to the reports made to him, approached as near to rebellion against the authority of the country as anything short of civil war could be."

An hon. MEMBER: What date is that?

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): He does not say anything about crime.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The date of the Report is March 10. I shall now read an extract from the charge of Mr. Justice Murphy at County Galway. He says—

"Mr. Foreman and Gentlemen of the Grand Jury of the county of Galway,—The number of cases that are to be brought before you at the present Assizes is very small. I think in all it only reaches 16, and these offences, as represented to me in the lists furnished by the officers of this county, do not appear to be of a serious nature. If this return of offences manifested or indicated the condition of your county there would be presented to me the opportunity—of which I would, indeed, be very glad to avail myself—of congratulating you on the condition of your county. However, I regret to say, from the returns made to me by the Inspectors of the Crown and the officers of the county, it appears that any conclusion derived from the list presented for your investigation would be wholly incorrect. They report to me that there is a complete paralysis of law, that it is unable to protect many of the inhabitants in the exercise of their most ordinary rights, and that lawlessness is perfectly triumphant."

I now pass from the County of Galway to the County of Clare, where the Judge who presided, Mr. Justice O'Brien, said—

"I find by the usual returns which are compiled by the Constabulary that even with regard to the undetected crime there is a large increase since the time of the last Summer Assizes over the corresponding period of last year."

He goes on to relate certain horrible crimes which had been brought under his notice. He then proceeds to allude to a speech made five years ago by the present Lord Fitzgerald in that place, and Mr. Justice O'Brien says—

"Nearly five years have elapsed since that charge by Lord Fitzgerald, and no person can say after so long a period of time this country is not worse off in every respect—worse off in obedience to the law, worse off in the peace and security of life and property, and worse off as regards every class and every rank in that material prosperity, of which peace and security to life and property are the necessary foundations."

He goes on to say—

"All these returns which I have before me, and the information which has reached me from other quarters of an unquestionably authentic character, lead me to the conclusion that law to a great extent has ceased to exist in this county; the common rule of obedience which must exist in every civilized State and which every honest and well-disposed citizen is expected to perform and must yield, if unwillingly, is abrogated for the present by an influence and replaced by an influence fatal to industry, fatal to prosperity, fatal to every interest connected with the welfare of the community, and an influence that I still cannot but be persuaded is becoming dominant here and elsewhere through the want of courage and firmness in meeting it."

I pass from Clare to Limerick, and I hope the House will have patience with me. Mr. Justice Johnson said—

"Gentlemen, turning to the list of reported cases furnished to me by the authorities, I am sorry to say that the county presents no advance towards peace and order since the time that I last had the opportunity of addressing you. On the comparative calendar which is presented to me, the serious offences have not diminished, but increased. I find that firing at the person has increased by two; assaults inflicting bodily harm have increased from 13 to 24; cattle stealing has increased from one to four; maiming of cattle has enlarged from 9 to 16; intimidation has doubled, and the very serious offence of seizing arms and levying contributions has more than doubled."

An hon. Member: How many were there?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: He does not say how many. I am quoting his address. He goes on—

"I find here that in no less than nine cases parties of armed men"—this, perhaps, answers the hon. Member's question—"frequently disguised, and all under circumstances which enable them to avoid detection, and be made amenable, have gone deliberately roaming about through the country for the purpose of wreaking vengeance, or committing injury on the unfortunate inmates of peaceable homes, sometimes, as I have said, to the large number of 30, sometimes being smaller—varying from two persons to 30—sometimes their visits being accompanied with acts of brutal violence. I have a case before me where no one was made amenable, where a peaceable family were dragged from their beds at night, and the women of the house cruelly beaten. In another case before me, because a son had the courage to stand up for his father he was shot through the thigh. Now, gentlemen, it is quite idle for us to shut our eyes and say there is peace where there is no peace, while these things are going on through the country."

Now I come to the County of Kerry. "These returns," says the learned Judge in his charge—[An hon. Member: Who is the Judge?] Mr. Justice O'Brien. He says—

"These returns present a picture of the County of Kerry such as could hardly be found in any country that has passed the confines of natural society, and entered upon the duties and the relations, and acknowledged obligations of civilized life. The law is defeated—perhaps I should rather say has ceased to exist—houses are attacked by night and day, even the midnight terror yielding to the noonday audacity of crime; person and life are assailed; the terrified inmates are wholly unable to do anything to protect themselves, and a state of terror and lawlessness prevails everywhere."

"You can easily understand," he goes on to say—after giving some dreadful cases of crime, and the amount of damages which the Grand Jury had to present—

"You can easily understand that these things do not at all give you any idea of the material injury that arises from crime and disturbance in the loss of employment, the discouragement of capital, the injury to trade, and the multiplied consequences of all kinds detrimental to the community that arise from insecurity to personal property and life. To all these evils we have to add another, and, perhaps, the worst of all—that of which you are conscious, which experience and observation teach every day in all the forms of social life—a system of unseen terrorism, a system of terror and tyranny."

I now come to the County of Cork, and this is my last quotation, for which I apologize. Mr. Justice Johnson says—

"The list which has been furnished to me of the cases that will be submitted to you for the purpose of finding bills is exceeding small for a great county of this kind. It consists practically of only 14 cases, which are all crimes or offences such as everyone must expect to find in any agricultural community. Happy would it be if that represented the real state of affairs in the county. From the returns presented to me judicially, which it is my duty judicially to bring under your notice—from those returns I am unable to say that this great county is in an orderly or in a satisfactory state. The returns from this and the West Riding—and they cover a period of only about three months since the last Winter Assizes—show that in a considerable portion of this great county people who live in remote and isolated districts are subject to violence, alarm, plunder by day and by night—principally by night—from gangs of armed men, disguised, who rove through the country, seizing arms, plundering sometimes property, always with a show of violence, often accompanied with threats, and sometimes with assaults of the meanest and most dastardly character, and sometimes with grave results."

And after giving the usual melancholy account of the crimes to be brought before them, including one of a most horrible character, where a man's daughters were dragged out of bed by ruffians, who poured pitch on their heads, and cut off their hair with shears, he concludes thus—

> "Now, as long as there is no security—and there can be no security in the part of the country where that takes place repeatedly and without detection or possibility of detection—so long as there is no security there is no order; so long as there is no order there can be no peace; and so long as there is no peace there can be no prosperity."

Now, I ask the House to observe that the men who give this testimony are not partizans—they are not politicians travelling about the country in order to make up a good Parliamentary case. They are Judges of the land—Judges of the High Court of Ireland—who, in the exercise of their duty, feel it incumbent on them to make these public statements as to the condition of the counties through which they travel; and I ask whether a more terrible picture of the state of society was ever drawn—[*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"]—than that which is given in these charges? I heard one hon. Gentleman on the Front Bench opposite say "Oh." I do not know what power of colouring he may have at his command; but, if he could draw from his imagination a picture of a state of society worse than that given by these Judges, I can only say that I should think very highly of his skill as an artist. That shows the condition of that part of the West of Ireland—about, as I have said, one third of all Ireland, and about one half of that country exclusive of Ulster. Those charges exhibit the condition of public order in these districts. Now, what is the power of the law to meet that state of things? The hon. Member for East Mayo, the other day—when he was attacking me—said, what was the use of adding battalion of police to battalion, and raising the Estimates for the Constabulary Forces year after year; and I replied to him that it was in vain to raise the Force if the Courts of Law were incapable of fulfilling their elementary official functions. This is the evil which we have especially to meet. It is this existing paralysis of the Courts of Law which we have specially got to meet. Whence this paralysis of the Courts of Law? The first answer I have to give is that evidence to convict is not forthcoming. I shall not trouble the House with any long particulars on the subject.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): We want the particulars.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I dare say I can give enough to satisfy the hon. Gentleman. In the counties I have just enumerated the number of offences reported since the previous Summer Assizes amounted to 755. The number of cases for which there was no clue to the offenders was 536.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): How many threatening letters?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The figures I am giving have no reference to threatening letters. The number of cases in which the injured persons declined to swear any information was 422. So terrified were they by the system of intimidation which prevails in those counties, that they dare not come forward to give evidence against those who outraged and ill-treated them.

MR. PARNELL (Cork): Is the right hon. Gentleman now giving us the number of agrarian offences in those counties, or of all offences?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; these are the number of grave offences which the Judges had to try.

MR. PARNELL: Agrárian?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No; not agrarian. I am sorry my voice has failed; but I distinctly stated that I was dealing with the counties the condition of which I have just described. With regard to the interruption of the hon. Member for Cork, it was a relevant one, and I am glad he made it, because I want to say a word of explanation to the House upon the term "agrarian offences" used in the statistics before the House. There is no doubt, I think, that the police have somewhat unduly restricted the cases which they describe as "agrarian." I make that observation simply to guide hon. Gentlemen aright, because it makes no difference in my case. My case is that the whole of this part of Ireland is sinking into absolute disorganization, and I decline altogether to confine my attention to agrarian crime; and I say that if in 422 cases out of 755 where injuries have been inflicted those who were injured did not dare to come forward to give evidence, it matters not whether the crime is agrarian or non-agrarian. It shows a condition of terrorism which this House is bound to deal with, and without delay. I have stated to the House one of the causes of the paralysis of the law. Another cause is that when they did come forward the juries, in the face of the clearest evidence, declined altogether to convict. [MR. T. M. HEALY: Hear, hear!] If I gather rightly the cheer which the hon. and learned Member for North Longford has just indulged in he highly approves of the action of these juries.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I repudiate that altogether. I referred to the action of those juries which refused to convict the Walkers and other Orangemen.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course, I accept the disclaimer of the hon. and learned Member; but he will admit that his cheer was ambiguous. I was very unwilling to trouble the House with a multiplicity of narratives, but I must do it. I will give them a case from County Roscommon. A man was tried at the late Spring Assizes for assault. In his charge Mr. Justice Murphy said—

> "The case is clear. You can disregard the evidence if you please. It is perfectly uncontradicted,"

and so on. After half an hour's deliberation the jury returned a verdict of "Not guilty." His Lordship thereupon said—

> "Gentlemen, your verdict is contrary to the evidence. It is your privilege to disregard the evidence and your oaths."

Here is another example from County Tipperary, one of the counties which the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) told us was in a quite satisfactory state, in which the right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that some after-glow of the golden age still lingered. I will read some extracts to show how the juries did their duty, and I specially call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) to the fact that the cases I am about to give are not agrarian cases. The jury do not content themselves merely with giving a verdict against an unpopular landlord or in favour of the evicted tenant. Demoralization has passed far beyond that point. A farmer named Clarke was indicted for obtaining money by means of forged documents purporting to be given by the agent. The case was proved in the clearest manner.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Who says so?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Judge charged strongly for conviction; but the jury, which consisted principally of farmers in the same rank of life as the prisoner, disagreed. The next case is also in the favourite county of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. John Morley)—Tipperary. Two men, named Fitzgerald and Donovan, were charged with having assaulted two men on the high road near Cappawhite, named Crowe and Ryan. They were not unpopular landlords; they were not land grabbers; they were not men who had taken evicted farms. The evidence was perfectly clear, and the Judge charged strongly for conviction, but the jury acquitted.

MR. PARNELL: On what authority does the right hon. Gentleman make these statements?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am giving the House facts which I have ascertained from what I consider an authentic source.

MR. SEXTON: They are not facts at all.

An hon. MEMBER: They are falsehoods.

MR. PARNELL: What is your authority? What are you quoting from?

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): Mr. Speaker, may I say one word?

MR. SPEAKER: It is very difficult for me to secure the proper conduct of orderly debate unless I have the co-operation of hon. Gentlemen. I must appeal to hon. Members for that co-operation. The right hon. Gentleman can be replied to subsequently in argument.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not exactly know what the hon. Member complains of. I am reading the information given to me of an authentic kind, upon my responsibility as a Minister of the Crown. Here is another case in Tipperary. A man named John Hogan——

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Where is this from?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: He was charged with a most horrible outrage on a respectable girl. He was acquitted by the jury in the face of the clearest evidence, and why? Because he was a well-known leader in that neighbourhood. That is, no doubt, a case indirectly connected with this agitation. Whether hon. Gentlemen have any reason to be proud of it I leave them to consider. The truth is that in Tipperary, as in other parts of Ireland, there is not the slightest chance of getting a conviction from a jury if either agrarian or Party questions come into consideration. Do not let hon. Gentlemen suppose that I think that Northern juries are immaculate. I make no such assertion. What I say is, that the whole mode of regulating the jury system in Ireland is one that makes it absolutely unworkable. Is there any man in the least acquainted with Ireland who is not aware that, if a case involving Party considerations comes before a jury, and if you know beforehand the political complexion of the men who compose that jury, you can tell beforehand not only what the jury will do, but how they will be divided in their verdict? And I ask you whether, in these circumstances, it is possible for the jury system to be—what it was intended to be—an instrument for the execution of justice? I heard of a case the other day singularly illustrating the frame of mind with which many Irishmen regard the jury system. There was a man over 70 years of age who applied to be excluded from the panel, and he was told that he should be so relieved. Next day he returned and said he would rather be on the panel, "for it might give him an opportunity of serving a friend."

Mr. T. M. HEALY: It is a disgrace to make anonymous charges of that kind.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The charge I make is not against an individual, but against the system. Let the hon. Gentleman get up in his place and say if, in his opinion, the juries in Ireland may be trusted on Party questions to act according to their oaths. But, Sir, I regret to say that Party feeling is not the only nor the most tragic cause of the failure of the jury system in Ireland. Terrorism also prevails. I heard the other day of jurors in a respectable position who had begged of an officer whose duty it was to order some jurors to stand by that he would include them in the jurors to be asked to stand by. The officer refused, but said that if they did not come up to be balloted for he would not fine them. They, therefore, said that they did not dare to take advantage of this privilege, because they had been canvassed and they must appear. Hon. Gentlemen will see what that means. It means that they had been canvassed by friends of some of the prisoners for trial, and were told what verdicts they were to give. They were unwilling to violate their oaths; yet they could not free themselves from the tyranny which oppressed them. Is this to be wondered at when we see the Press of Ireland—at least, the organs of the hon. Member for Cork—publishing the names of jurymen who have given verdicts one way, and holding them up to public reprobation? That system has certainly been carried out by *United Ireland*, whose editor has actually defended it. Here is one sentence, to the effect that—

> "The most besotted and bloodthirsty juror will, we fancy, moderate his eagerness for conviction if he knows there is a right of appeal from the dark security of the jury-box to the calm judgment of his neighbours in the world outside."

There is exquisite irony in the words "calm judgment of his neighbours outside." The judgment may be calm, but the modes of enforcing it are terrorism, Boycotting, shooting, and outrage. A gentleman wrote to *United Ireland* somewhat complaining of this method of procedure; and this remark is in the form of a footnote to the correspondent's letter. [An hon. Member: What date?] The date is the 11th of December, 1886—

> "In a self-governed Ireland it would, of course, be intolerable that men should not be allowed to differ freely in the jury-box and everywhere else; but in the state of chaotic conflict to which the English rule reduces us he who is not with us is against us, and must ex-

pect to be dealt with accordingly. That is not liberty, but it is the way of winning it, and the only way within our power at this moment."

What does this mean? It means that those who desire the separation of Ireland from England — [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Does the hon. Member doubt it? The phrase used is "a self-governing Ireland." I will modify my sentence, because it does not affect my argument. I say those who desire a self-governing Ireland are prepared to promote that object by exercising avowed terrorism on every man and woman—on every man who goes into a jury-box determined on giving a verdict according to the evidence. I apprehend that the House will be satisfied, from the evidence adduced, that the jury system in Ireland is not now a workable system. The truth is that all Irishmen—those who are not terrorized —regard that system as a means of advancing their own political objects. They go into the jury-box only with the view of defending a partizan or condemning the conduct of an opponent. So long as you have a system which is worked in that manner, it is in vain to hope that justice will be administered in Ireland. I apprehend that having shown that over this part of Ireland a system of absolute lawlessness prevails to the extent I have described, I might almost rest there the case of the Government for amending the Criminal Law. But, in truth, the case does not rest upon that alone. It does not merely rest upon the fact that the ordinary law has ceased to fulfil its appointed functions. It rests not less largely upon the fact that the space which the law ought to fill is now occupied by the National League. Four nights of last week were mainly occupied by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite trying to whitewash the National League. It was represented by the right hon. Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) as an innocent trades union which existed for the sole purpose of protecting weak tenants against strong landlords. If that were its object, not a single man on the Ministerial side of the House would have a word to say against it; we should accept it as we accept the trade unions which flourish in this country. I do not deny that there are men connected with that League in Ireland who have at heart simply and solely the good of the tenant; but in the tangled web of Irish politics there are very few perfectly white threads, and how far they go beyond the agrarian objects which hon. Gentlemen suppose they have in view, let them consider the number of persons actually Boycotted. It may be that some members of the National League have only in view these disinterested objects; but we cannot forget that the League leans in part upon those dark, secret societies which work by dynamite and the dagger—whose object is anarchy, and whose means are assassination. But leaving out of account the connection of the National League with secret societies, and taking only a few short public utterances of its members, I say that it is an absurd travesty of the facts to say that the National League has any resemblance whatever to a trade union which exists merely for the protection of the weak. Let me read one or two extracts from speeches which will bear out what I say. The hon. Member for North Wexford (Mr. J. E. Redmond), on the 7th of December last, made this statement to his hearers — [*Cries of* "Where, where?"] — at Castlerea— "You are not only to fight for a reduction of rents——"

Mr. J. E. REDMOND (Wexford, N.): I never spoke at Castlerea.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It was the hon. Member for North Fermanagh (Mr. William Redmond). He said—

> "You are not only fighting for a reduction of rents, not even for your homes and against landlordism. You are fighting to-day in the struggle in which your fathers fought, for the old immortal cause of Ireland having the right to govern herself. . . . And if you win in this, you are also striking a blow for Home Rule, the Irish nation, and for the green flag of our people."

[*Cheers.*] Hon. Gentlemen appear to think that this is an innocent quotation. They forget what it was I was attempting to prove—that the National League is not merely a League for keeping tenants in their holdings——

Mr. T. C. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour): Considering the extent to which I have been responsible for the National League for the last four or five years, I claim the right, in face of the imputation of the right hon. Gentleman, to ask whether this was a National League meeting at all at which the hon.

Member for North Fermanagh had spoken the words?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Will the hon. Gentleman deny that the hon. Member for North Fermanagh is an important member of the National League? I apprehend the hon. Gentleman will not deny that the hon. Member for North Fermanagh is one of that Parliamentary Party which uses the National League as its main political instrument. At the same meeting the hon. Member for East Galway (Mr. Harris) said—and I call the attention of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian to the quotation—

> "This is not a question between small reductions and large reductions; it is not a question of what a man is able to pay at present prices; and it is not a question of sympathy for good landlords or bad landlords; but, my friends, the great mighty question is whether the lands of Ireland shall belong to the people of Ireland, or whether they shall belong to the enemies of the people. I am not going to indulge in a No Rent Manifesto. But we put a programme before you that will lead to that result—that will first take one slice, then take a second slice, and we will keep slicing at it until nothing remains."

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I rise to Order; and I ask you, Sir, whether, seeing that the Government indicted the hon. Member for Galway for this speech, and that the Judge at the trial told the jury that they must not consider that they had the speech before them, as there was no proof that it was delivered as read out—I ask you, Sir, whether a Member of the Government can still produce that speech in this House in order to found his case upon it?

Mr. SPEAKER: This is not a question of Order at all. It is done upon the responsibility of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: One more quotation I shall make from the speech of the hon. Member for South Galway (Mr. Sheehy). He said—

> "He would advise the tenants not to be in a hurry to purchase their holdings, or to buy from the landlord anything that really belongs to themselves, and what was it in the land that did not belong to themselves? It must be beneath the ground."

That is going a step even beyond prairie value—

> "There were other purposes they should never lose sight of—the resolve of the Irish people never to lie calmly under the British yoke, never to relax their efforts until they had the green flag free in their own country. They should never forget that was the first object of national organization. He appealed to them to remember their own interests, to remember the weakness of the enemy, and nothing could defeat them but their own cowardice. Ireland expects that one and all, young and old, will join hands against the dual enemies—landlordism and the English Government."

Now, Sir, have I or have I not now shown proof conclusive to the House that the leaders of this so-called innocent organization mix up—and intentionally mix up—a policy of terrorizing and plundering the individual with that of the disruption of the Constitution? And if that be so, I hope that we shall hear no more from right hon. Gentlemen opposite of this trade union theory as connected with the National League. If this were a mere barren theory—if hon. Gentlemen opposite contented themselves with going to Ireland and making speeches of this kind which led to no effect—I should be scarcely inclined to quarrel with them, and I should be the last to interfere with that particular display of their energy. But, unfortunately, these speeches are enforced by a mode of intimidation painfully familiar already to this House, but over which, I am sorry to say, I shall still have to detain them for a few moments. I allude to the question of Boycotting. I do not know whether hon. Gentlemen would like me to read some anecdotes of instances in which Boycotting has been put in force. [*Cries of* "Go on!"] I will humour hon. Gentlemen; but I cannot always give the names in such cases for obvious reasons. In the West of Ireland, towards the end of 1886, a private meeting of the committee of a local branch was held, and afterwards a local newspaper published what purported to be an account of the proceedings and resolutions passed. The resolutions condemned a firm for supplying goods to an obnoxious trader, who was a shopkeeper who had supplied the police, and calling on the members to strictly Boycott obnoxious persons, on pain of expulsion.

Mr. W. H. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.): I rise to Order, Sir. The right hon. Gentleman is reading anecdotes which imply serious charges against certain people in Ireland. I want to know whether he will have the common honesty to——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The imputation of a want of common honesty addressed to the right hon. Gentleman is out of Order.

MR. W. H. REDMOND: Mr. Speaker, I did not——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Mr. W. H. REDMOND remained standing, amid loud cries of "Order!" and "Name!" but eventually resumed his seat.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The effect of the resolutions to which I have referred was that the traveller for the firm in question was refused orders by some traders.

MR. W. H. REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman give the name of the firm in question?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I would give the name if I could do so with safety to the parties concerned. It is a respectable Dublin firm.

Mr. W. H. REDMOND again rose. [*Cries of* "Order!" *and* "Name him!"]

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Shortly afterwards the president of the branch was arrested for drunkenness, and a letter from the firm was found in his pocket, addressed to himself. The letter regretted and apologized for supplying goods to an obnoxious individual, and promised not to repeat the offence again. The Boycotted shopkeeper was refused a supply of goods by the firm soon after. Also in the president's pocket were found rough copies of the Boycotting resolutions which had been published in the newspaper. The following is a copy of the letter referred to:—

> "To———(the president of branch National League).—(Address)———. Dear Sir,—We regret very much to find that we have given offence by sending goods to a party in your town who we now understand is in bad repute, and, had we been aware of it, of course we should not have executed his order, which was sent us by post and executed in the regular course of business, and trust you will kindly explain this, not only to your own branch, but cause it to be explained in neighbouring branches, as you can easily see we were not to blame, and, of course, will not supply his orders in future. However, we trust you will have the matter set right for us, as we should be sorry to give any offence in any way, and oblige yours truly, ———."

There are more serious cases than that; but that will sufficiently show the powers of the National League. Here, however, is another case. In 1883 a low-class butcher took the grazing of a small farm from another man, at a small annual rental, on the condition that it was to be surrendered at any time when demanded. In the spring of 1886 the landlord, not having received 1*d.* by way of rent from the butcher, sent for the latter to meet him at his house. At the same time he sent a similar message to a neighbouring farmer. At the interview the landlord said he wanted the land in order to let it to this neighbouring farmer; and the butcher expressed himself perfectly satisfied and agreed to surrender the land. Failing to do so, however, he was dispossessed, and in October, 1886, the neighbouring farmer took over possession. At a fair held in the same month this farmer was prevented from buying stock, owing to the intimidation practised by the butcher, for which he was subsequently prosecuted and convicted. After this the farmer and his family became very obnoxious, and he was referred to as a grabber at a meeting held in November at the chapel-gate after Divine Service; the local blacksmith, who for years had worked for him, refused to shoe his horses any longer; he had to procure the necessaries of life from a place some four and a-half miles distant; and his neighbours decline to hold any intercourse with him. At the end of 1886 this farmer was denounced as a land-grabber at a meeting, and in the beginning of the present year he was being vigorously Boycotted. Early this year one of his workmen was hooted and groaned at, and a few days afterwards a strange woman sent for the farmer and warned him to give up the farm. The wife of the working man who, as stated above, was hooted and intimidated, was confined a short time afterwards, and the local midwife refused to attend her, as being the wife of a man who worked for a Boycotted person. Was not that a terrible state of society? [*Laughter.*] Does anyone find that a ludicrous incident, or one for laughter? Recollect, this is not an agrarian case—properly speaking—for the tenant had voluntarily given up his farm and had not been evicted, and this is the result of it. [An hon. MEMBER: These are anonymous stories.] Then I will take another case. In December, 1881, Laurence O'Hara was evicted for non-payment of two years' rent of a farm in the Pilltown district. His inability to pay was due to intemperate habits and idleness. The landlord placed caretakers on the farm until February, 1884, when it was taken by Pat Carrigan at the rent paid by the former tenant. Since then Carrigan has been rigorously Boycotted, and also anyone who speaks to him or has any dealings with him. At present six persons are wholly and 18 persons partially Boycotted for working for or associating with Carrigan. At various times during the past three years, several persons have been summoned before the local branch of the National League to answer charges of having spoken to or worked for Carrigan, or to get forgiven for having done so. In many such cases the proceedings were reported in the local National papers. Again, on the 2nd of August, 1885, at a special meeting of the Thurles National League, summoned by placard, and attended by about 180 persons, a resolution was adopted condemning the practice of dealing with obnoxious persons. This resolution was directed against Thomas Ryan, owner of the principal hotel, who was in the habit of letting cars to the police for eviction duty, and supplying Emergency men. In about a week Ryan found he was completely Boycotted, and he sought for forgiveness by the National League; but in the absence of Father Cantwell, the president of the League, nothing could be done. Ryan wrote to the National League towards the end of August, 1885, tendering his submission, and offering to accept any terms imposed on him. A special meeting of the League was summoned for the 30th September, 1885, to consider the case. About 300 attended, and by a majority of 270 it was decided that he was not sufficiently punished, and that the Boycotting should continue for six months longer. Another special meeting was held on October 11, 1886, and about 250 persons attended. Ryan's submission was then received, and the Boycotting was removed. Ryan has not let cars to the police or bailiffs since he submitted to the League. Here is another case which seems to be of peculiar hardship. A man—having made some money in America—about the end of October last year took an evicted farm. He paid a half-year's rent in advance, and bought 30 head of cattle, spending about £300. [*Cries of* "Name!"] No; it is one of those cases in which I cannot give the name. The National League immediately took up the matter, and a priest addressed his congregation about the "grabber," and condemned his action. The man attended this priest's chapel. [An hon. MEMBER: What chapel?] Hon. Members are perfectly aware that I cannot give the name. Having refused to give the name of the person concerned, I cannot stultify myself by giving any indication that may lead to his identification.

MR. W. H. REDMOND: That is a slander on the Catholic Church.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The man attended this priest's chapel, and after the address mud was thrown at him and he was hooted at. His servant attended before the National League and promised to leave his employment, and eventually it was found necessary to afford him personal protection. Believing he could not hold out against the Boycotting, he wrote to the priest asking to be allowed to hold the farm for the half-year for which he had paid rent, and that he would then give it up. The priest held up the letter at chapel, and told the congregation its purport, and asked if the man's request should be granted. They decided it should not be granted. It was then agreed to hold a public meeting about the case. The man has since been rigorously Boycotted. The hon. Member for North Fermanagh has told me that I am slandering the Catholic Church. I will read him a case which will show how the National League treat the Catholic Church when the minister does not happen to agree with them. A National League meeting was held at Ballinakill, near Woodford, County Galway, on the 13th of March, 1887, for the purpose, evidently, of preventing Sir H. Burke's tenants from settling with him. The parish priest of the place is the Rev. J. Calligy, who is unpopular with the disaffected, owing to his opposition to agitation. A leading Land Leaguer—Francis Tully—in addressing the meeting, said—

> "I am sorry our priests are not with us today. If they were I would have a word with one of them. The Easter dues will soon be called, and I would advise you to pay it to the campaign fund, and let the old boy, Father Calligy, go and eat the turkeys in the big house. You can speak to him if you like, but there is no law to compel you."

It appears, therefore, that ministers of the Catholic Church who happen to incur the anger of the Land League are treated with very scant respect by the friends of Gentlemen opposite. Here is the last case I will read. Towards the end of 1886 a committee meeting of a local branch of the National League was held, and a car driver appeared before it, charged with having driven the police. On entering the room he tried to defend his action, and one of the members asked him to sign a guarantee that he would not drive the police again. He refused, and he was then turned out of the rooms. A Boycotting resolution was passed against him. He was Boycotted, and the demeanour of the people became so hostile that he subsequently attended the committee, asked for pardon, and promised never to drive police again. He was refused pardon, and, thereafter, he could only get provisions secretly, and no one would speak to him.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman—and I think it will save the time of the House—if we may take it that these alleged facts came from the officials of Dublin Castle, or from the correspondent of *The Times* newspaper?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Does the hon. Gentleman really suppose I would quote unauthenticated extracts from *The Times*, or from any other newspaper, as evidence on which to ask the House to increase the stringency of the Criminal Law in Ireland? There is one more special case which I will bring before the House, because it shows—as well as the anecdotes I have read to the House also show—that this Boycotting is in no sense confined to cases where there has been eviction of tenants. A farmer was Boycotted for having taken from a landlord grass land which had never been in the possession of a tenant, as the hon. Gentleman well knows. I do not know whether the House would desire that I should go minutely into the facts of the case. The man paid his rent in advance, when his attention was called to a resolution passed at a convention in Wexford, "that no landlord's grass should be taken." The House will observe that the resolution of the League in this case was not directed against land-grabbers, or against landlords who attempted to let lands from which a tenant had been previously evicted; it was passed against landlords as a class, and not in favour of any tenants whatever, and the persons who passed it were acting in the interest of a class war, and intended to make use of that resolution, as they would of any weapon that came to hand, to destroy a representative of that landlordism which, out of this House, hon. Members constantly and were never tired of denouncing. But if anyone desires to have an idea how far this system of Boycotting extends, and how the National League is mixed up with it, I should like that he would look at only one issue of *United Ireland*. I have here some eight or nine announcements which appeared in one issue only of one newspaper. The first was—

> "County Sligo—the Rev. P. Lowrie, parish priest, presiding. It was passed unanimously that John Henry O——"

—I will not venture upon the Irish names—

> "be adopted as the candidate for this electoral division; that Henry Breck send in his resignation at once, to save the expense of a contest. William Alexander, Sub-sheriff, was the only person who could be got to purchase the hay and straw got on a Boycotted farm, and saved by Emergency men."

Now, here you have, first, the ordinary course of Boycotting; and, secondly, the extravagant pretension that by their system of Boycotting the National League are to manage local elections. Here is one from Meath—

> "At next meeting, at Rathmore, 25th March, the people will be expected to pay their subscriptions for the year, as a remittance is due to the Central League."

Then here is one from Kilkenny—

> "The hon. secretary brought under the notice of the meeting that cars have been supplied at Clonmel to emergency men and others, and in the past week two cars were supplied to parties who were unknown. The hon. secretary also brought before the meeting the fact that, since last meeting, evicted land had been taken. The general feeling was that hunting should be stopped."

So that you will observe that the National League are determined not only that the land from which the tenant has been evicted shall now be cultivated, but that it shall not, even in a state of nature, serve for amusement, or for any use whatever to mankind. Then there is this—

> "At Drimore, a case of land-grabbing was postponed for the purpose of giving the accused parties an opportunity of being present."

I will not go on with these extracts. The interest with regard to them lies in the fact that, as I have said, they are all taken from one issue of one newspaper, and they show the extent to which the system on which I have been commenting extends. If the House desires to know the extravagant pretensions of those who direct this terrible weapon of Boycotting, and how far they go beyond the mere agrarian objects which right hon. Gentlemen opposite think those persons have in view, they cannot do better than simply look down the columns of advertisements in the same newspaper with regard to evicted or surrendered farms. Would the House allow me to read out some of the other heads or titles under which persons are Boycotted? They included—"Caretaking on evicted farms," "Being unpopular as a landlord," "Acting as agent," "Associating with Boycotted persons," "Supplying necessaries to the police," "Purchasing necessaries from Boycotted persons," "Having acccommodated obnoxious persons," "Not joining the National League."

Mr. T. C. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour): Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he would give the name of any person who had been Boycotted for not joining the National League? I shall be able to satisfy the right hon. Gentleman that the information he has been supplied with upon the subject is perfectly untrue.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: For "not joining the National League"—that spontaneous association of which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle spoke. I hope hon. Gentlemen will allow me to state the case in my own way. My point at this moment is not the number of persons Boycotted, but the number of Provinces in which the National League presume to interfere to use Boycotting to carry out their will. "Not joining the National League," "being related"—that is being the father, the mother, the son-in-law, and so forth—"to a Boycotted person, being related to persons who have been Crown witnesses at one time or another," "for having given evidence in any case for the prosecution," "for driving police in the execution of their duty," "for not voting for Nationalist candidates at Poor Law Guardians' election," "for being appointed teacher at a National School, contrary to the wishes of the people," "for having caused his wife to change her religion," "for being suspected of having paid rent," "for not paying rent to League trustees," and, lastly, "for having obtained compensation for being shot at." I am glad to see hon. Gentlemen appreciate the humour of that. Well, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman opposite will recollect that, in the earlier part of my speech, I dealt principally with that broad belt of the country which lies on the West and South West of Ireland, and I gave from the Judges' charges an account of the terrible condition of that region; but I would point out to the hon. Gentleman who thinks that the disorders of Ireland do not extend beyond its limits, that the very worst district in Ireland for Boycotting is the South Eastern Division. The Returns of the number of Boycotted persons are divided by the police, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian well knows, according to the districts of Divisional Magistrates—Western, South Western, South Eastern, the Northern, and the Midland. Well, the South Eastern—which includes the counties of Carlow, Kilkenny, Queen's County, Tipperary, Waterford, Wexford, and Wicklow—has a pre-eminence—an unhappy pre-eminence—as regards persons totally Boycotted, over any other Division of Ireland, and only falls short by one of the grand total, which includes those who are both partially and completely Boycotted. [Mr. W. E. Gladstone: Read the figures.] As the right hon. Gentleman asks me, I will read the figures. The number Boycotted in the Midland Division—would you like the counties too?—[Mr. Gladstone: No.]—was 91, the persons Boycotted in the Western Division was 124, the persons Boycotted in the South Western Division was 282, the persons Boycotted in the South Eastern 281, and the persons Boycotted in the Northern Division was 58. In other words, on the date to which this Return refers, there were 836 wholly or partially Boycotted in Ireland.

Dr. TANNER: How many Protestant Home Rulers were Boycotted?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Are there any Protestant Home Rulers out of the House? I think, Sir, I have given the House some idea of the extent to which this dreadful system of Boycotting extends. One consequence of it, however, has not been adequately dealt with. One of the main objects of the right hon.

Gentleman's Land Bill of 1881 was to give every tenant in Ireland, out of Ulster, a right of sale in his holding. That goodwill would amount probably in the South of Ireland to something between 15 and 20 years' purchase of the rent, and it was intended by the right hon. Gentleman that if in any case the tenant had to leave his holding he should have as one of his assets this most valuable tenant right. But the value of that tenant right has been absolutely destroyed by the National League. It is now of no use to the landlord, and it has been taken by force from the tenant. Under the baneful tyranny of the National League a tenant who has to leave his holding, or who elects to leave his holding, has now no power whatever of selling his tenant right. It has lost all value; nobody dares buy it; it is useless to the man who has it to sell, and it is useless to the landlord on whose hands it is thrown. Indeed, the action of the National League in this matter amounts to an absolute destruction of a valuable asset which was, as I have said, created by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. And those who pretend that the action of the League is directed towards the benefit of the tenant must surely forget that the most tyrannous landlords in Ireland have never done anything to deprive the tenants of their property comparable to what the League has done through their method of action. I have shown what the professed objects of the Leaders of the Land League are. I have described to you the terrible nature of the punishments and sufferings which the proceedings of the League inflict. I have shown you that the violent speeches which they make in Ireland are speeches which bear serious fruit, and which have terrible consequences; and I do not think that any Gentleman who has not given his mind to the subject can realize fully the gravity of the situation with which we have to deal. This League interferes not merely with dealings between landlord and tenant, but between buyer and seller, between father and son, between husband and wife. There are some diseased parasitic growths which mimicked with a ghastly success and healthy organism; they have the same laws of nutrition and decay, but they flourish according as the organism to which they are attached—weakens and perishes. Such is the Land League. It imitates with a terrible fidelity the processes and operations of the Courts of Law. It has its own jurisprudence; it has its own methods of procedure, and its own forms of punishment, and the tyranny which results from this state of things is ghastly indeed. It strikes—as I have said—at every relation of life; it does not spare the relatives of those who have offended, and its influence extends even beyond the grave. Doubtless many of those whom I am addressing are very indifferent to the rights of landlords, and are not very sedulous for the preservation of the Union; but even to them I would appeal, with some hope of success, when I say that no tyranny, however grave, no tyranny however cruel, can compare with the anarchy which must prevail if you have at the same time in the same country two sets of tribunals and two sets of law—one the legal tribunal which gets no verdicts, the other the illegal tribunal which invests its own laws, its own methods of procedure, and inflicts with unerring certainty its own forms and degrees of punishment. Now, Sir, I have completed the broad outlines of the case which I desired to lay before the House. I have, I think, shown that crime is uncontrolled and unpunished in parts of Ireland, and that in other parts of the country which are more satisfactory as regards the open commission of crime this system of secret terrorism reigns absolutely undisturbed; and I conceive that in proving these two facts I have, I contend, made out an adequate case for giving to the laws those powers which they at present lack for fulfilling their functions. I now come to a brief—but I hope an adequate—description of the aims of the Bill which Her Majesty's Government propose to the House to meet this state of things. As I have told the House, the two chief causes which render our Courts of Law in Ireland inoperative are the difficulty of getting evidence, and of getting verdicts according to evidence. I trust that the general provisions of our Bill will aid greatly in meeting the difficulty of the first of those evils. We have one special provision directed towards that object, borrowed from the Crimes Act. We have borrowed from the Scotch law—a law under which I think hon. Gentlemen will not deny that it is possible for men to be both happy and free—we have borrowed from the Scotch law a plan under which it will be possible for magistrates to examine witnesses on oath, even in cases in which no person is charged before them with the committal of a crime. I need not, however, dwell on that provision. The House is familiar with it as part of the Crimes Act of 1882 of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt). Then I come to the question of the difficulty of getting verdicts according to evidence. We propose, in the first place, to abolish the jury system altogether for certain classes of crimes punishable by a certain length of imprisonment. We provide that two magistrates shall have summary jurisdiction, and a maximum power of inflicting six months' imprisonment, with hard labour, for the following offences:—Criminal conspiracy, Boycotting, rioting, offences under the Whiteboy Acts, assaulting officers of the law, taking forcible and unlawful possession, and inciting to the above offences. I may say why in this Bill we do not propose to interfere in the slightest degree with the liberty of the Press. We entertain the hope that by giving magistrates power of summary jurisdiction for inciting to these offences we may be able to deal with that class of cases, and prevent the Press from being sharers in these crimes. Of course, it will be felt that if the jury system has really broken down it will not be sufficient to give this power summary conviction with the maximum power of imprisonment, and only for those offences. The graver criminal would escape if you leave the system in other respects unaltered. We, therefore again, with small modification, borrow from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby's Act of 1882, that—

> "If the Attorney General for Ireland shall certify that a fairer trial can be held in some other place in Ireland, the High Court shall direct that the trial be held in some other place in Ireland;"

with this limitation, however—a qualification which was not in the Act of 1882—namely,

> "That the prisoner, if he can show that a fairer trial cannot be held in such a place, should have power to make representations to the Court to that effect, and the Court shall have power to direct accordingly."

Then we give power either to the defendant or the Attorney General to have a special jury in any case in which he may think fit, thus assimilating the criminal practice to what is believed to be the civil practice both in England and Ireland. But we are here met by a problem which has exercised the minds of other right hon. Gentlemen who have had to devise some plan by which the defects of the jury system in Ireland might be overcome. It is manifest that intimidation and Party spirit may extend to every part of Ireland, and need not necessarily be confined to the district where the crime takes place. How are you to meet that case? If the change of venue and a special jury are not sufficient to secure a fair trial, what expedient are you going to adopt to meet it? [Mr. T. M. HEALY: Send them to Belfast.] The difficulty of getting over the possibility—rather that you may not get a fair trial in any part of Ireland—is enhanced by this further consideration—that even if you could get a fair trial it may be at the cost of the lives, the property, and the happiness of the jurymen, on whom you fasten the duty of giving a verdict. We think, then, that it would be unfair to cast upon the shoulders of men, unpaid and arbitrarily chosen, the whole burden of preserving the fabric of law and order in Ireland. We, therefore, have been obliged to devise some means by which the very gravest class of offences may be tried by some other means than a jury trial in any part of Ireland. The method by which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby attempted to meet this difficulty was by having a trial by Judges without a jury—Judges selected from the Irish Bench. The Irish Judges, it is no secret, very strongly objected to that expedient, and I am not prepared to say that they were wrong. At all events, this is not the expedient which we think right to adopt. We prefer to retain, as far as we can, the spirit and principle of the jury system—so long as that jury system can be applied with some hope of obtaining a fair verdict; and we, therefore, under certain limits, which I will presently describe, propose that the Attorney General for England and the Attorney General for Ireland together may certify that a fairer trial can be had in England; and then, under the same conditions as to trials as are to exist in regard to change of venue in Ireland, the trial shall, according to the certificate, be held in England. [An hon. Member: In what part of England?] The name of the place will be in the certificate. We are not of opinion that this proposal in any sense violates the spirit of the Criminal Law; but we are rather of opinion that it violates it infinitely less than the plan proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby. We are aware that in certain circumstances it might be a hardship to a prisoner to be tried in England—that a prisoner might not be able to convey his witnesses, solicitor, and counsel from Ireland to England. Therefore we provide in the Bill that Irish counsel shall be allowed to practise in English Courts, and also that the State shall provide the necessary funds for conveying both witnesses and lawyers to London.

An hon. Member: What about the fees? What is the scale of fees?

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I hope we get a good retainer.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and learned Member for North Longford ought not to complain at all of that now. Sir, this proposal we intend to confine to certain specified crimes. From this list of crimes we have carefully excluded everything which can possibly be conceived to have a political complexion. We have excluded, therefore, treason, treason-felony, sedition, and seditious libel. The crime can be tried in England if it be shown, and only if it can be shown, that a fair trial cannot be had in Ireland, or that the jurymen are in fear of their lives and property from such a trial. The only crimes to which, under these circumstances, we propose to apply this provision are murder, attempt to murder, aggravated crimes of violence, arson, and breaking or firing into dwelling-houses. As I said before, we conceive that by limiting our proposal in this way, and by preserving to the prisoner the privilege of being tried before an impartial jury, we do much more to carry into effect the spirit of the English Criminal Law than we should do by providing instead some machinery analogous to that which was passed into law at the instance of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby. Now, Sir, there is a further limitation which applies to every one of the provisions I have enumerated to the House. We recognize—and we gladly recognize—that there are parts of Ireland in which crime and lawlessness, and intimidation, and disregard of the law of the land are not in such a state as to necessitate such a stringency of the Criminal Law; and, therefore, we have provided that the provisions I have read shall only have application in those districts which are proclaimed by the Lord Lieutenant.

Mr. W. BOWEN ROWLANDS (Cardiganshire): Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether it is in contemplation to establish any uniform system of panel-striking?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not object to the interruption; but I think the hon. Member will see that I should serve no good purpose by going into details of that kind at this stage of the discussion. If I can give the House an adequate idea of the proposals of the Bill, I shall be satisfied; and I hope that, so far as I have gone, I have succeeded in doing so. So far, we hope we have made adequate provisions for securing that the Courts shall give verdicts according to the evidence; and, one of the great objects which we have in view being to insure the adequate punishment of those who exercise intimidation, and as the various combinations with which Ireland is cursed chiefly carry out their purpose by means of intimidation, we are not without hope that these clauses will be sufficient in themselves to strike effectually at any unlawful association or combination for the purpose of intimidation. But, at the same time, we felt that we should not be justified in leaving the Executive absolutely powerless to deal with such associations in the event of the failure of our plan for the establishment of summary jurisdiction. We, therefore, have introduced clauses which we think will have the effect of dealing with the case of dangerous associations. The Lord Lieutenant in Council will have power—under certain limitations which I will describe—to make it an offence against this Act to have anything to do with an association for the commission of crime, for carrying on operations for or by the commission of crime, for encouraging or aiding persons to commit crime, for promoting or inciting to acts of violence or intimidation, or for interfering with the administration of the law or disturbing the maintenance of law and order. But we are of opinion that these powers—which we think necessary, but know to be extreme—should be exercised only under limitations which we do not propose to apply to the rest of the Bill. The Lord Lieutenant, according to our proposal, may make a Proclamation making such associations illegal. If Parliament be sitting at the time, the Proclamation must be laid upon the Table of the House within seven days from the time it is made; and if Parliament be not sitting it must be summoned forthwith in order that the Proclamation may be laid upon the Table within seven days of its meeting. If either House of Parliament shall, under those circumstances, present an Address to the Crown practically condemning the Proclamation, it will be of no force.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: That is to save the Orange Society when the Liberals come in.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: When the Lord Lieutenant has issued his Proclamation, he may choose certain specified districts in which it is to have effect. The Proclamation will, in itself, extend potentially to the whole of Ireland; but we hope that it will not be necessary to extend it in practice or put it in force all over the country. There are districts, I have no doubt, where the Land League is a perfectly innocuous association; but there are districts where it is a curse to civilization. We do not propose to make it binding on the Lord Lieutenant, because he thinks that the National League or some other dangerous association ought to be put down in one district—we do not propose to make it binding upon him to put it down in every other district in Ireland. I think I have explained, I trust clearly, the provisions of the Bill we propose. As I have explained that the application of the Bill may be limited in point of space, we do not propose that the measure shall be limited in point of time. We do not propose to put it in the power of any Government to compel their Successors to have to consider the condition of Ireland at a time when it may be perfectly impossible, through Parliamentary exigencies, to carry out their plans. I do not know whether the House will care to learn the distinctions between this Bill and the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby. The main distinctions are these—his Bill was limited in point of time, and ours is not; his Bill was not limited in point of space, while ours is or may be; we have added to the offences which can be dealt with summarily criminal conspiracies in support of Boycotting, and Whiteboy offences and incitements to commit them. We have given to the prisoners what the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman did not give—a power to protest against the change of venue; and, whereas the right hon. Gentleman proposed to deal in certain cases with certain offences by Special Commission, we prefer to retain the jury system and to deal with them by change of venue to England. The right hon. Gentleman had certain powers in his Bill which we omit—certain laws relating to strangers, and certain clauses dealing with the Press. These are the main distinctions between us and the right hon. Gentleman. We think all the differences which separate our Bill from his are improvements. Some of them go in the direction of strengthening the Bill. The majority go in the direction, not of making the Bill more efficient, but of making it more equitable in point of working to any prisoners who may be tried under it. Now, Sir, I have laid my case before the House. I have explained our Bill to the House. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian told us on Thursday night that our Bill was a Bill for putting down agitation. Our Bill is a Bill, not for putting down agitation, but for enforcing the law. The law which we wish to enforce is not the law specially or particularly which regulates the relations of landlord and tenant. The law we seek to enforce is the law which gives in this country and every civilized country security to private individuals. It is the law which prevents your pocket being picked and your head being broken; it is the law which enables you to go home with some security that midnight marauders will not invade your house, fire into your dwelling, possibly shoot you, possibly drag your wives and daughters out of bed. There are those who talk as if Irishmen were justified in disobeying the law because the law comes to them in a foreign garb. I see no reason why any local colour should be given to the Ten Commandments. But, lastly, the laws which the Government seek to enforce are the laws which, as far as I know, are the same in every civilized country which even pretends to a glimmering of civilization. [Mr. T. M. HEALY: What about the Whiteboy Acts?] Nor do I think that any regard to local prejudices in Ireland need induce us to treat leniently those who shoot a man for no other offence than that he is suspected of a desire to pay part of his rent. I am quite aware that we are approaching the consideration of this subject under very peculiar difficulties. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian told us that never before in the history of Crimes Acts did the legitimate Opposition set themselves against the legitimate Government of the day.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): What I said was, that the Government of the day had never proposed coercion without knowing that they would have the support of both Parties in the House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I accept the correction of the right hon. Gentleman. I do not retort upon him, though I think I might, as he retorted upon me, that he had forgotten his own speech. At all events, we have the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that three-sevenths of the House of Commons are opposed to the Government on this occasion. It is quite true that, for the first time in the history of this country, the victims of oppression, of outrage, of murder, have called upon the Government to protect them, and that Government has not been supported by the English minority. But, Sir, we do not take the view apparently now taken by the right hon. Gentleman, that our conduct in this matter is to be regulated by the views of the Opposition. If they fail in their duty—as I think they are failing—that is no reason, and that shall be no reason, why we should not do our duty. This may support us, or it may not support us; but we should be utterly failing in the first and elementary duty of Government if, through any fear of Parliamentary opposition, or any dread of a hostile majority, we were to neglect or defer, for one single day, the answer to the appeal which comes up to us from every part of disturbed Ireland. Sir, this will be my last word. Many of those who are most devoted in the cause of liberty pay but a cold and frigid respect to the cause of order. I will not ask whether, under some circumstances, these two great principles are or are not ever opposed; but I will say, and say boldly, that in this case they are united, and that if I appeal to one rather than to the other, it is in the cause of liberty that I ask this House to support us in breaking the yoke under which so large a part of Ireland is now groaning.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make better provision for the prevention and punishment of Crime in Ireland; and for other purposes relating thereto."—(*Mr. Arthur Balfour.*)

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I know, Mr. Speaker, that I rise under circumstances of the greatest difficulty to reply to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, which has been prolonged over such a considerable length of time to so late an hour of this evening. Towards the close of his speech he informed the House of certain differences which seemed to him to distinguish his Bill from the Bill introduced some years ago by the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt). There was, however, one difference which he omitted to mention. The Bill which was introduced by the right hon. Member for Derby in 1882 passed into law; the Bill which is now introduced by the right hon. Gentleman opposite will never pass into law. If I believed that the people of England—I will not say the Members of this House —if I believed that the people of England would be capable of passing into law such a Bill as that described by the right hon. Gentleman I would give up for ever the hope of seeing these two peoples—the English and the Irish people—shaking hands and uniting in peace in a common brotherhood. It is the old, old story again. For 700 years these two peoples have hated each other, and have struggled against each other, and many a bitter and sorrowful thing has occurred at both sides out of that long and terrible struggle; and, now after these hundreds of years in the 87th year of the pretended Union, what is the best proposal that can be made for bringing peace between the two nations? It is that Act by which the Government of Ireland has suppressed in Ireland every liberty for which the people of England themselves hold dear, and did not hesitate to fight, and to fight against the Throne, in days gone by. The best proposal that England can make for the Government of Ireland now, at this period of the 19th century, is to suspend every liberty that is dear to every man who is not a slave in his heart, and suspend them, too, without any limit as to time. All I can say is, that I would not put the right hon. Gentleman to the trouble of bringing me over to the Old Bailey to be tried, as I see he has exempted criminal conspiracy, but I would fall back upon methods——

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Criminal conspiracy is not exempted from offences to be tried in England.

Mr. DILLON: I thought you said it was. But if this Code of laws, the worst ever proposed, or dared to be proposed, by any Minister of England before—if this Code of laws should receive the sanction of a majority of the people of England, I, for one, would abandon public agitation, and would consider myself at least a slave, if I were to agitate publicly under such circumstances. I would do either of two things—I would either leave for ever a country where no freeman could live, unless like a slave; or, if the people were able and willing, I would be proud and happy to lead them into battle against such an infamous system. The right hon. Gentleman talked of civilized people approving of his Bill. I say there is not a civilized people on this earth who would not sympathize with any and every effort a people like the Irish could make, or dared to make, or would be justified by their resources in making, to resist so hateful, so infamous, and so oppressive a law. One thing I am certain of, and I warn you here of it, that though the resources of the Irish people are too limited, as compared with those of England, to oppose your tremendous power, though they may be downtrodden and disorganized, and crushed under the iron heels of your overwhelming Constabulary and military, so as to be seemingly to submit like cowards and slaves to such a Code of laws as this before the House, they never would, and will only wait until an opportunity comes for striking back against you. If I believed we were in the same position now with regard to the people of England as we stood in seven years ago, when this present struggle commenced, I would despair of ever burying the hatchet and sword between the two nations. But, Sir, it is a good thing for England, as well as for Ireland, that there sits upon these Benches a body of men who represent the convictions of a majority of the people of this country; and who, if I am not greatly mistaken by the expressions of sympathy and kindness I have received from them in private life, are prepared to stand by us to the utmost which Parliamentary law will allow us in resisting and opposing a system which can have only one result—the disorganization of society in Ireland and the driving back of the people of Ireland to those sad methods which resulted in so much bloodshed in the past. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland has told the House that the Bill he is going to introduce will not be limited in point of time. No, Sir, it will not be limited in time. You cannot limit nought—you cannot limit nothing. The Bill must first come into existence before any limit can be put to it as to time, it must be passed before it has any operation at all; and I am greatly mistaken, and shall be greatly surprised, notwithstanding the Government has now a majority at its back, if it ever succeeds in dragging its hateful carcase through all the stages of this House. I will not waste time, Sir, in going into the details of this Bill. The Government appear to have culled from the whole of the 86 Coercion Acts that have gone before, the very worst provisions, and united them with provisions of such stringency which, so far as my historical reading goes, were never before proposed by any previous Coercion Government. I will say, Sir, before I proceed to say a few words on the case which the Government have endeavoured to make, it seems to me extraordinary that English Conservative Gentlemen will not pause and reflect now, after seven years of the later stages of this bitter struggle, on the fact which has been repeatedly told them by a late Chief Governor of Ireland, that after three Coercion Acts of the severest stringency have been passed by this House, and one of them administered by a man of very different mettle from the present Governor—that the Chief Secretary should be obliged to get up and state that the condition of the country is infinitely worse than ever it was before, and that these Coercion

Acts only made the people more embittered against English rule. That certainly ought to make men ponder seriously when another Coercion Bill is brought forward. An hon. Member, the other night, said he denied the Crimes Act had been a failure—he declared that it had put down crime, but what does Lord Spencer say, the man who administered the Act? He declared, in several speeches in England—and I read them all very carefully—that though by the Crimes Act actively and severely administered, he had reduced the amount of crime in Ireland to a certain extent, there was no improvement in the condition of the people, or in their feelings towards England? No. Lord Spencer declared during the three years the Act was in force he found the hatred to English rule had increased, the disaffection to the law, and the disorganization of the people of Ireland to be greater when he left Ireland than when he took up the reins of Government. Those are Lord Spencer's own words; and, Sir, before I leave this position of Lord Spencer's administration of the law, may I say this—Lord Spencer was our enemy while in Ireland, but I say this, that he faced us with the courage of a man, and while there in Ireland he did his duty manfully and well, and passed through an ordeal compared to which the hottest battle was but a trifling matter. He believed, whether true or not I cannot say, that his life was not safe day or night, and going into battle compared with that is as nothing; and sneers at Lord Spencer come very ill from Gentlemen on that Bench who knew nothing of the dangers which lie before them. [*Cries of* "A threat!" *from the Ministerial Benches.*] I make no threat. I have merely replied to the sneer cast the other night at Lord Spencer; because it was said he had gone back on his own words—had gone back on the policy he had tried to carry out in Ireland. Such a sneer comes very badly from the Treasury Bench. Lord Spencer never flinched in exercising the powers which were given him, and he showed a courage—whatever the result may have been—in which I am sure he will not be imitated by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. Let me now, Sir, go for a few minutes into the case made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite the Chief Secretary for Ireland for this, the 87th, and greatest of all Coercion Acts, which is to last for all time, which is to crown the great edifice and seal the Union between England and Ireland, by declaring to the world that that Union can only be held together by depriving the inhabitants of Ireland of every one of the liberties that any brave man would fight for. I would ask hon. Members who have listened to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, have they heard any case made out by the right hon. Gentleman for such a drastic Bill as this, or for any Coercion Bill at all? I declare most solemnly that as I sat and listened to the right hon. Gentleman my wonder grew piece by piece, for a more disreputable, a more wretched, and a more miserable attempt at making a case for a Coercion Act I never heard. I tell the right hon. Gentleman this—if he will allow me to take his place on that Bench for half-an-hour I would make a ten times better case for a Coercion Act from my own knowledge. I do not deny that there is some crime and some trouble in Ireland; but I say that the Chief Secretary has not proved the necessity for a Coercion Act. He stands up here and reads a lot of anonymous stuff about crimes in Ireland, supplied to him by permanent clerks in Ireland, and he cannot answer a single question in relation thereto. He depends upon Government officials in Dublin Castle to make up the unfounded and wretched trash he has produced; and the only thing the right hon. Gentleman has succeeded in proving is that he knows absolutely nothing of the condition of Ireland, this Chief Secretary of a fortnight or so. He only spoke what he was told. But suppose that all his facts were admitted, what do they amount to? The right hon. Gentleman specifically refused, at our invitation, to go into the question of the statistics of crime in Ireland, and why? Because they would have shown what his Predecessor (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) stated at Bristol not long ago—that the condition of Ireland in respect of crime was, with the exception of two districts, improving. It is unparalleled in the history of the 86 Coercion Acts that the Chief Secretary for Ireland should refuse to give any statistics as to crime in support of a Coercion Bill. The right hon. Gentleman commenced by referring to the charges of certain

Judges, who, he said, were notoriously fair-minded and unbiassed men, who were not making up a political case for coercion. I beg leave to take issue upon that point. A most extraordinary thing is that in the case of every Coercion Act the charges of certain Judges were ready for the Government to assist them in applying for coercive powers for Ireland. But what did these Judges say? Judge Lawson—and this affects the Division I represent—stated that the condition of Mayo could not be distinguished from a condition of actual revolution or civil war. The right hon. Gentleman carefully avoided giving the House a Return of outrages on which that charge was based. I am well acquainted with the whole county, and I challenge contradiction when I say that I am satisfied, from personal investigation, that the North, South, and Western Divisions of the County of Mayo—leaving out the Eastern Division, which I represent—are as peaceful as Essex, or Sussex, or Surrey. The law and the process of the law have just as much currency in North, South, and West Mayo as in any part of England. I am better acquainted with the condition of Mayo than Judge Lawson, for I have lived there for a long time, and my family are connected with it. The observations of Judge Lawson were based on the police reports which the right hon. Gentleman has not read for us. They say these reports have all reference to East Mayo. Now, I know East Mayo better than any other Division, and what occurred in East Mayo was this. East Mayo, under my guidance and advice, had almost universally adopted the Plan of Campaign. So far as the levying of rack-rents goes, there is not the slightest doubt that in East Mayo there has been some disorder, and the law has been impeded, but there has been no other disorder. But as to outrages and robbery and crimes of violence, they are wholly absent, and you are safer walking the roads of East Mayo at night than you are in walking through the streets of London. In my recollection, which extends over a considerable period, I have never known the district of East Mayo more peaceful. There is undoubtedly disorder, and there is undoubtedly Boycotting; but, in the cases where the landlords have given way, a more absolute condition of peace does not prevail throughout the whole of Ireland. But we are told that the law has been set at defiance. In that one respect it has, and I am proud to own in this House that I personally am responsible for the paralyzing of the law in that respect in East Mayo. I only wish that I had paralyzed it at Glenbeigh and in other districts in Ireland, and that every Member of our Party could have operated with as much success in his Division as I did in East Mayo. We managed to bring the people through last winter by means of the Plan of Campaign without violence. So far as I am aware, with but two or three exceptions, there was hardly a single eviction in East Mayo; and in all other respects the country has not been so peaceful in the memory of man. Yet, although there has been no special allegation of crime made by Judge Lawson, we have the general statement that the country is in a state of civil war, simply because by means of the Plan of Campaign I made Lord Dillon grant a reduction of 20 per cent—and simply because Lord Dillon and Mr. Rashleigh could not collect their rents, until they consented to the terms we proposed. That is what the civil war means. I will not go into the charges of all the Judges; but I simply call attention to the fact that with the solitary exception of Judge Johnson in the County and City of Cork, no specific details were gone into. In the case of Judge O'Brien and Judge Johnson, some districts have been described as very bad, but no details were gone into. The general statement was that a condition of "disorganization" prevailed. We know what that means. Disorganization in the minds of these Judges means combination against the payment of rent in cases where landlords refused to give reductions. That is what the Judges denounced. I do not know what the Chief Secretary's own view may be, but that is what the friends and backers of the Chief Secretary have in view. They speak of the disorganization of society; but there was only one in the whole of the extracts from the charges of the Judges which had any effect upon the House, and that was a case mentioned by Judge Johnson, where a girl's hair had been cut off. I say, unhesitatingly, that if we could discover the man who committed the outrage, supposing it was really committed, we should see that he was punished. We have denounced it in stronger language than you have ever used. If we could discover these men, they would be dealt with in a most summary fashion. Where I used to live, in America, such men, if found, would be lynched, and in a modified way they would, no doubt, be so dealt with in Ireland. But are we to be told that the liberties of a country are to be taken away because a set of young blackguards break into a house and commit such an outrage? If I were to take up the criminal literature of England, I would undertake to find cases compared with which the one cited by the Chief Secretary would shrivel up altogether. In all these cases the right hon. Gentleman made out no case whatsoever. When I pass on to the next portion of his speech, I find that his case is even a great deal weaker than it had been in the previous portion, because, in reply to our repeated calls for particulars, the right hon. Gentleman said—"Yes, I will give some cases." These cases were with regard to the action of jurors. In spite of his own contrary intention, we drove the right hon. Gentleman at last into giving us particulars. I do not know whether the House noticed it, but he gave us six or seven cases of the action of jurors, and it was a remarkable circumstance that in not one of them did the case arise in either of the six counties upon which he founds his legislation. He began with Roscommon. Now, Roscommon is not in the districts mentioned. The next was Tipperary. Tipperary is in a state of absolute peace. He never said a word about Tipperary in connection with bringing in coercion. He gives three cases in Tipperary, and what did he tell? He said that none of them were cases of agrarian crime at all. We must presume that he has taken the strongest and the best cases with which to illustrate his argument; but did anybody ever hear such a method of argument? He goes and undertakes to prove that, from the condition of six counties in Ireland, coercion is necessary. He is then called upon for particulars, and he takes refuge in other counties and cities—cases which do not refer to agrarian crime at all. ["Oh, oh!"] In not a single one of these cases did he give any particulars of what affected the juries. He simply says that the Judges charged strongly for conviction. Well, I have heard Judges charge strongly for conviction in England and juries disagree. In all parts of Ulster I heard Judges charge strongly for conviction and juries disagree. In these cases, he deliberately tells us, first of all that they have nothing to do with agrarian agitation, and nothing to do with politics; and then he gives us no proof whatever that the minds of the juries were unduly influenced one way or the other, and we are wholly without information as to the reasons why the juries disagreed. Of course, it may be that a friend or cousin of the prisoner was on the jury. He did not tell what the Judges said, and we were obliged to trust to the right hon. Gentleman's own descriptions of what took place. Now I come to another branch of his great argument, which was this. He denounced the National League. If the rest of his case was weak, this I think may be described as the weakest part of all. He undertook deliberately to prove that the National League was engaged in some desperately wicked work, the nature of it he forgot to mention. He did not state at all what his case was that he was going to prove against the National League, and I listened with great curiosity to hear what was the case that he would endeavour to make out against that organization. What did he do? He commenced by citing four meetings, in none of which had the National League anything whatever to say. That shows how much the right hon. Gentleman knows about Ireland. There were four meetings called under the Plan of Campaign, and acting under my advice; and in no instance had the National League anything whatever to do with those four meetings. When that was pointed out to him, the right hon. Gentleman said—"But the people were prominent members of the National League." Are we then to be told that any organization is to be responsible for every word uttered by every prominent member of the organization? But that is not all. Having referred to these meetings, he proceeded to quote an extract from these speeches, one by my hon. Friend the Member for North Fermanagh (Mr. W. Redmond); the second by the hon. Member for East Galway (Mr. M. Harris); and the third by the hon. Member for South Galway (Mr. David Sheehy). He never quoted from any speeches of mine, although, unfortunately, I have made a good many. Now, I say that all the speeches he quoted were absolutely and entirely innocent. With the exception of one of them, they do not contain the expression of a single sentiment upon which there is the shadow of a shade of a foundation of establishing coercion. What did they say? All that these speakers declared was that, in their opinion, the object before the people of Ireland was not only to get reduction of rents, but to set themselves free, and to get the right of governing themselves. We all admit that. We never denied it; and yet he went all this way round to prove that the National League had set that object before the people of Ireland. All I can say is, that he took a very long *détour* to very little purpose; for if he had but obtained a card of membership, he would have seen that it is plainly stated thereon that the very first object of the League "is to gain legislative independence for Ireland." Of course, everybody knows that is the object of the National League. That was the most that could be made out of the great mass of speeches which are collected by the Government at enormous and idiotic expense, piled up at the Castle in Dublin —I suppose numbering about 10,000. We are entitled to say that out of all those speeches, he could not find any worse passages than those perfectly innocent ones which he has given to the House. With the exception of the quotation from the speech by the hon. Member for East Galway (Mr. Harris), as to the correctness of the report of which there is very great doubt, about "slicing down rents," I say there is not a single passage which, from our point of view, is other than perfectly innocent. That speech has been quoted over and over again, and I do not care to go into a discussion as to whether the report accurately represents what the hon. Gentleman said or not; but it is mere childish folly to say that any single sentence uttered by any man, in the course of a long political agitation, is to be taken as a justification for taking away the liberties of a people. It is preposterous, and it only piles on additional proof, if, indeed, additional proof were necessary, to convince any fair-minded man that the case of the Chief Secretary is so lamentably weak that he has been obliged to have recourse to these wretched quotations, which are picked out by the eagle eye of the Loyal and Patriotic Union for retail to the people of England. Now I come to the fourth branch of the right hon. Gentleman's case, and it is the only branch in which he plainly demonstrated himself—that is with regard to the practice of Boycotting. I am not in the habit in this House of making statements I do not believe in, and nobody denies that Boycotting is very prevalent in certain parts of Ireland. To an Englishman, not knowing the other side, the right hon. Gentleman's statement would present a terrible picture; but to us the right hon. Gentleman has again succeeded in proving nothing but his own ignorance of the country he has undertaken to govern. Evidently, from the strong language and strong rhetoric that he used, he made up his mind to lay on the colours as thickly as he could, and he went so far as to challenge right hon. Gentlemen opposite for a more appalling picture than the authentic facts before him presented. What did he do? I made a note at the time at random of some of the cases he brought forward. One was with regard to a well-known case at Thurles where Boycotting took place. It was the case of a man who came before the local branch of the League, and asked to be forgiven. He was not forgiven, and the Boycotting went on. What was the date of the case? It was the 14th of August, 1885. At the very time that this man was before the Thurles branch of the League asking to be forgiven and being refused forgiveness, the Tory Party were in alliance with us. They asked and they got our support at the Elections in November of the year 1885, and they knew right well of the Thurles case of Boycotting. It was publicly and notoriously before the country at the time. The newspapers took considerable interest in it; but it did not make the Tories refuse an alliance with the hon. Member for Cork, so long as, by his co-operation, they could secure a majority at the polls. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to quote a resolution passed a long time ago, condemning certain evictions, and declaring that, in the opinion of the meeting, no man should be permitted to hunt over the land. Does the right hon. Gentleman not know that farmers in Ireland are legally entitled to prevent any man hunting over their lands? And does he not know that it is one of the legitimate weapons by which we get reductions of rent in Ireland? I call it a fair bargain; but the last of the Boycotting cases is very amusing. The right hon. Gentleman, in bringing it forward, nearly wept over it, and he leaned over the Table to an unusual length. He was more emphatic and impressive in his manner than ever. The right hon. Gentleman said a labourer was working for a Boycotted man, that his wife was going to be confined, and that he could not get a midwife to attend her. Now, does he mean to put a clause in his Bill to compel midwives to attend women where they do not choose to do so? If so, I shall be prepared to oppose such a clause. I mention this to show the absurdity and the idiocy you are being driven into by attempting such an impossible task as that which you will be attempting by means of this Bill, if it passes. Do you suppose that by any Act of Parliament you can compel a midwife to attend a woman when she does not choose? There is a tragic side as well as a comic side to this subject—this is one of the comic sides; another was when a little boy, aged 10 years, because he whistled "Harvey Duff" at a passing policeman, was summoned for intimidation. These, Sir, are the results of idiotic legislation like this. I have now come to the end of the Chief Secretary's case, and I do not think there is really any case at all. The case which the right hon. Gentleman attempted to prove made out no case for any coercion at all, much less for such a terrific Bill as he proposes to introduce into this House. He has, indeed, made out a case that he should speedily leave the Irish Office. He succeeded to-night in proving, to the satisfaction of every Irishman, that he is actually moving in the dark in Ireland—that he is dealing with a condition of people and things about which he knows absolutely nothing. That being so, he is absolutely and entirely in the hands of the most dangerous gang of men that exist in any country. He is like a child in the hands of the men who have been the curse of this country and Ireland all through this century—the permanent officials of Dublin Castle and the landlords, whose interest it is to keep England and Ireland enemies; and, if it is the case, he is being borne along a road the termination of which it is not hard to see. He is now learning the lessons and hearing the stories from them with which dozens of Irish Chief Secretaries before him have been stuffed. He is learning that all you have to do is to have a continuous and strong Government and plenty of coercion; and these people who tell him this laugh at him behind his back. They know perfectly well that their day has gone by in Ireland; they do not expect, nor care, nor desire that—[here the hon. Member snapped his fingers]—about the Union. If you asked an Irish landlord to stake his life or any of his money on the maintenance of the Union, would you find one to do it? They care nothing about your Union, but a great deal about their rents. What is their opposition to Home Rule? They know that Home Rule is a question of a short time, and they want, under the shadow of this Coercion Act of yours, to thrust their hands up to their shoulders in the pockets of the British taxpayer—put their cash into carpet bags, and get out of the country before Home Rule is granted. They want to sell their estates for double their value. They want to leave you face to face with the impoverished tenants of Ireland, who will have been compelled, under this Coercion Act, to sign agreements to pay double, or nearly double, the price of their farms, and then they will leave it to the British Government to collect the money. If they get their money, you will find very few of them staying in Ireland to maintain the Union, or support your Government. Everyone knows that if to-morrow, by some great operation, you were to buy out all the Irish landlords at their own valuation, and give them, out of the British Treasury, the cash for which they eagerly long, the Loyal and Patriotic Union of the defenders of the Empire would vanish in smoke, and you would be left masters of the field—aye, but with a very unfortunate state of things to face—with an impoverished people who had signed agreements to pay enormous sums, and the Irish landlords, after cursing Ireland for generations, would have left you with a wall of separation between England and Ireland which it would tax the utmost ingenuity of English Statesmen to get over or to get round. Well, Sir, I have said already that this

Bill is not honestly brought before the House. I regret that I should be compelled to speak at any great length; but as there are not many Members listening to me, the infliction will be less. The question is one so enormous that, in fact, it is utterly impossible for me to attempt to deal with this case within moderate or brief limits, because what I contend is this, that this Bill is an attempt at coercion of a thoroughly dishonest character, and no case whatever has been made out for it. Furthermore, I contend that if it is passed, so far from restoring order in Ireland, or lessening the amount of crime, it will tend enormously—as all the previous Bills have done—to increase disorder in that unhappy country, to increase crime, and what is now known as important—to enormously increase and intensify that feeling, which so much has been done to get rid of in the past year—of hatred of the English people, of utter distrust of this House of Commons. There is no escape from the effect of the passing of this Bill. But there is another aspect of the case which, to my mind, if not to the mind of the right hon. Gentleman, is no less important, no less vital, and it is this—that if this Bill be passed, which I doubt, and if it be carried out, as I do not in the least believe the Government will succed in doing; with the vigour and courage which Lord Spencer displayed, it will undoubtedly enable the Government and the landlords of Ireland to inflict upon the people an amount of suffering and cruelty such as they have not endured since 1852. That being so, I feel it my duty to lay before even the present small audience some portion of the vast mass of information on the subject which has naturally come into my hands from the various districts of Ireland, and which shows the frightful system of persecution and extermination to which the tenants are subjected. Of course, it is manifestly impossible for me to go at full length into all the information I possess. I shall, therefore, commence by taking two or three typical cases of eviction campaigns—that is, eviction on a large scale—and first I will take the case of the estate of Mr. Daly, Ballyhaunis, County Mayo, on the borders of my own Division. There are 27 tenants who are rented at something like a fraction over 70 per cent over the Government valuation, and there is one instance of a poor woman who pays exactly three times the Government valuation. These tenants applied to me for protection about two months ago, and asked if I could put in force the Plan of Campaign. I said, "Certainly," and I requested some friends of mine to go down. The tenants paid in under the Plan of Campaign, and their rents are safely lodged where Mr. Daly cannot touch them. He served them all with summonses, and got them into Court, and so shocked was the County Court Judge (Judge Richards) at what he had heard, that he said to Mr. Daly in open Court—"Cannot you make some compromise; can not you give some reduction?" Mr. Daly replied—"Oh! they can go in the Land Court." "But," says Judge Richards, "would not it be possible to give them some reduction, without putting them to that expense?" But the landlord pressed the case, and got the processes. Now, these evictions, and it is significant, were the first that took place in Ireland after the new Chief Secretary was appointed. I omitted to mention that the tenants had offered to pay Griffith's valuation, which was 20 per cent higher than Lord Dillon's tenants had settled for. The money is where he can reach it, if he chooses to send for it, and he can have it at any moment. The evictions were carried out with great cruelty. Three hundred police were present, great expense was incurred to the British taxpayer, and the next day the tenants went back to their homes, and are there now. An indignation meeting was held at Ballyhaunis, and so strong was the feeling exhibited by Mr. Daly's neighbours that he has asked Mr. William O'Brien and the parish priest to arbitrate on the whole case. Had you this grand Bill in force, what would have been done? These poor people—steady, honest, industrious, prepared to pay more than a just rent—would be to-day lying in gaol, or starving by the roadside of Mayo; whereas they had brought this man to reason, and these poor people have been allowed to return to their holdings. The idiotic thing about the whole transaction is that the British Government has paid about £50 for evicting these people. This would be the result of your Crimes Act—"Pay your full rent, or out you go into the road." Now, I will take the case of the Lansdowne estate. It must have struck hon. Members and the English public with surprise at seeing the accounts given in *The Times* of the tenants worth their thousands of pounds leaving their magnificent places with nothing. I cannot understand how hon. Members in England can be so obtuse as to believe the men who are Justices of the Peace, prominent citizens, large farmers, will, because of intimidation, go out of their homes and leave behind them all their improvements. Lord Lansdowne, at an early stage of last winter, as I was informed, under the advice, and, perhaps, gentle pressure of the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. John Morley) offered, without being asked, to return to the tenants on his County Kerry estate a reduction of 20 per cent on the judicial rents, and so a settlement was arrived at. But the Queen's County tenants, who were very highly rented, got no reduction, and none was offered them. The result was that they met together and demanded a reduction in the case of the majority of the tenants who were leaseholders, of 30 per cent, and in the case of judical rents of 20 per cent. This being flatly refused, a great feeling was aroused among the tenants, and matters came to a deadlock which lasted some time. Then the tenants adopted the Plan of Campaign, and there cannot be the slightest doubt that they did so of their own motion and free will, and without the instigation of any other person. Then came the evictions; and, in connection with them, I want to take up the case of Denis Kilbride, whose case was mentioned in *The Times* by their correspondent, and it was stated that he was selected as one of the first tenants to be evicted, in order to make an example of him because he was one of the main promoters of the Plan of Campaign. We are told it is always outsiders who promote the Plan of Campaign; but everybody knows that this man was the chief promoter of it on that estate, and that he had been selected to be evicted first for that very reason. He and Mr. Dunn, whom you removed from the Bench for joining the Plan of Campaign, were the leaders of the movement, and though the agent tried to buy and bribe them off, they stood like men by the poorer tenants, and for this their names will never be forgotten in Ireland. Now Kilbride's farm was rented at £760, and his Poor Law valuation was £420. And now I will ask hon. Members' attention to a summary I have extracted from Reports of the Land Commissioners as regards reductions in Leinster in the four last months of last year. Here it is—

> "September—Former rent, £51, Government valuation, £44; reduced rent £40. October—Former rent, £2,593; Government valuation, £1,845; reduced rent, £1,701; November—Former rent, £1,498; Government valuation, £1,311; reduced rent, £938. December—Former rent, £962; Government valuation, £713; reduced rent, £503."

In face of this return, which shows an average reduction of more than was offered by the tenants on this estate, Denis Kilbride has been put out of his holding, because he refused to pay—although he offered to pay 20 per cent over the Government valuation and 50 per cent over the judicial rents fixed on the estates all round him. This man was losing money on his farm under a rent that was a murderous rack-rent. That language is no exaggeration of the rent which I have proved from these returns to be of such a character. He is banished from his home, and probably robbed of thousands of pounds' worth of improvements, and driven out homeless on the roadside from a handsome house, because he will not pay a rent which is 50 per cent higher than the judicial rents, and will not betray his fellows. You must know that when men like this who are in the habit of paying their rents regularly and honestly, and against whom no breath of dishonesty could be breathed even by an Irish Chief Secretary; when they leave handsome homes and submit to see their wives and children, brought up in luxury, exposed to hardship—that a great belief in the justice of their cause must be at the bottom of it. If you pass this Bill, you are putting a weapon of persecution and tyranny, of cruel tyranny and spoliation, into the hands of men who have used these powers most unmercifully in the past. There is a description of these evictions in *The Times* of to-day which I recommend to the perusal of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. In it I read a description of an interview between the parish priest of Ballina and the correspondent of *The Times,* and, knowing what I do of *The Times*, I would earnestly recommend them to peruse it. The priest told the correspondent they would build houses for the evicted people, and they would support them. He says—"They will never yield;" and *The Times* correspondent says—"I am obliged to admit that Father Meara is one of the finest and best specimens of his class." Is that not enough to make Members of this House reflect? I will say a few words on another case which happened in the Rosslea district in last December. A man came to me in my own house in Dublin from the Rosslea district, and asked for my protection for a number of tenants who were about to be evicted. The tenants on the estate were all Catholics. I consented to take the case up. A day was appointed for meeting; 135 families received notices of eviction, and the Clones Workhouse was noticed to receive 635 human beings. The agent had stated over and over again that he would not abate his terms, which the poor people were utterly unable to pay. These terms included the cost of evictions. The condition of these people was simply this—they were poor mountain tenants, who had previously paid their rent, as long as they were able, from the proceeds of a peculiar kind of embroidery work done by the women of the house, and on account of this very fact the rents had been cruelly and outrageously raised in past years, because it was know these women could make large sums; but this peculiar work deserted the locality in one of those inexplicable ways nobody could account for. The women had no work to do, and the only way for them to obtain money to pay their rents was by selling their mountain cattle. But this means of obtaining money disappeared also, and the people were reduced to actual poverty. They had fallen into arrears and were about to be evicted for arrears of rent. I went down in January—it was one of the coldest days I recollect—the snow was six inches deep on the fields, and the cold was intense. It had been settled that the evictions were to come off on the Tuesday, and the meeting which I was to address on the Monday was proclaimed, on the ground that it was to be held for the purpose of obstructing the Sheriff in carrying out the evictions. The police were armed in order to prevent our meeting; but we held two large meetings, at the usual waste of public money. The police, I suppose, had 50 cars, and there were 200 police present to prevent the meeting. What was the result? The evictions were postponed on the plausible pretext that the weather was so bad. It was singular that my meeting was proclaimed because I was going to obstruct the carrying out of the evictions, and there was no word about the cold or the evictions being postponed, although my meeting was on the Monday and these on the Tuesday. Three or four days ago I received a letter from the priest of the district, in which he said—

> "The poor people will never forget you for coming down and helping them in that struggle."

He added—

> "The evictions which were to have come off last week have been settled on the terms originally proposed."

The agent actually accepted better terms than I originally proposed accepting—one year's rent, and giving a clear receipt up to May, 1886. But if the Government had had a Crimes Act, what would have been the result? There was no crime in that district; but if Judge Lawson went there, he would say law was not obeyed, disorder was rampant, and the Queen's writ could not run, because I held a meeting to protest against these evictions; whereas, the result has been that the struggle is ended, the landlord has got his rent, the people have been protected, and the district is at peace. I would invite the attention of hon. Members to this fact. Every single Englishman whom I know, who has travelled in Ireland, has become a convert to our views. I do not know a single case of any honest Englishman travelling among the people who has not come back a convert to our view of the case. I allude to these cases in order to show that, by allowing popular agitation, not only has injustice and cruelty been avoided, but also that wild revenge which is the inevitable accompaniment of coercion. I, therefore, urge hon. Members to pause very seriously before they embark on a course which will lead to things being done in Ireland that will make them disgusted with themselves, and sorry they have had anything to do with it. I desire now to turn for a few moments to the condition of the West of Ireland, and to read you a few words from that mine of information, the Cowper Commission

Report, which, though they come from a witness hostile to us, ought to have great force on Members of this House. Lord Cloncurry is well known as a bitter opponent of the League. He has lost £10,000 in his struggles with us in Ireland, and, of course, his whole evidence is tinctured with hostility to our movement. He gives his evidence unwillingly to the following effect:—It has been shown that for the last few years the price of store cattle has been rapidly falling. He is a great grazier himself. Mr. Knipe asks—(Q. 20,728)—

> "Must it not have an injurious effect on the farmers from whom you purchased cattle?"

Lord Cloncurry answered—

> "In the Western counties they must have felt the fall very much."

Mr. Knipe then asks—

> "And consequently there must be a greater difficulty in paying rent?"

Lord Cloncurry to this answers—

> "Yes; in Mayo it is a wonder to me how they pay rent at all. I could buy cattle for £8 a head there, that I could not buy for £14 10*s*.; but where I sell in England the prices have gone down."

"I wonder," says Lord Cloncurry, "how they can pay rent at all;" and yet I have been branded as a robber, because I asked Lord Dillon for a reduction of 20 per cent, and they have paid Lord Dillon less this 20 per cent, and Mr. Daly's tenants are going to pay, and so are all of them if they are treated like human creatures and not like beasts. I have just been dealing with a question which is admittedly one of the most serious connected with the serious state of affairs in Ireland—the probable operation of this Act, if passed into law, on the people in the Western parts of Ireland—and I have pointed out that one of the most determined upholders of landlord rights in Ireland is astonished, in his experience as a grazier, that the tenants in that part of the country can pay at all. I will turn from that now to some evidence given by a man who is as much to be taken as the representative of Western Irish land agents as any man, Mr. Henry A. Robinson, who was the agent of Mr. Berridge over the greater part of Western Connaught, and who, I very much regret to see, has become agent over the Island of Arran. Mr. Henry A. Robinson is a man who is typical of the harsh agents in the West of Ireland, and his evidence, as given in the Blue Book, is of the most supreme interest. I entreat hon. Members to study and carefully read the evidence of Mr. Henry A. Robinson before they put into the hands of men like him powers which enable them practically to treat the people of that part of the country like slaves—indeed, worse than any many man would ever dream of treating slaves—because they will enable him, and other men of his class, as he is at present engaged in doing, to drive them out like vermin. He was asked, in examination—

> "Are the tenants unable to pay the rent? Do you think they are?"

He answered—

> "They are able to pay whenever there is a demand for their small cattle. That regulates the rent more than any other crop. There is no crop that interferes with the rent. The potatoes are for their own use; but as long as there is a demand for their cattle they can pay."

This is a point I lean on; because here again is a declaration coming after Lord Cloncurry's declaration, that there had been such a fall in the price of small cattle that he wondered any tenant in Mayo could pay any rent at all. "Are the rents," he was asked, "being fairly paid?" He answered—

> "They were being fairly paid, but they have an inclination to stop paying them.
>
> "Since when?—They were fairly paid, very fairly, up to two months ago.
>
> "Is it attributable to anything that has taken place in your neighbourhood?—I cannot say. There has not been any agitation in the neighbourhood; but reading and hearing that tenants have got a reduction elsewhere they expect a reduction.
>
> "Have they asked you for an abatement?—Yes.
>
> "Have you offered them any?—No.
>
> "Are there judicial rents?—Yes.
>
> "You gave no reduction on judicial rents?—We gave none.
>
> "When were the judicial rents fixed?—At the very opening of the Commission.
>
> "When the rents were being fixed in the province of Connaught they were something like 25 per cent higher than they were to-day. Have any been fixed recently?—No, none have been fixed recently."

That is the evidence of Mr. Henry A. Robinson, who is agent over a vast district of country in which the Plan of Campaign does not run, and that is more in the nature of a misfortune to the tenants. He has recently been appointed agent over the Islands of Arran, which are populated by a people whom, in my opinion, it is a shameful thing to ask to pay any rent at all. But Mr. Robinson contemplates, as soon as convenient, to descend upon the Islands of Arran and collect the rent. I should like the House to notice the way in which Mr. Robinson deals with the question of emigration. He is appointed because he has the reputation of being an exterminator, and because it is known that he will strike terror in the tenants. Like a great many other men, Mr. Robinson is in favour of emigration, and thinks that the people ought to be induced to emigrate because the land cannot possibly support all that are upon it decently. Asked whether the tenants were in favour of emigration, he says—

> "No, I think they are not. I think they are advised not to emigrate. They would rather remain as they are.
>
> "They are subject to periodical famine ?—Yes.
>
> "And in a state of chronic misery ?—Yes.
>
> "And, I suppose, in a state of chronic discontent ?—Yes."

Good God! is this the position that Englishmen are going to assume in their treatment of this question? Can it be possible that Englishmen are going to place in the hands of this man, and others like him, such powers as are proposed to be given in this Bill to harry these poor people as he is harrying them at present? I got a letter the other day from a priest asking me to give the protection of the Plan of Campaign to 27 tenants on Mr. Berridge's estate. I replied that I would, if all the tenants would join. I had a letter from him the other day, to say that the thing was hopeless—that the tenants were too cowardly to join. These poor people had asked for 20 per cent reduction on their judicial rents. They were flatly refused their request, and now they are under notice of ejectment; and the terms of Mr. Henry A. Robinson are that they must pay the full rent and costs of ejectment, which will nearly double the rent upon them. I can do nothing for them, and the only remedy and relief this House is going to give these poor people is to pass a Coercion Act, to enable Mr. Henry A. Robinson to rush into gaol any poor creature who dares to raise his voice against him. I now want to read a few words from the evidence of that *rara avis* in Ireland, a good landlord, because, even in the County Mayo, there are good landlords. I have been accused of asserting that there are no good landlords in Ireland; but I have, on the contrary, always maintained that there were good landlords there, although they were in a minority. Where there is a good landland in Ireland, we never hear of his coming to this House and asking for protection. On his estate there is no Boycotting or intimidation, or trouble with their tenants. For instance, Mr. Thomas Tighe is a landlord in the County Mayo and a Justice of the Peace. He was examined before the Commission, and was asked did any of his tenants hold under judicial leases. He answered—

> "No. In '79 I gave my tenants unasked an abatement of 20 per cent.
>
> "And you never interfered with them since ?—Never.
>
> "Were any agreements brought before the Court by which the rents were fixed ?—No; the tenants took no action in the matter. I and my tenants have lived on the best of terms."

He was asked if he wanted to sell his estate? He answered—

> "Yes; I offered to sell my Kilmainham estate at 20 years' purchase."
>
> "Which they were glad to agree to, I suppose ?—Yes; because the rents were fair."

This is in the County Mayo, where, according to the Government, the law has ceased to run. And yet Mr. Thomas Tighe has never had a word of difference with his tenants. There is further evidence to show how he had dealt with his tenants as follows:—

> "You used to get your rents punctually before you sold ?" (was one question put to him.)—"Yes; in 1879 there was a very bad year, and I stocked the land myself. I never compelled a tenant to strip his farm, or to sell his interest in it in order to pay his rent."

He added—

> "I have stocked the land myself in bad years."

Those words contain the keynote of the whole matter, and disclose the secret of the remedy for a great deal of trouble in Ireland. It is too commonly the case that landlords allow tenants to strip their farms for the rent; and then this is what Mr. Tighe says of the people in Mayo, where everybody is supposed to be dishonest—

> "I am happy to say that I have been very successful in this way, for the tenants I assisted got on very well, surmounted their difficulties, and honestly paid their rent."

I have quoted these words for the purpose of showing that when a landlord acts, as a Christian ought to act, he has no difficulty with his tenants; and, in every case of a contrary character, it will be found that the tenants are refractory because the landlord has been acting dishonestly, has been crushing them by his exactions, compelling them to strip their farms in order to pay the rent, and evicting them when he has pauperized them. I have endeavoured to show that where the landlord is just, the tenants will pay if they can. I have shown how men, acting for large and wealthy landlords resident in England, have been convicted, out of their own mouths, of the cruellest and most unmerciful conduct. So long as the Government allow such things to go on, it is criminal, in the highest degree, to think that they can restore respect for the law by simply bringing in a Coercion Act. As regards the County of Kerry, which is more typically Irish in many respects than any other, the condition of that one county, as compared with the rest, cannot justify the Government in robbing a whole nation of its civil rights. I wish to prove that Kerry, up to a recent period, has been admitted to be one of the most peaceable districts not only in Ireland, but in the entire United Kingdom; while now it is the scene of continued outrage and violence, and that the increase of crime is due to something apart from the nature of the people. Surely, when such a change as this has been wrought in the character of a people, men of honesty should first endeavour to ascertain the cause of the change before coercing the people. The cause of that change is not far to seek. The County Kerry was declared by no less an authority than Chief Justice Lawson to be unusually peaceful until 1878, since which date the list of evictions furnishes a significant reason for the increase of crime. In 1877, 18 families were evicted; in 1878, 26; in 1879, 70; in 1880, the number was 191; in 1881, it was 192; in 1882, it increased to 293; in 1883 to 403; in 1884 to 410; and in 1885 to 458. A total of 11,000 human beings were thus driven from their homes during the period in question. This is the cause, and the only cause, of the extraordinary change in the condition of Kerry. I would now ask hon. Members to direct their attention to the evidence of a Resident Magistrate with regard to Kerry. I will, however, remark beforehand that the Blue Book from which I have been quoting is not accepted by the Irish Party as an impartial reading of the case. It is a mass of evidence collected by a Commission which has been appointed in the landlord interest. On that Commission there was appointed one English landlord connected with the coercion administration of the country, two Irish landlords, one English economist—who might be impartial—and an Irish farmer who, it had been carefully ascertained before he was appointed, voted Tory at the last election. Not a single Representative of the mass of the people was placed on the Commission; but it comprised three Representatives of the landlord class. The President, Earl Cowper, the Earl of Milltown, and another Member asked leading questions to induce evidence in favour of the case of the landlords, which evinced a most unfair animus towards the Nationalists. I have myself at a meeting of the National League warned the people not to go near, and not to put any evidence before the Commission; and they apparently took my advice, for of 120 witnesses examined, I do not believe that 10 have endeavoured to state the Nationalist view. There is evidence in favour of that view, and it is doubly valuable, because given by unwilling witnesses for, excepting in Ulster where Protestant farmers are examined, the witnesses are almost exclusively officials, land agents, landlords' representatives, officials of the Property Defence Association, and of the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union. Therefore any justification that can be extracted from their evidence ought to tell with tenfold force in favour of the Nationalist Party. The Resident Magistrate to whom I alluded is Mr. Considine, of the town of Killarney. He is himself the son of a Limerick landlord. He had been explaining to the Commissioners that the League, so far as he knew, was doing its utmost to put down outrage. Thereupon Lord Cowper said—"I suppose it would be the game of the League at present to put down outrage?" "The game of the League!" that was a question which showed the animus of the President. "Yes," replied Mr. Considine; "I think they would desire to do so"—an answer in which he plainly reproved the President as far as he dared. Then the President, alluding to the Curtin case, remarked—"Only these people have got out of their hands." The reply was—

> "Yes; in my judgment, the central authority of the League have been doing their utmost to stop these outrages; but I think it has gone outside their power to do so."

The witness was speaking of the limited district of Killarney; but does it not strike the House that this quotation shows a very unfair way of carrying on the inquiry? A most important witness was Mr. Davis, who for some years had been District Inspector of Constabulary at Castleisland, the worst and most disturbed part of Ireland.

> "I am glad to hear," said Lord Milltown, "that Mr. Davitt has denounced outrage."—"Oh, yes," answered Mr. Davis; "he came down here specially and denounced outrage."
>
> "Do you think it had any effect?"—"I should say it had."
>
> "Did Mr. Davitt show any sympathy for the Curtin family?"—"I am quite sure he did; and I know members of his Party who were present at the funeral, and did everything to denounce outrages and prevent Boycotting."

I allude to this evidence, because it is, in my opinion, monstrous to accuse Irish Members, or any organization with which they are connected, such as the National League, of being in any way responsible, either directly or indirectly, for outrages; on the contrary, I assert that they have contributed enormously towards maintaining the peace, and the absence of outrage during a period of great distress and many evictions. When the Government's own paid officials admit that in all the worst districts of Ireland the influence of the League has been strained to the utmost to put down outrage, it is a preposterous and almost a cowardly thing to say that that organization has instigated outrages. I have never shrunk in this House from taking on my shoulders the full responsibility of any action of my own. I acknowledge that I have been acting in a combination in the shape of the Plan of Campaign against the payment of exorbitant rents, and also to a certain extent in Boycotting to carry out that object; but I assert that I have done more to prevent crime and outrage than any Government official. I would ask the attention of hon. Members to the evidence of Mr. E. Roche and the District Inspector of Constabulary in regard to the district of Castleisland. There the Land Act has operated to a very limited extent, owing to the fact that a large portion of the people are leaseholders. Rents are high, but abatements are made in some instances; evictions commence, then outrages take place, then comes the Crimes Act, and in consequence of the frightful blood tax, the rates in that district are almost equal in amount to the rents. In a district where crime is most rampant, it has been stated by the salaried magistrates of the Government that the influence of the Land League has been dead for years, and that Boycotting is carried out by an organization which they do not like to name. Well, what has been the result of five or six years of this rule in Kerry? You have brought the country into a state that is most deplorable, and, I must say, is a constant source of grief and shame and distress to all Irishmen. And what is your remedy for all this? Simply to continue to carry on the methods of coercion and blood tax which have produced these evil effects. And what, Sir, is the cost of this system? I say, Sir, that to support this system is the worst and most infamous use that the taxes of the country could be put to. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer went out on the terrace of the House of Commons and shovelled sovereigns into the Thames, he would be doing a more prudent and meritorious act than your agents are doing in Kerry. Mr. Heffernan Considine, one of the Resident Magistrates of Kerry, was examined before the Cowper Commission, and stated, in reply to Sir James Caird, that he knew one landlord who had a Boycotted farm on his hands and had been working it himself for two years. The rent of the farm was £70 a-year. There were seven policemen protecting the caretakers, and Mr. Heffernan Considine estimated that it cost the country £1,000 and the landlord £300 a-year to work this miserable farm of £70 a-year. That is certainly a glorious system for administering the taxes of England; and I venture to say that if any Member of the House were to investigate the circumstances of the evictions, he would come to the conclusion that the tenant was right and the landlord wrong. I am convinced that the people of England—if we can only reach the people of England—will put an end to this system which, according to the Chief Secretary, is to be perpetual. A great many land agents were summoned before the Commission; and I want now to direct the attention of the House for a few minutes to the character of the evidence given before the Commission by some of the agents themselves, which will show what a small amount of reliance can be placed upon the statement of Tory landlords who come from Ireland, and indignantly deny the charges we make against them. One of the agents examined was the agent of the Duke of Abercorn. I do not know whether I am correct or not, but it is believed in Ireland that the influence of the Hamiltons is most sinister and anti-Irish—it is believed that they were not sorry to get rid of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Lord Randolph Churchill), whom they regarded as opposed to them in their Irish policy. I know, any way, that the Hamiltons are anxious to have a Coercion Act in Ireland; for, without a Coercion Act, they would soon be unable to levy their rack-rents in the North of Ireland. In fact, they are regarded by their own tenants and by the Ulster tenants as excessive rack-renters. Mr. Thomas M'Farland, the agent to the Duke of Abercorn, was examined and stated, in reply to Lord Milltown, that the tenants had always been well treated, and that there would be great reluctance on their part to sever their connection with the old family. He also stated that between 8 and 9 per cent would cover the cost of management, losses, and outlay upon improvements on the estate. So much for the opinion of Mr. M'Farland; but we shall see that the tenants' opinion is entirely different. A short time ago a meeting was held in St. Johnstone's Schoolhouse of the Donegal tenantry of the Duke of Abercorn. Everyone who knows the locality is aware that there were very few Catholics in the room. The chair was occupied by a Mr. David Robertson, a Loyalist, and he said—

> "He was sure they would all agree with him that it was no wonder the country was in such a state of agitation when they found the tenant farmer in a worse position than he was 50 years ago, and tied down by law to pay rents reduced on an average only 10 per cent on rack-rents put on in 1858 when all sorts of farm produce were double what they were at present."

He added—

> "There was one thing certain, a reduction of rent must come, if the tenant farmers were to live in this country. They were told that the Government would give no reductions on the judicial rent. There were three sources—a reduction was to be looked for from the landlord' from the State, and from the Land League. The last appeared to him to be the most popular and the most effectual."

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked the hon. Gentleman to read from page 691.

Mr. DILLON: It will be more interesting to the House to read the opinion of the tenants.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked what was the period to which the hon. Member was referring?

Mr. DILLON: 1858.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Thirty years ago.

Mr. DILLON: I desire to show what a good heart these Ulster landlords have for their tenants. Judging the names of the tenants who have recently spoken, I should say they were members of the Church of England or Presbyterians. And what did they say? They, it appears, had asked for a reduction of 30 per cent, which, they said, had been curtly refused; and at this meeting they asked his Grace for a more favourable reply, and one of the tenants said—

> "They all remembered the time when they did not dare to assemble in a meeting like that to discuss their grievances, and when they had to submit to whatever kind of tyranny was bestowed upon them without raising their voices against it. They had reason to thank God, to thank the Legislature, and thank the spirit of the time that they were able to meet together that evening."

These are the affectionate tenantry of their beloved landlord, the Duke of Abercorn. That is a nice commentary on the statement of Mr. M'Farland; and I am inclined to believe that if these men had not the courage to speak out we would have the Hamiltons posing here as men who had the love and respect of their tenants, and from whom the tenants would not part even if they could. This only shows that the Northern Protestant, as well as the Southern Catholic, will use strong language when driven to the wall. If I had used in Mayo the language used by Mr. Samuel Crowe I should have been indicted; for that gentleman spoke of the 70 tenants who refused to sign his memorial as black sheep, and I shall await, with some interest, to see whether a prosecution under the new Coercion Bill is the result. It is quite true that there is no National League in that district, and why? Because the tenants dare not join it. The first case I will cite is that of a man who has held himself up to the public of England, and I believe successfully, as a model landlord. He has given evidence before the Commission of the most extraordinary and preposterous character ever placed before any inquiry. That gentleman is Mr. A. M. Kavanagh; and, when called upon to give evidence, he asked the permission of the Commissioners to deliver his evidence without being questioned. The result was a political harangue, extending over seven or eight columns, in which he denounced the late Government, the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, and the Land Act, and declared he would give no abatement of rent, because none was required. That was his evidence before the Commission; but what happened? As ill luck would have it, the Land Commission went to Loughrea the other day and reduced some of this gentleman's rents. Among the reductions were, £17 17*s.* to £8. That was in the case of Thomas Haynes; in the case of Michael Comerford, the reduction was from £44 to £30; Michael Murphy, £14 to £7 15*s*; and in other cases, £25 to £17, £13 to £8 15*s.*, and £2 to 12*s.* 6*d.* This landlord of £20,000 a-year actually charged for a small holding £2, although the Land Commission said it was only worth 12*s.* 6*d.* No wonder Mr. Kavanagh denounced the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian; for that right hon. Gentleman had exposed to the world the infamy of the conduct of one who had hitherto postured before the country as a humane and honourable landlord. Mr. Kavanagh was asked whether, in these rents, there was included any interest on improvements made by the landlord. "No," he replied; "in this country it is quite the other way;" by which he meant that all the improvements were made by the tenants. Passing on, I come to another head of the landlord party. The landlords have been getting into a great deal of trouble lately, and the reason is because many people want to ask—"Why do not a large number of the tenants go into the Land Courts?" The answer is—"Because they dare not go in." If they had, they would have been sued for the hanging gale and for the arrears; they would have had their turf taken from them; they would have been appealed against and dragged from Court to Court at great expense. It is only recently that the landlords have become terrified by the Plan of Campaign, and that the tenants on the worst estates have received relief by plucking up courage to go into Court. I next come to another good landlord, who has not been found out until just lately. Lord Courtown is at the head of the Property Defence Association, and reductions have been made on Lord Courtown's property as follows:—From £52 to £38, £19 to £11, £15 8*s.* 6*d.* to £8, £67 to £31, £16 to £8 15*s.*, and £28 to £14 15*s.* There is also a long list more. Had Lord Courtown been in this House, he, too, would have repudiated the charge of exacting exorbitant rents. Yet these are the men who the landlords of Ireland have not been ashamed to put forward as the champions of their class, and who last autumn would have persisted in declaring that rents were not too high. Why have not they chosen men like Mr. Thomas Tighe? Because such men will not do the dirty work which these associations require to be done. I have referred to the Land Corporation, and to the Property Defence Association, which have been established for the protection of landlords. But there is a third association of the kind—the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union—which has flooded the country with a greater number of lies than has ever been previously circulated. That association was founded for the purpose of proving that the great mass of the Irish tenantry were inhuman and discontented without reason; but its action from beginning to end has been a gross libel on the Irish people at large. At its head is a noble Lord who was once a Member of this House—Lord Castletown—and, unfortunately for him, some of his tenants recently went into the Land Court. When hon. Gentlemen knew the reductions that were made by the Court on Lord Castletown's estate, they will easily understand how it is that the Loyal and Patriotic Union spent so much money. It is because they have a class interest to defend. Their object is not the Union of the two countries; it is to stave off, if possible, the destruction of their rack-renting system, and to cover the exposure that is being made of the infamous way in which, as landlords, they have treated the people of Ireland. In Lord Castletown's case, the reductions from the old rent were £10 to new rent £5; from £28 to £13 10*s.*; from £30 to £22; from £41 to £29; from £478 to £330; from £4 1*s.* to £2 10*s.*; from £18 to £10. Here is a pretty state of things for the head of the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union, which flooded the country with its boasts! Is that state of things creditable to the noble Lord? If, in speaking at this length, I can bring home to the minds of the people of England what is the real motive of these Gentlemen who talk about their preparedness to make sacrifices, I shall be content. Sacrifices forsooth! I challenge any Member of the Government to lay a finger on any single sacrifice that has ever been made by any Irish landlord for any purpose except the recovery of his own rent. So far from making sacrifices, these noble Lords and hon. Gentlemen of the Union were the very people who were not ashamed to come over from Ireland and ask the Lord Mayor of London to help them. Yet those very men are ready, and do not hesitate, to reproach me and my Colleagues of the National League, because, as they say, we were not ashamed to accept the earnings of the evicted tenants in America, and to be the instruments, as I am proud to be, of carrying out their wishes. At least, the Nationalist Party do not take anything from Englishmen. Nor, as a matter of fact, do we beg from our own flesh and blood. The money is forced upon us, poured out upon us by all classes in America to forward the cause of Irish freedom. To beg from Englishmen is reserved for the Irish rack-renting landlords, and Englishmen, if they knew the truth, would rather give to any object under the sun than to that. Make sacrifices? Why so demoralized have those men become, that they will not make any sacrifice even for themselves. Their rentals, in the aggregate, amount to £10,000,000 a-year; and how much does the House think they subscribe to the Tenure and Property Defence Association? Why, they subscribed last year only £3,000. And yet that Association talked to the English people of being turned out of Ireland penniless, and openly begged of them for help. That was the revenue of the Association for last year, and the banking account was overdrawn, so that they had to come to London to beg for aid. In contrast to this, I can tell the House that the poor tenants of Ireland subscribed £14,000 last year to their organization, while the rent-roll of these men who subscribed £3,000 only for theirs, was £10,000,000. No, those men will make no sacrifice for no principle and no object except that of collecting their rents and filling their own pockets. As a class, they care nothing for the Union; their pockets are their chief consideration; and if the House were foolish enough to allow them to take large sums out of the Treasury of England, they will desert Ireland and the Unionist cause, and they will abandon Ireland to the Nationalists, and leave them absolute masters of the field. As to the general policy of the Government for settling the Irish Question, I maintain that if we pass a Coercion Bill we must abandon purchase. I have no objection to a system of purchase, if it is made perfectly free. For a fair purchase, the first necessity is that the tenant should be free, and the price moderate and reasonable. If a Coercion Bill is passed, I will make it my business to go to the people of England, and warn them all through the country against advancing a single shilling to the Irish tenant for purchase. Speaking as an Irishman and knowing my countrymen, I will tell the English people that Irishmen will honourably pay back every shilling advanced to them by way of loan, so long as there is a firm and free bargain; but that it will be a dangerous thing to the Irish people, and to the English Exchequer, to carry out a system of purchase under a Coercion Bill. It will be madness on the part of the English taxpayers to consent to any purchase scheme while a Coercion Act is in force. Here is, by way of illustration, a case which has occurred under the Plan of Campaign, which I had had the privilege of putting in force.

Mr. SPEAKER said, it would be travelling wide of the question to discuss the details of a purchase scheme on the Motion to bring in a Bill to amend the Criminal Law.

Mr. DILLON: I recognize the propriety of the interruption, and will not pursue that part of the subject. I have addressed the House at greater length than I am in the habit of doing; but I believe it was impossible to overrate the gravity of the crisis. There can be no doubt that we have once more arrived at what the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian has once described as the "parting of the ways." On one hand, there is a road which will lead inevitably to a repetition of all the miseries and troubles through which the country has passed for the last 87 years. On the other is a road which will lead to a speedy termination of all these troubles, and to a reconciliation which many believed to be impossible a few years ago. The inconsistency of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) in supporting this policy of coercion is astounding. It was only on the 9th of April last that the right hon. Gentleman said that the cause which made the recrudescence of crime in Ireland possible was the agrarian situation, and if the cause could be got out of the way, there would be nothing to justify recourse to coercive measures; and the right hon. Gentleman added that he would bring in a Bill to stay evictions for six months, and to provide for the settlement of arrears. What has occurred since the 9th of April to alter the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman? Why does he go away from those words now, and thus do violence to the teaching and principles of his past life and of his Party? There is not a single fact bearing on the case which was not known in April last. The only strong cases now brought forward date back to 1885, and the beginning of 1886. It is inexplicable that the right hon. Member should recede from that declaration, and should support a Motion which will put off for some time the possible reconciliation of the people of the two countries. For my part—for our part—it will be the duty of Irish Members to resist this measure in a way that the Rules of Parliament will permit of our doing. I believe we shall be supported in that resistance by the entire body of the Liberal Party and by the people of England. If the Bill passes, in spite of the utmost exertions we can make, I, on my part, shall continue to carry on the Plan of Campaign in Ireland. I do not care whether the Government try me in Dublin or at the Old Bailey—I will only say this, that if you succeed, by the aid of packed juries, in convicting me and putting me in prison, on your heads be the crimes and the horrors of the situation that will ensue.

Mr. HALDANE (Haddington): The language in which the Chief Secretary for Ireland introduced this Bill, the nature of the charges which he has launched against the Irish people, and the temper with which those charges have been brought forward, illustrate the passionate inconsiderateness with which Englishmen, at certain times, approach the consideration of the Irish problem. We, at least, of the Liberal Party, with all our failings and with all the mistakes which we have committed, have learned one thing. We have learned that hysterical legislation cannot affect the consequences of acts the nature of which we have long since come to understand. The proposals now placed before us are so remarkable and of a stringency so extraordinary as almost to take one's breath away. I do not deny that there might be a state of things for which so extraordinary a proposition might be necessary. It might be natural if the Executive had to deal with a small body of conspirators, systematically banding themselves together to promote acts of rapine and disorder against the general well-being. Then, indeed, a proposition such as that which the Chief Secretary has placed before the House would be necessary; but whether that is the case now is an issue which is one of fact. I base my opposition to the Bill, not upon the nature of the propositions which it contains—although of those propositions I shall have something to say before I resume my seat—not upon any suggested satisfactory condition of the Government of Ireland, because I do not think the state of Ireland at this time can be described in any respect as satisfactory; nor do I base my opposition on any general considerations, other than a broad issue of policy. The policy which Her Majesty's Government are now bringing before the House can only, from the point of view of myself and those who think with me, end in disaster to the cause of social order in Ireland and in the disgrace and humiliation of the people of this country. The Government have introduced a certain amount of confusion into the issue. They say that to refuse to pass this Bill would be to deny to the Executive the means of maintaining law and order, and of carrying out the mandate entrusted to them. That is a proposition from which I wholly and entirely dissent. In my opinion, the duty of the Executive, not only in Ireland but in every other country that exists under Constitutional Government, is to carry out the enforcement of the law without the slightest regard to the reasons upon which such law and policy have been based. Certainly that is the doctrine which I should desire to support, and the history of this country illustrates the disastrous results of any departure from it; indeed, it affords numerous instances of the evils which have resulted in times when the Crown asserted a contrary doctrine, and sought to set itself up as possessing an authority co-ordinate with, if not superior to, that of Parliament. I, for one, would be no party to challenge the policy of the Government if I thought that the outcome of that challenge was the affirmation of a doctrine which, whether maintained in the interest of the Sovereign or the subject, I trust is for ever dead. That is not the question we are here to discuss, but something entirely different. We are sitting here, not as the Executive, but as the Commons of Great Britain and Ireland, to determine the nature of the law which the Executive is to enforce; and we are within our rights and privileges when we say that we will not give the further sanction of our authority to any legislation unless it involves an enforcement of a reform of the law. I desire, as far as possible, to state the case I have to make to the House with fairness. It is impossible, on a question like this, in which Parties are separated by perhaps a greater gulf than there is any instance of in the records of this country —it is impossible to approach the question before the House otherwise than in a spirit more or less partizan, but I will undertake, at least, to abstain from anything like a misrepresentation of the condition of affairs. I will endeavour to state the facts with accuracy, and to avoid imputing to hon. Members opposite any motives or purposes which they themselves would not acknowledge. I have said that the question we have to determine is one of policy. The Government have passed from stage to stage of the policy they are now asking the House to sanction in its last development with the utmost regularity. It is not unedifying to see how they have done this. It is long since they passed the point at which the ways diverge. They have become separated from us by a gulf which is ever widening. Her Majesty's Ministers have taken upon themselves the duty of restoring social order in Ireland by means which not only deprive them of the sanction of the majority over whom they have to rule, but which are opposed to the ordinary and common instincts of those very people. We, too, had a policy of social order; we, too, have sought to restore the permanent and just administration of the law in Ireland, but we sought to do so not by means of measures passed in the teeth of the wishes of the people with whom we had to deal; but by securing, as far as we could, the sanction of popular opinion, the good wishes and good will of the Irish people, and those instincts of order which we believe to exist in Ireland as well as in any other civilized community. Her Majesty's Government have now taken upon themselves a task which certainly is a task of great difficulty, and I am afraid we are not likely soon to see the end of it. We certainly have not seen the end of our difficulties in attempting the government of Ireland. The last thing we desire, and the last thing we should seek to do, is in the slightest degree to involve the Government in embarrassment in the discharge of a duty which is almost without parallel; but we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the discharge of that duty will not only involve the Government in difficulty, but cannot fail to involve this country in an embarrassment no less than that in which it will involve Ireland. Let us look at the stages through which Her Majesty's Ministers have passed in the development of their policy. They set out with a denial of the necessity of that which they have entered upon now. The way towards coercion is paved with good intentions. The path which the Government have sought to tread is a path which has been fraught at every step with difficulties which they could hardly have foreseen. In the first instance, they set out with an abjuration of the doctrine of Home Rule, and I do not expect to see them in the slightest degree deviate from that principle. But what is their position now? To begin with, they find themselves face to face with the necessity of restoring social order in Ireland. They have their own theory upon that subject, and they have announced that the absence of social order is due to the absence of prosperity and contentment in that country. Now in that idea is there not something like a confusion between cause and effect? We have heard, in the annals of civilization, of good government preceding contentment and happiness; but I do not think we have ever heard of contentment and happiness preceding good government? You cannot restore the one unless you take upon yourselves to secure the other. The Government, feeling the difficulty of their position, set out with the purpose of devising a policy which might assist them in compassing their object. Finding they did not possess knowledge sufficient to enable them to accomplish their object, they invented a policy of Commissions. Undoubtedly, there was a certain amount of wisdom in that. It was necessary for the Government, in order to satisfy the Irish people, to discover and ascertain the mode in which the Irish people were to be satisfied. But the Irish peasant was hungry. It is all very well to inaugurate a policy of Commissions, but a policy of that kind takes time, and you were required to legislate immediately—to deal with a case of social order as best you might. To undertake reforms in the law was no doubt part of the duty of the Government; but the Government forgot that their policy was essentially a policy which must take time. On their accession to Office they committed the fatal mistake of simply rejecting the Bill of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), forgetting that a policy, which in its place might be wise, might not be successful under circumstances which brooked no delay. That brought them to Policy No. 2. The late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) found it necessary, for the purpose of keeping up a condition of affairs that was found intolerable, to put pressure on the landlords of Ireland; but he forgot that Ireland was a country in which the people identified the landlords, in their own minds, with all that is most hateful—that it is a country where the necessity was recognized of the Government of the day ranging themselves on one side or the other; and a country which was accustomed to recognize the Government almost as a matter of course as ranging themselves on the side of the landlords. Her Majesty's Ministers forgot that they had to make an election on one side or the other; that they could not ride two horses at once, and conciliate the landlords and the tenants as well. The late Chief Secretary endeavoured to do something for the tenants, and he attempted to bring pressure to bear upon the landlords; but the tenants would not have it, nor would the landlords. They objected to a half-and-half policy, and called upon the late Chief Secretary to do one thing or the other. The consequence was that he failed. It was that circumstance which brought the Government to Policy No. 3—the policy which they are now introducing. It was necessary to take steps for insisting on the restoration of the observance of the law. The state of Ireland was a state which certainly admitted of only one verdict. That state was really—I will not say deplorable—but a condition of things in which it was necessary, and above all things essential, that some firm course of administration should be entered upon. Accordingly, the Government have entered upon such a course. We have heard to-night the propositions which have been placed before us by the Chief Secretary, and of which I took a rough note; propositions which can only be described as drastic in their stringency. Before you can form an opinion upon these propositions it is necessary that you should look at the existing condition of Ireland. The real Government of Ireland is at this moment in the hands of the National League. You have got before you the lamentable spectacle of a conflict between the *de jure* and the *de facto* Government—of the Representatives in Dublin Castle of the Treasury Bench at Westminster carrying on a feeble and somewhat spasmodic struggle with the irresistible influence of an organization which is flourishing in every part of the country. The reason is not far to seek. The reason is that the National League exists because it is the real representative of the opinions of the majority of the Irish people. The issue, Sir, is one of fact. I, for one, do not like to learn that a rival to the Government exists; but, before suppressing it, there is a necessity for inquiring into the causes which account for its being there. I listened to a speech which was made the other night by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Inverness (Mr. Finlay). I have listened to-night to the speech of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, and the view which my hon. and learned Friend took of the functions of the League was practically the view subsequently taken by the Chief Secretary — namely, that it is in itself essentially a secret society, enforcing its mandates by means of Boycotting, and enforcing Boycotting by means and artifices of a secret, violent, and highly criminal nature. Is that a view of the operations of the National League which is founded on fact? Is it a view which anybody would arrive at who considers the existing condition of Ireland? You have only to read the columns of *United Ireland* to find the doings of the League proclaimed in the light of day in every township and every district of the country. My hon. and learned Friend stated that the doings of the League are doings that are enforced by Boycotting. Undoubtedly they have been enforced by Boycotting; but how came they to be enforced in that way? It is because in Ireland Boycotting is the only way of getting out of the difficulties imposed by the carrying out of an unjust and unnecessary policy. You talk of the National League Party encouraging outrage; but what is the evidence of your own witnesses? Take that of Captain Considine—a gentleman who is certainly not likely to be prejudiced in favour of the League. You will find in the evidence of that gentleman a statement that the efforts of the League have been for 12 months past directed to putting down, as far as possible, crime and outrage. Perhaps Kerry is a county where you have more crime and outrage than in any other. It is said to be the principal centre of disturbance; and it is notorious that it is the district where the National League is less powerful than anywhere else. I know that hon. Gentlemen opposite feel most strongly on the subject of the issue in this case; but how is it possible for you to cure the existing state of things? How are Her Majesty's Government going to substitute for what is undoubtedly the *de facto* Government of Ireland a *de jure* Government, which I should certainly like to see established there, and which ought to be there, carrying on its work with the goodwill and assent of the general mass of the Irish people? The question is, how are you to make up your minds as to the meaning of this great popular movement? There may have been mistakes made in questions such as these before now. There has been no one who has been more uniformly wrong in his opposition to all popular movements than the Chancellor of the Exchequer. No man has formed judgments more adverse to popular movements than the right hon. Gentleman. I know that the right hon. Gentleman is a man of the highest integrity. I know that he is a man who would form no judgment as part of a conclusion at which he had arrived unless he believed that that judgment and conclusion were arrived at on proper and sufficient grounds. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer is a man whose judgment has often been wrong; he was wrong about the extension of the franchise in counties, and he became from the opinion which he formed on that question a political Ismaelite. I believe that there are not a dozen hon. Gentlemen opposite who will now express an opinion that the extension of the franchise which was made in that direction was an unwise one, and I say that the great question before us now is one which has to be decided on considerations of a precisely similar character. I now come to summarize the objections which I take to the Bill which has been shadowed forth by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. I am afraid that my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General will have his work cut out for him. The Bill certainly has its extraordinary —I might almost say its comic—aspects. I can well conceive my hon. and learned Friend meeting the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland and discussing evidence he had never seen, and upon the nature of which he has had no opportunity of forming a judgment, for the purpose of removing some trial from Ireland to this House. How is any Attorney General to form a judgment upon a matter of that kind? How is any man who does not know Ireland to form a judgment whether a particular trial ought to be removed or not? There is, however, something more. The Chief Secretary told us that the object of the Bill is twofold. In the first place, to secure evidence; in the second, to secure verdicts; and he hoped by the Bill to be able to accomplish both of those objects. Now, how does he propose to obtain evidence? He re-adopts a provision which was originally contained in the Crimes Act brought in in 1882. No doubt that provision was not without its use. It was a provision which served, at all events, to obtain a certain amount of evidence which at the time was sufficient; but the circumstances under which the same provision is brought forward now are very different. Under no circumstances can you now count on being able to obtain satisfactory evidence in Ireland. You cannot do without evidence in Ireland unless you are prepared to carry on the business of the law by means of a drumhead court-martial, which is the only tribunal which would act without evidence. Then, again, how are you to obtain a verdict? There is a simple way of doing it. You may obtain it by constituting the tribunal in a particular way—a tribunal, for instance, which will act without that evidence which the law prescribes as necessary; but this Bill does not provide that. It is all very well to appoint magistrates with summary jurisdiction; but how are they to act? They cannot act without evidence, and the difficulty will be, as it has been in the past, in obtaining that evidence. So far as I can see, Her Majesty's Government have not advanced one step in the direction of obtaining evidence. There are a number of most extraordinary proposals put forward in the Bill. There is a proclamation of dangerous associations. How far is that to be carried? I presume that it means the immediate extinction of the National League. [*Cries of* "Hear, hear!" *from the Ministerial Benches.*] Well, you will extinguish the National League, and you will have to reckon with the consequences of your act. You will have to reckon with having driven agitation, which is now above-board, beneath the surface; and the effect of your legislation will be the formation once more of those secret societies which have been the curse of Ireland. We have been in hopes we might get rid of those secret societies for ever; but if the propositions of the Government are brought forward for bolstering up a bad land system they will inevitably result in the revival of secret societies. Much has been said about injustice to landlords. No doubt there have been instances of the most cruel injustice to landlords; but I am afraid that for one case of injustice to a landlord there have been 100 cases of injustice not less cruel, and not less disastrous to tenants. I admit that the condition of many Irish landlords is deplorable; but they are suffering from the system which now exists. For the rack-renting landlord who oppresses his tenants we can have no pity; but for other landlords we feel very great sympathy indeed, and if they are to be got rid of they must be got rid of on just terms. Some of those who have been returned to this House—and I am one of them—would only allow ourselves to be elected not only on the terms that we should be free to support a Land Bill analogous to that brought in by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone); but also that we should be free to support any other Bill which might be brought in by any Government—whether Liberal or Conservative—which proposed to deal with the matter on a just and rightful basis, without interfering in an inequitable manner with the tenants, and without doing anything that might unduly jeopardize or prejudice the interests of the British taxpayer. Let Her Majesty's Government bring forward such a measure, apart from any other measure, and I, for one, promise them that upon such a subject—a subject which is far too important to allow Party considerations to intervene—I will do my best to support any proposal they may submit to the House so long as it is framed in accordance with the ordinary conditions of prudence. There is, however, another reason which induces me to oppose the Bill which the Government have announced. I am prepared to oppose it because I believe it is a measure which will prove to be utterly useless. It is a Bill of which, stringent as it may be—and it is stringent to a degree that is appalling—it is not difficult to prophesy that it will be enforced with a hand more unsparing in its rigidity and its intensity than that with which the measure of 1882 was administered by Lord Spencer and Mr. Trevelyan. What was the effect of that measure? No doubt a certain amount of crime was put down; but at what cost? You turned nearly the whole of Ireland into a condition of irritation, and made the people prepared to resist, almost to the last drop of their blood, a policy you are now seeking to revive. You made Ireland far more Nationalist than ever it had been before. Every Town Council, every Local Board, every popular assemblage in three of her Provinces declared in favour of the Nationalist cause. The influence of the National League was even felt in Ulster, where there were signs of the people stepping forward and taking part in the operations of the Land League with the rest of the Irish people. Every popular body took sides with what became, from that moment, the Nationalist cause. If that were so under the Bill to which I refer, how much more will it not be the case under the Bill which Her Majesty's Government propose to introduce; every line of which is calculated to make the Irish people hate this country and the administration of its laws far more bitterly, and with greater intensity and a greater sense of injustice, than was even the Crimes Act of 1882? I object to the Bill because it appears to me to be the necessary and logical outcome of a bad policy. I think that the bringing forward of this measure became an absolutely necessary step with the policy inaugurated by the Government last year. The evil was committed then, when they pledged themselves to oppose Home Rule in any shape or form; and we who cannot support them in that—we who are pledged to bring about a state of things in which the Government of Ireland may be carried on in different lines—are only acting with consistency when we declare that we will oppose this Bill in every shape, in every form, and from every point which the Rules of Debate in this House will permit. We have been taunted to-night by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary with leaving the attack on this Bill in the hands of an Opposition which he said is not the regular Opposition. I deny that the Opposition to which the right hon. Gentleman referred is not the regular Opposition. For the purpose of opposition to this measure we are one. One Party is not fighting less stringently or less earnestly than the other. You have accused the Irish Members repeatedly of having violated every Rule of this House. Perhaps your accusation may not be altogether devoid of truth; but what was the occasion of it? You refused to listen to those eminent Irishmen—from Grattan down to Mr. Isaac Butt—who have addressed you in eloquent terms, and have endeavoured to obtain the redress of Irish grievances. You have refused to these men every act of justice. You refused even to consider the propositions which they have placed before you. You refused to consider their proposals until the Party came to be led by sterner men with a less rigid intention of observing the proprieties of debate. They have forced you to listen to their case. We were as wrong then as you are now, and they have compelled us to listen to the case of the Irish people. At length they have brought us to a state of things in which the Irish Party, so far from being a small minority of the House, is in alliance with the vast majority of the Liberal Party of this country. You say that we have changed our views. Yes; we have changed our views, and we have changed our policy. We have changed that policy at a moment which we believe to be not too late. We have taken up a position from which you will not drive us, either by your taunts or by any arguments you are likely to use. No doubt we—the Liberal Party—have also sinned against Ireland, but the fault we committed was committed in partial ignorance. You, however, through the medium of this monstrous Bill, and through the medium of your general policy, are about to inflict another grievous wrong upon Ireland, and for you there exists no such palliation. You will pass this Bill. [*Cries of* "No!" *from the Irish Members.*] Yes; the Bill will be passed, not by convincing argument, but by the mere weight of numbers. And, in making it a part of the law of the land, you will inflict a wrong on the Irish people, the consequences of which will only be measured by the disaster you will bring upon the administration of justice in Ireland, and the disgrace which that administration of justice in Ireland will inflict upon this country.

VISCOUNT LYMINGTON (Devon, South Molton): In offering a general support to the proposals of the Government, I do not pledge myself as to the various details; but I shall rest my case not upon a question of rent, or the amount of crime, but on the plain duty—I may even say the honourable trust—which I feel is reposed in every Unionist Member of this House to support the only possible Unionist Government in enforcing the authority of the law, and securing to every Irish fellow-subject the absolute protection of the laws of the British Parliament. I am willing to confess that the outward and visible condition of crime, although by no means satisfactory, is not so serious as has been the case when former Coercion Bills have been introduced into this House. But the explanation is clear, although I am bound to say that it is not a very satisfactory one. In former times the forces of anarchy, when those forces were represented by Fenianism, by the Land League, or by the National League, were struggling for mastery in Ireland. To-day—I am ashamed to say so—the forces of anarchy are the masters of Ireland. Outrages are no longer necessary. And why are they no longer necessary? To quote the words of Sir Redvers Buller, "intimidation is rampant" in that country. Sir Redvers Buller was asked by Lord Cowper, "Are the tenants afraid of the League?" and the reply of Sir Redvers Buller was "Yes; they are coerced by the League; they are in fear of the intimidation which is rampant in the country." These are the words of Sir Redvers Buller, whose evidence has been much quoted by hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House, and especially by the Irish Members. It is not the quality nor the quantity of crime. What necessitates the proposal of Her Majesty's Government is the plain, avowed, and self-evident fact, which it does not require Blue Books to prove or disprove, that law and order are in abeyance in Ireland; and that while the Government *de jure* is that of the Queen, the Government *de facto* is that of the League. That is the position which we have to confront. It is a position in which the Unionist Party cannot acquiesce. I make no complaint of, and I bring no charges against, the Irish Party. They, at least, have played their part in this controversy and in this struggle with determination and with courage. I listened, as I always do, with great respect to the speech of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), and I felt that the sentiments of that speech constituted, if there had been no speech at all from the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, the strongest reason and claim for the stringent powers which have been asked for on the part of the Government. The Irish Members and the Irish Party are not afraid of using force. They believe in coercion. They are willing and are ready to employ coercion to coerce the tenants into performing the part they wish them to play in this contest, and they know that they must employ force, and sustain the application of force, to enforce the duty that was preached by the hon. Member for North Wexford (Mr. J. E. Redmond), and which sums up the whole principle of the policy and attitude of the Home Rule Party in this House. Speaking at Chicago, the hon. Member said—

> "The duty of the moment is clear. I assert here to-day that the government of Ireland by England is an impossibility, and I believe it to be our duty to make it so."

[*Cheers from the Irish Members.*] Quite so; that was most admirably expressed by the hon. Gentleman.

MR. J. E. REDMOND (Wexford, N.): Why do not you read on?

VISCOUNT LYMINGTON: There is no necessity. That is perfectly clear from the Separatist point of view. For my own part, I do not believe that the English people are inclined to be over squeamish as to the means or manner in which they assert the authority of the law in Ireland. I think they have stronger nerves than is supposed by many Gentlemen who claim to represent them in this House. At least I am certain that what would discredit the Unionist Government, and not only the Unionist Government, but what would destroy once for all the Unionist Cause, would be for the Unionist Party to accept a tacit surrender and tacit acquiescence in anarchy. We have never surrendered Imperial interests to the arguments of despair and the forces of anarchy, and while we refuse to the Irish the right to misgovern themselves, we cannot, at the same time, refuse to govern Ireland ourselves. As long as there is a Unionist Party in the House and the country, it is our first, our foremost, and our primary duty to take every measure, whatever it may be, to prove to the English people that the government of Ireland by England is not an impossibility. But, Sir, I make no apologies for supporting coercion. And more than that, I say that unless we are prepared to accept the doctrine of separation, we must in some form or other accept the right of coercion. For separation, complete, frank, and openly avowed, there is something to be said. In this case, Irish Gentlemen, I should hope, would depart in peace, and English and Scotch Members would at least be left in this House in peace. But any intermediate policies, such as the respective plans of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W.E. Gladstone) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain), must involve some sort of contract between Parliament and the Irish people; and experience has shown that whenever the terms of a contract are distasteful to the Irish people they do not hesitate to repudiate that contract. They are not hesitating to-day in regard to the judicial rents—a contract only made five years ago. They are not hesitating to exercise the full pressure they can bring to bear on Parliament in order to get Parliament to upset that contract.

An hon. MEMBER: What does your own Commissioner report? What does Sir Redvers Buller say?

VISCOUNT LYMINGTON: I will come presently to Sir Redvers Buller. I should have thought that the Prime Minister would have had some feeling of regard for a Parliamentary contract which he was instrumental in getting Parliament to accept five years ago. [An hon. MEMBER: The late Prime Minister.] Yes; the right hon. Gentleman is not Prime Minister now, owing to the exertions of hon. Members sitting on this side of the House. But supposing the policy of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian had been accepted by the House; supposing that the Imperial Parliament had imposed upon Ireland the tribute which was to exist under his Home Rule Bill, or that it had imposed upon the Irish tenants the obligation of paying to the Receiver General the instalments under his land purchase scheme; if it is wrong for the Government to apply coercion and to resist interference with the judicial rents—I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it would not be equally wrong, equally immoral, and equally unjustifiable to have insisted upon the Parliamentary contracts entered into under his Home Rule Bill, and under his land purchase scheme? The rents which are denounced by the right hon. Gentleman and his Followers are not the rents of Irish landlords in the sense that they are rents fixed by them. The rights which the Irish landlords possess are not the old rights which they once possessed—the full and absolute right of confiscating their tenants' improvements. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) quoted a saying of Lord Clarendon, in which he described the Irish landlords as "felonious landlords." That expression was uttered many years ago; it was uttered before the legislation of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. In those days that statement would have been accurate and natural; but circumstances are now changed. [Mr. T. M. HEALY: Not at all.] I say that the circumstances are completely changed. I challenge Sir Redvers Buller—who made a perfectly wild and reckless statement when he said that whatever law there is in Ireland is on the side of the rich—I challenge Sir Redvers Buller, or any Gentleman in this House, to tell me of any country in the world where the occupiers of the soil possess advantages equal to or greater than those possessed by the Irish tenants. They have fixity of tenure, fair rents, compensation for disturbance, and free sale; and I should like to know from hon. Gentlemen what greater boons any Parliament could confer upon any tenantry in the world. But, Sir, there is another charge, and perhaps a greater one—one, at least, which carries with it great weight. We are told by the opponents of coercion that the whole history of coercion has been a failure. We are told that, whatever may be the necessities, whatever the conditions of Ireland, it has been proved by experience repeatedly and over and over again that coercion has failed. Well, many things have happened since 1846, and even since 1881. At the present moment the balance of Parties in this House is not held by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) but by the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington). The noble Lord holds the balance of power in this House, and in many constituencies in England. [An hon. MEMBER: But not of his own constituency if he will try it again.] The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian expressed a wish at one time that the Liberal Party should be able to settle the Irish Question independently of the Irish vote. That wish is, perhaps, now realized, though doubtless in a different sense and with a different intention from that which the right hon. Gentleman supposed or wished for; because to-day a Party exists in this House and in the country which is pledged as strongly as any Party can be to subordinate all their minor Party considerations to the supreme question of maintaining the Parliamentary union between England and Ireland. Then, Sir, another great change has taken place. Coercion is no longer a weapon open to the old objections. Coercion is no longer a weapon to enable unprincipled landlords to extract from oppressed tenants exorbitant rents. If coercion has failed in the past, I would ask hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House whether their remedial legislation has been so eminently successful? I myself am one of those who still believe in the value and in the advantages of the Land Act of 1881. I supported that Act in Parliament, and I still believe—and believe most earnestly and strongly—that the Act has conferred enormous boons on the Irish tenantry. That it has been desirable and necessary has been proved by the large reductions in rent which have been made by the Land Commissioners. I will go further, and say that that remedial legislation would have proved successful—and successful in its political effects—if hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway had allowed it to be so. If the remedial legislation of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian has failed, it has failed not because it has been bad, not because it has not been wanted, not because it has not conferred great boons upon the Irish tenantry, but because the right hon. Gentleman has never been able to resist that coercion which the Irish people have been able to put upon him to invalidate and destroy the effects of his own legislation. The Land Act has failed, and we are driven to the last resort—a large scheme of purchase to buy out the Irish landlords. What scheme that could ever be devised is likely to succeed until law and order are restored? Why is it that the vast majority of sales under Lord Ashbourne's Act have taken place in Ulster, where the landlords are not particularly anxious to sell? And why is it that in the other parts of Ireland, where the landlords have offered every facility to tenants to purchase their holdings, they do not take advantage of Lord Ashbourne's Act? [Mr. T. M. HEALY: Hear, hear!] The hon. and learned Gentleman says "Hear, hear!" I am afraid the explanation is that the tenantry in the South and West of Ireland have been constantly and insidiously indoctrinated with the belief that a little more pressure put upon the landlords—a little further delay—and they will get the land at prairie value, perhaps at less than prairie value; for under the Plan of Campaign, which has received the sanction of Gentlemen sitting on the Front Opposition Bench, an Irish tenant enjoys, I am bound to say, the unique position, enjoyed by no other man in the world, of having all the advantages with none of the burdens of ownership. The tenant is himself at once the judge and jury as to what rent he should pay. [An Irish MEMBER: Why not?] An hon. Member says "Why not?" From a tenant's point of view that remark can be appreciated. If I were an Irish tenant, of course, I should infinitely prefer the opportunity of discriminating whether I should pay my rent at all; but my point is that unless you can get the Irish tenantry to rely upon the law of this country as a basis of order and good government, no remedy which can ever be propounded by Parliament can possibly succeed, for no remedial legislation, however generous or beneficial, can possibly compete with the Socialistic advantages offered by the Irish Party. How can you expect any people to suffer the delay of remedial legislation which is to be obtained from Parliament, when they can take the law into their own hands and give effect once for all to their own remedies? I should like, Sir, in regard to this question of purchase, to revert again to a statement made by Sir Redvers Buller. He was asked by Mr. Neligan——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must remind the noble Lord that the question of purchase has no connection with the immediate discussion before the House, which is the introduction of this Bill.

Viscount LYMINGTON: I am sorry, Sir, that I should have trespassed beyond the limits of this discussion. I was anxious to show that remedial legislation is impossible without some reserved power of coercion. My hon. Friend the Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Bryce) said, a few days ago, that—

> "He thought no case could be pointed out in which a democratic Government had succeeded in coercing into friendship and love another nationality which formed a part of the same democracy."

And then, speaking of the case of the American Rebellion, he said—

> "They (the Northern States) then, with the characteristic practical good sense of the American, at last changed their course, and in 1876 President Hayes withdrew the Northern Armies from the South, genuine self-government was restored, and from that time till now the Southern States had been a perfectly satisfactory and well-governed country."

Of course, no one ever heard of an individual or a State being coerced into love; but if my hon. Friend meant that no State has ever been coerced, by a democratic Government, into obeying laws not of their own making, I cannot agree with him, and I assure him that he is greatly mistaken. If the House will allow me, I should like to answer his allusion to the Southern States. The hon. Member for Aberdeen ought to know that the military Governments of which he spoke were a temporary measure, and that the Southern States came back into the Union, not by the exercise of self-government, but under the authority of the American Congress, in which they were not represented, and under Acts which their people had no part in enacting. My hon. Friend spoke of Tennessee, and, making his own history as he went along, he led the House to suppose that Tennessee had come back as an ordinary self-governing State into the American Union after, and not until after, President Hayes withdrew the Northern armies from the South in 1876.

Mr. SHIRLEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Doncaster): Is the noble Lord in Order in referring to a speech made in this House in another debate during the present Session?

Mr. SPEAKER: The noble Lord, I imagine, is referring to a speech in what may almost be called a stage of the Bill now under discussion, and I cannot rule that he is out of Order.

Viscount LYMINGTON: Before I was interrupted I was referring to the point made by the hon. Member for Aberdeen in regard to the case of Tennessee. I was remarking that the hon. Member seemed to suppose that Tennessee came back into the Union as an ordinary self-governing State after the Northern Armies were withdrawn from the South in 1876. As a matter of fact, Tennessee came back into the American Union under the Imperial Act of a foreign Congress in July, 1866. [An hon. Member: Not a foreign Congress.] It was a foreign Congress in the sense that Tennessee was not represented. Again, to touch upon this question of American Home Rule; and, again, to show that the American democracy did not hesitate to exercise the right of coercion, the Reconstruction Acts of the American Congress, which over-rode the self-government of the Southern nationalities, to quote the words of the hon. Member for Aberdeen, were sustained by the Supreme Court in the celebrated case of "Texas *v.* White," seven years before the withdrawal of Northern troops referred to by the hon. Member. In that case (1869) the American Supreme Court held that the ordinances of secession passed by the Southern nationalities had been absolutely null, that the seceding States had never been out of the Union, though the Home Rulers of every one of those nationalities had voted them out of the Union; and that during and after the rebellion they had no Governments competent to represent those States in their relations with the National Government. The extent to which coercion was applied by the democratic Government of the United States to compel these seceding nationalities into friendship and love was signally illustrated in the case of the wealthiest of the Southern States—Georgia. That State, after the defeat of the rebellion, passed laws, in the exercise of her perfectly Constitutional Home Rule, declaring negroes incapable of holding office, and refused to ratify, as she was legally entitled to do, a certain Amendment—the 15th—to the American Constitution. For this the American Congress refused her people their right to be represented at Washington; nor was that right allowed until Georgia had been coerced into revoking her State laws and ratifying the objectionable Amendment in 1870. So much, then, for the case of American Home Rule. The whole history of the treatment of the South by the North, the whole conduct of the American democracy in asserting the authority of the Union, is in distinct and absolute favour of the unquestionable and unquestioned right of every democracy, and a proof that a democracy can exercise the most powerful, potent, and stern coercion. As it is with the American people, so I believe it to be with the English people. I grant that they are radical in their sympathies, that they are deeply impressed with the necessity of far-reaching, far-searching reforms; but they have no sympathy with disorder or with outrage. They love their own freedom; they love their own Parliament. I believe they are disgusted at the conspiracy—I can call it nothing else—which is attempting inside the walls of this House to paralyze our Business.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I rise to Order. With great respect to the noble Lord, I wish to ask whether it is in Order to speak of a conspiracy within the walls of this House?

MR. SPEAKER: Conspiracy of the kind referred to is a very strong expression for the noble Lord to use. If it was applied to any section of the House, I think the noble Lord will feel that he ought to withdraw the expression.

VISCOUNT LYMINGTON: I will apologize to the hon. and learned Member for having offended his very delicate sensibilities—["Withdraw!"]—and assure him that my remarks had no special reference to him. My experience in addressing public meetings is that the people of this country are beginning to regard with impatience what must appear to them to be the unjustifiable means of standing between the vast majority of the House, who are sent here to represent them with the distinct and definite object of carrying on, first and foremost, the Business of Parliament, and effecting, first and foremost, the vindication of law and order in Ireland. In conclusion, let me say a few words in reply to a taunt which was addressed pointedly to myself and to other Gentlemen who sit on the Opposition side of the House. It has been repeatedly said that the clamour for coercion comes from those who have not the courage to sit side by side with those with whom they act. ["Hear, hear!" *from the Irish Members.*] Quite so; we are looking for the example to be set by the Party which is led by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. If my noble Friend the Member for Rossendale is the master of the Cabinet, the master of the Opposition is the hon. Member for Cork. The Liberal Unionist alliance on that point with the Conservative Party is an open and avowed alliance, an alliance of which we are not ashamed. The noble Marquess at the head of the Government and the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale at the commencement of this alliance stood shoulder to shoulder at one of the largest public meetings ever held in London; and I challenge the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian to stand shoulder to shoulder at any great English meeting on an English platform with the master of his policy, the hon. Member for Cork. And, Sir, I maintain, apart from other questions and other considerations, that the Liberal Unionists have as good and as unquestioned a right to sit on these Benches as any Member of the Party led by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. We have surrendered no opinion—no Radical, no Liberal opinion—what we have not surrendered are our own convictions and our own independence; we have only surrendered minor and Party considerations to the supreme question of the hour—the question of the Union. Whatever our fate may be, and wherever we may sit in the House, I can assure hon. Gentlemen opposite and hon. Members around me that we shall not be influenced by taunts; but that we shall be guided by the single desire to preserve unimpaired, and at all costs, the full and absolute supremacy, in all parts of Her Majesty's Dominions, of Imperial law and Imperial authority.

MR. J. E. REDMOND (Wexford, N.): Sir, I scarcely think that the Government are to be congratulated on the only defence that has been heard to-night of their policy, and still less do I think that the Liberal Unionist Party are to be congratulated on their spokesman. The Government are not happy in their defenders, for during the long and somewhat tiresome speech we have just listened to, there has been no argument on the question before the House—namely, the introduction of the Coercion Bill. The Liberal Unionists are scarcely to be congratulated, because I think the noble Lord, in the first sentence of his speech, put their position in a far too candid way for their feelings or their prospects. The noble Lord, according to his own statement, is going to support this Bill, not in consequence of the figures in connection with agrarian outrage—not in consequence of the movement for a reduction of rent—but he and his fellow-Liberal Unionists are going to support it because they think that by opposing it they might dislodge the present Government from power. The speech of the noble Lord is a repetition of the statements made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) some time ago, when he said that he would vote in favour of no proposal which would have the effect of dislodging the present Cabinet from the Government Bench. I do not think I should be doing justice to myself, or the subject under discussion, if I were to dwell for a single moment longer on the speech of the noble Lord. Sir, there are circumstances connected with the introduction of this Bill which distinguish it from every proposal for coercion which has been made in recent years in this House. This is the third Coercion Bill which has been proposed during the six years I have sat as a Member of this House; and, Mr. Speaker, I may truly say that, bitter and humiliating as has been the work of an Irish Nationalist during those years, there has been no part of that work so absolutely hateful as being compelled to rise here time after time to protest against the suspension of the Constitution of his country by men whose minds have been made up beforehand on the subject, and who have been less guided by considerations of national equity than by considerations of Party exigency and discipline. Up to the present moment there has been no single subject of domestic or foreign concern on which men of different English Parties and the most widely divergent political views have been able to agree, save and except only the passage of coercive legislation for Ireland. I rejoice to think that that day has passed, and that we have had, with regard to this Bill, a noticeable departure from the experience of the past. We have now before us the spectacle of the Liberal Party standing forward as the defenders of Irish liberties. That example must exercise an enormous influence upon the Irish people; it will teach them the lessons of patience and self-restraint in the face of terrible provocation. It will comfort them in their present hour of trial and need, and it will teach them that it will not be their fate very much longer to appeal in vain for justice either to the English Parliament or the English people. In what I have to say with regard to the introduction of this Bill—I desire to appeal to reason and argument alone, although it is difficult for an Irishman to pass by without some expression of resentment the insult to his country which is conveyed in this proposal. For my own part, I desire to treat it simply as if it were an ordinary Bill depending for its passage on the weight of reason and argument which is brought to bear in its favour. Of course, I recognize the fact that there are two kinds of coercionists in this House—two distinct classes of hon. Members, who have agreed in supporting coercive Parliamentary legislation, but who do so from very different motives, and for very widely different reasons. The arguments which must be addressed to these two classes of Members on the introduction of this Bill are, consequently, of a somewhat different character. First of all, there are those who believe that Ireland is unfit for Constitutional liberty, who regard the Irish people as irreclaimably savage and as hopelessly disloyal. Such Members support coercion on principle. They have faith in the sword; they believe that, under certain circumstances, force is a remedy. Those men are straightforward and honest—their policy is at least intelligible; and, for my part, regarding them as I do, as open foes, I have much more respect for them than I have for hon. and right hon. Members in other portions of this House, who, although they never lose an opportunity of denouncing coercion in theory, are always prepared to vote for it in practice. To those who support coercion on principle, I ask permission to submit a few questions. Do they not really think that the time is past when coercion can be looked upon as a remedy in Ireland? Is all past experience to count for nothing, and the entire history of the past to be disregarded? If coercion were a remedy either for Irish discontent, disaffection or crime, Ireland to-day would be the most peaceable, contented, and loyal part of the Empire. Coercion has been the only policy which has been perseveringly applied to her by every English Party in turn. Eighty-six Coercion Acts in 86 years! One Coercion Act for every year since the Legislative Union. Has the result been so satisfactory? Has the condition of the country improved so much? Have the Irish people become so contented with English rule that the Government of England at this day still believe in the policy of repression? I believe that even with the English Tory Party this policy of perpetual coercion has exploded. Of one thing I am certain—namely, that those who support such a policy or principle cannot stop short at this Bill. If they hope for the success of their coercion, they must make it thorough. This Bill is drastic enough in some respects, but it is half-hearted and cowardly in other respects. I assert that if coercion is to be the method of government, you must go further than this Bill, and in the end disfranchise Ireland, and do away once and for all with this empty mockery of Constitutional Government; but though they may still be many who regard Ireland and coercion from this old-world point of view, there are few who have the courage to say so. Let me turn to the other class of hon. Members who are the professors of the doctrine that force is no remedy, and who believe that coercion is simply a hateful and desperate expedient. I admit at the outset there may be occasions on which such men might find it their duty to vote in favour of proposals of this character. Is this such an occasion? I assert that before such men can conscientiously vote in favour of such a proposal as this, it must be proved to their minds satisfactorily—first of all, that an exceptional state of violence and crime exists in Ireland to-day; secondly, that the ordinary law has absolutely broken down in its dealings with this exceptional state of violence and crime; thirdly, that the proposals which are now made are likely, judging by the history and experience of the past, to be efficacious; and fourthly, that such social disorder as does exist does not spring from the stupid and persistent refusal of the Imperial Parliament to remedy admitted grievances. Now, let me briefly take these four points in turn. Does an exceptional state of violence and crime exist in Ireland to-day? I wish, in the first place, to give a warning to English Members to be careful how they believe what they read and hear on the question of Irish outrage. There is at this moment an unscrupulous and widespread conspiracy at work, with the object of misleading English public opinion, and inducing the belief that Ireland is in an exceptionally criminal state; whereas, in reality, Ireland is comparatively tranquil. That conspiracy has its agents everywhere; in this House, and in the Press, and upon the platform, and its hand was recently detected in the columns of *The Times* newspaper, and more than one of its calumnies have been openly refuted within the walls of this House. The system of manufacturing bogus outrages as a preparation for Irish coercion is of very old origin. It has been at work as a preparation for every Coercion Bill which has been introduced into this House since the Union. So far back as 1814, an Irish Judge disclosed from the Bench the true nature of this conspiracy. Mr. Baron Fletcher, in charging the Grand Jury of County Wexford in 1814, spoke as follows:—

> "Much exaggeration and misrepresentation have gone abroad, and the extent and causes of disturbances have been much mis-stated. Several advertisements in newspapers now before me describe this country as being in a most alarming state of disturbance; whereas the country never enjoyed more profound tranquillity. These advertisements have been, I understand, republished in the prints of Dublin and London, and have naturally excited strong sensations. It may not be uninstructive for me to explain those misrepresentations and exaggerations which have impelled the Legislature to swell the Criminal Code Session after Session with new Statutes for vindicating the peace of this country."

Sir, these words are as true to-day as they were on the day on which they were spoken, and I call upon English Members to take their facts about Irish outrage and crime, not from platform statements of Unionist or Tory orators in Ireland or in England, not from the statements in Unionist or Tory prints in Ireland or in England; but from the hard figures of the official Returns, and from these alone. Now, Sir, I do not hesitate to say that at the present moment, and for a considerable time past, agrarian outrages in Ireland have been considerably below what I may be forgiven in calling their normal average. It is a significant commentary on the character of the land system which you have maintained in Ireland, that from the very first it has been associated with agrarian crime. The numbers of these crimes have risen and fallen from time to time, but the crimes have never, under your land system, entirely died out; and it is not difficult for anyone, who reads aright the miserable history of the land war of Ireland, to see that right through this history outrages have followed eviction, as surely as disease has followed famine. Every period of agrarian distress has been marked by an enormous increase of agrarian crime; and the explanation is to be found in the fact that the Irish landlords have used every period of agrarian distress as a fitting opportunity to evict their poorer tenants. In 1847—that terrible year of famine and pestilence—agrarian crimes rose to the terrible number of 20,986, and we had the explanation at the beginning of the following year, 1848, when so eagerly were the landlords using that period of famine to evict their tenants that this Imperial Parliament felt called upon in very shame to pass an Act to make it illegal to evict tenants on Christmas Day and Good Friday—the two great festivals of the Christian year. Now, in 1848, the agrarian outrages numbered 14,000; in 1849, 14,903, and in 1850, 10,639—and so on year after year until the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) laid his hand to that great work of remedying Irish wrongs which he has not yet completed, but which we believe he is destined yet to complete. In 1870, the right hon. Gentleman passed a Land Act which seems to us to-day a very small measure; but, Mr. Speaker, it placed some obstacles in the way of evictions, and, in doing so, it tended to sensibly diminish agrarian crime. At the present moment, agrarian crime of a serious character in Ireland is practically unknown, and agrarian crime, even of a trivial character, is rare. I listened with amazement to the speech which was made to-night by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. A. J. Balfour). I listened with amazement to his figures until we drew from him the reluctant acknowledgment that those figures did not refer exclusively to agrarian crime, but to crime generally. Mr. Speaker, if we are to go into crime generally, or ordinary crime in Ireland, then I say, Ireland can challenge comparison with any part of the United Kingdom. But, Sir, we are dealing with agrarian crime, and what are the facts? I have in my hand the official Return for the three months ending December last, and let hon. Members when they listen to the figures remember that at this time Ireland was suffering from a depression in prices so great that the Government's own Commission acknowledged that the depression practically made the payment of the full judicial rents impossible. This Return, which we were told to-night by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was not sufficiently comprehensive as to include all classes of agrarian crime, is divided into 38 different columns or classifications of agrarian crime. Of these 38 classes, no less than 25 are absolutely blank for the whole of Ireland. Sir, during those months there has not been a single case in the whole of Ireland of murder, manslaughter, attempt to murder, conspiracy to murder, assault on police, cutting and maiming the person, taking and holding forcible possession, demand or robbery of arms, riots and affrays, appearing armed, administering unlawful oaths or rescuing prisoners. In point of fact, there has been an absolute absence of all the more serious crimes of an agrarian character; no less than nine out of the 32 counties are absolutely free from any sort of agrarian offence even of the most trivial character; and in only five of the 32 counties do the agrarian crimes amount to a double figure, and of the total of the so-called agrarian offences during the three months—namely, 166, no less than 72 were threatening letters, a most contemptible form of outrage I acknowlege, but still scarcely the kind of outrage to warrant the suspension of the most elementary rights of the Constitution. The total of offences, large and small, including threatening letters in 1886, was 1,025. I heard the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland say in his speech that there were only seven years since 1844 in which the agrarian crimes were fewer than they were last year. Well, I challenge that statement, and I am prepared to maintain that the outrages which were committed in 1886 were down to the lowest level of any year, and I believe were absolutely below the total of any year from 1844 to 1880. But, Sir, in June 1885, the Tory Party came into Office and they found the Crimes Act in operation, and they most wisely determined to allow that Act to drop—but upon what ground? On the ground that Ireland was free from serious crime, and that the ordinary law was sufficient to maintain social order. I repeat that was a most wise decision, and one which the subsequent further diminution of agrarian crime amply justified. But, Mr. Speaker, what was the state of agrarian crime in 1885? I have the Return here. Why, Sir, will it be believed that this Return shows an enormously larger number of agrarian crimes than the Return for the three months ending December 1886. Not only that, but the Return for June, 1885, was not free from murder and other serious agrarian offences; whereas, the Return for the three months ending December, 1886, as I have shown, is absolutely free from a single agrarian crime of a grave character. Now, in June, in 1885, we were told that Ireland was sufficiently free from crime to justify the abandonment of coercion; and now, at the beginning of 1887, although crime is considerably less, we are called upon to believe that coercion of a drastic character is absolutely essential to maintain law and order. The real difference in the situation is perfectly plain. In June, 1885, the Tory Party thought they could best retain Office by conciliating Ireland, and to-day they seem to be of opinion that that desirable end can best be obtained by coercing and insulting her. But, we may be told that it is not the crime before Christmas last, but the crime since Christmas which has necessitated the introduction of this Bill. Well, I regret that the Government have not felt it their duty to issue official Returns of agrarian outrages for the months that have elapsed since last Christmas. We have consequently no means of telling whether the number of serious offences has increased or not. If it has increased, then I beg English Members to bear in mind that it was since Christmas only that the Government commenced to interfere with the action of the Leaders of the people; it is only since Christmas that the Government have commenced to suppress legitimate agitation, and to break down, as far as they can, the combination of the tenants for their own protection against rack-renting. I have no intention of allowing myself to be drawn into a discussion of the Plan of Campaign; but I beg English Members to note that, according to this contention of the Government, so long as that Plan of Campaign was allowed to work unmolested on the few estates the landlords of which refused reductions, which Lord Cowper's Commission acknowledged to be fair and just, so long was agrarian crime repressed; and it was only when these landlords were allowed to recommence evicting that agrarian crime increased. But I deny the statement that agrarian crime has increased in any serious proportion since Christmas last. It is true, I believe, that there has been some Moonlighting in one district of one county of Ireland. I cannot conceive how you hope by the provisions of the Bill we have heard described to-night to put down Moonlighting; but, even if we were able by proposals of this character to detect and to punish those who were guilty of Moonlighting offences in one district of one county of Ireland, I utterly deny that that is a justification for a Coercion Bill of this character, which will suspend the elementary rights of the Constitution all over Ireland. What has been the experience of the recent Assizes? The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) made some quotations to-night from the charges of the Judges; but, Sir, he was most unfair in not giving us more information about the recent Assizes in Ireland. Now, the recent Assizes conclusively show that over the greater part of Ireland there has been an utter absence of crime. In the County of Meath there were only four cases, in Westmeath one, in King's County five, Longford five, Leitrim four, Carlow six, Louth one, and Sligo three. And I have extracts from some of the charges made by the Judges. Baron Dowse opening the Assizes at Maryboro', Queen's County, said—

> "The state of affairs is much the same as I found in Carlow, and as my brother Andrews found in the County Kildare. The country on the whole is very peaceful. You have only four cases to consider altogether."

Mr. Justice O'Brien, who has been quoted more than once in these debates, delivered a charge to the Grand Jury in the City of Limerick, in which he said, "substantially and really there is no crime at all." In Roscommon, Judge Murphy congratulated the Grand Jury on the condition of their county, and in Fermanagh, Louth and Tipperary, the Judges going Assizes bore testimony in their charges to the peaceful character of these counties. It is true that the Grand Juries in some of these places have passed resolutions in favour of a Coercion Bill. Mr. Speaker, it may be interesting to the House for me to read what took place in reference to the Grand Jury in one county; it will give hon. Members from England a fair index of the value to be placed upon the statements that proceed from these bodies. In the Queen's County the Judge, Baron Dowse, spoke as follows :—

> "The cases are of the usual class to be found in large communities like the Queen's County. There is nothing in them to disclose to any great extent anything like conspiracy against property or law and order ; but, as I say, the class of offences is what you may expect in a large community like this."

The County Inspector, the man responsible for the peace of the county, when examined before the Grand Jury, said, speaking of the state of the county—

> "I do not say it is in a happy state. I say crime is dead in the county. There is no crime in it at all."

But, immediately afterwards, the Grand Jury unanimously adopted the following savage resolution :—

> "That the Grand Jury of the Queen's County consider it to be their duty to record their conviction of the absolute necessity of the adoption by the Government of such legislation for Ireland as may restore the confidence of the loyal, bring the social disorder to an end, and stop the revolutionary action of the National League, which, if persisted in, will eventuate in the ruin of all classes."

Now, Sir, I think I have shown clearly enough what value is to be placed upon the demands proceeding from bodies like the Grand Juries of Ireland. We ask, is this the evidence upon which you rely to support the contention that Ireland is in a state of exceptional crime? You say you have secret information. What is that secret information? Why should it remain secret information, when we are expected, on the strength of it, to disregard the figures of this Return, and to believe that Ireland is in a state of crime? What are the sources from which your information is derived? Is it supplied by the paid magistracy, whose official existence may be said to depend in great measure upon the continuation of a state of coercion and turbulence? Is it derived from the Constabulary, whose promotion so often depends upon the detection and commission of crime? If so, I consider your sources of information tainted, and I call upon the House to refuse to sanction a Coercion Bill, as to the necessity of which not one satisfactory tittle of proof has been offered. But it would not be sufficient, even if the Government had satisfactorily proved that Ireland was in a state of crime and turbulence. They must show, in addition, that the ordinary law has broken down; and that I defy them to do. How have they attempted to do it? They assert that trial by jury in Ireland has broken down. Why did not the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland quote statements to that effect, delivered from the lips of the Irish Judges in the different counties of Ireland? Because no such statements exist. How many Moonlighters brought up for trial before juries in County Cork and elsewhere were improperly acquitted? No, Sir, the one notorious case in which apparently jurors had violated the obligation of their oaths took place in County Tyrone in loyal Ulster; where, I suppose, we shall be told a Coercion Act is not required at all. On the 16th December last two Orangemen, named Walker, were brought up for trial on the charge of having shot an English soldier and a policeman in the streets of Belfast. Mr. Justice Lawson, in his charge, laid it down emphatically that any person, who, in endeavouring to escape from justice, shot down a police officer, was, without any further evidence of malice aforethought, guilty of murder. "In this case," he said—

> "Grave consequences were involved. We are administering the law in the sight of the whole Empire, and it will be a dreadful thing if it can be supposed that a jury of this country will fail to perform its duty."

After some deliberation, the foreman of the jury announced that there was no possibility of their agreeing, and his Lordship said they must have wilfully made up their minds to disagree. The jury again retired, and later in the evening they came back with the same answer, and the Judge then said—

> "I have said all I can to you. It is highly discreditable to the jurors of this country that in a case like this they cannot agree. The juror who would violate his oath under circumstances such as surround this case is a man I look upon as second in guilt only to the man whose case he has been investigating. I discharge you."

These men have been put on their trial again. The men were brought up for trial in Omagh last December, but the Crown Prosecutor never dreamt it was necessary to move to change the *venue* of the trial to a place where Orangeism was not so strong. He never thought it necessary to order a single juryman to stand aside, though that practice is so common in other parts of the country. The prisoners have been brought for trial again before another jury in the North of Ireland, and with what result? In the case of one man, notwithstanding the statement of the law, which was clearly laid down by Mr. Justice Lawson, that murder was the offence, the jury brought in a verdict of manslaughter, and the second prisoner was acquitted altogether. Now, Sir, I repeat my assertion that in Ireland, generally, trial by jury has not broken down. What has to some extent broken down, is the system of jury-packing upon which the Government have been wont to rely in Ireland, in order to obtain the conviction of political opponents. The awakened interest which has been aroused in England by the recent trial in Ireland has had the effect, it appears, of making it difficult for the Irish Government satisfactorily to pack Irish juries in political cases, and indeed, they have recently had unpleasant experience of finding Conservative, Protestant jurors, specially selected by themselves to convict, refusing to do so. *The Daily Express*, a newspaper which is the organ of the Government and the organ of the Tory Party in Ireland, recently threw a flood of light on this question. They wrote the other day—

> "The times demand plain speaking. Trial by jury for political and *quasi*-political offences has been ever more or less of a make-believe and pretence in Ireland. Down to the present time the Crown has succeeded in enforcing the law by such an arrangement of the jury system as in political trials would secure the presence of men upon whom the Crown officers could rely. Owing to causes into which we need not now inquire, that system cannot be further pursued, and the Government is compelled to cast about for new methods of enforcing the law."

Yes, here is the truth; it is not that trial by jury has broken down; it is not that Irish jurors refuse to convict men charged with outrage and crime; but it is that the English Government are no longer able satisfactorily to pack juries to obtain the conviction of political opponents. Trial by jury, in its dealing with ordinary criminals, has not failed. The ordinary law, in its dealings with crime, has not broken down, and I call upon this House to refuse to sanction the suspension of the elementary rights of the Constitution simply because the Irish Government no longer find it easy, with precision, to pack Irish juries to obtain a conviction of their political opponents, like my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon). Now, Sir, I pass to the next point—to the consideration of the question whether the special laws now proposed are likely, judging by the history and experience of the past, to be efficacious. I have no intention of wearying the House by entering into the history of the failure of the 86 Coercion Bills that have been introduced and passed since the Act of Union. The very fact that there have been 86 such Acts in 86 years ought, I think, to be conclusive of their inefficacy. But let me say a word with reference to the two last Coercion Acts you have passed—namely, the Coercion Act of the late Mr. Forster and the Crimes Act of 1882. Was the Coercion Act of the late Mr. Forster a success? We know that under it crime increased a thousand-fold. The late Mr. A. M. Sullivan, who long enjoyed the respect of all parties in this House, summed up the results of Mr. Forster's *régime* in these words—

> "He (Mr. Forster) found Ireland alarmed and disturbed. He left it a volcano of human passions on one side, a Bastile of Government vengeance and caprice on the other. The 'village ruffians' and 'midnight marauders' went apparently untouched — nay, multiplied in numbers and increased in insolence and of crime; while mayors, magistrates, Members of Parliament, public representatives of every degree were seized and flung into gaol on mere suspicion, without accusation, evidence, investigation, or proof. . . . The inevitable result appeared. The secret societies became masters of the situation. Crime grew rampant."

I ask, has that terrible record no terrors for the Government? They will answer, no doubt, that their Bill is framed rather upon the lines of the Crimes Act of 1882. Then, I ask, was the Crimes Act of 1882 a success? Sir, the memorable speech of Lord Salisbury at Newport last October has been quoted before now. It cannot be quoted too often in the course of this discussion. Lord Salisbury, after abandoning that Act, and speaking with the official knowledge which he possessed, said—

> "The effect of the Crimes Act has been very much exaggerated. While it was in existence there grew up 1,000 branches of the National League. The provisions of the Crimes Act against Boycotting were of very small effect. It grew up under that Act because it is a crime which legislation has a very great difficulty in reaching. I have seen it stated that the Crimes Act diminished outrages. That Boycotting acted through outrages, and that the Crimes Act diminished Boycotting. It is not true—the Act did not diminish outrages. Boycotting was the act of persons proposing to do things which in themselves are loyal, and which are only illegal because of the intention with which they are done. What is the use of an Act of Parliament against a system such as that? As far as Boycotting is liable to the law, as far as legal remedies can reach it, do not imagine the Government are passive in putting the remedies of the ordinary law in action. The truth about Boycotting is that it depends upon the passing humour of the population. I doubt whether in any community law has been able to provide a satisfactory remedy."

Here, then, is the testimony of the head of the present Government to the effect that the Crimes Act was a failure, that it did not diminish crime, and that it did not interfere with the working of Boycotting. And yet to-night we are asked to give leave for the introduction of a Bill which is framed, in most of its particulars, so far as we can judge, on the lines of the Crimes Act of 1882. Sir, this Bill, if introduced and passed, will fail. It will, I honestly believe, tend rather to increase than to diminish crime. It will, while it is in operation, baffle all attempts at reconciliation and postpone all peaceful settlement of the Irish Question. I ask now the last question which I proposed at the commencement —namely, does the social disorder which exists in Ireland spring from the stupid and persistent refusal of this House to remedy admitted grievances? Sir, if so, no sane man can regard this Bill as a remedy. Yet, no sane man, so far as I know, denies the existence of grievances in Ireland, or denies the fact that it is from these grievances that outrages spring. In 1823, Lord Brougham made a memorable speech within the walls of this House on this very point. In the course of it he used these eloquent and significant words—

> "We were driving six millions of people to madness, to despair. . . . The greatest mockery of all—the most intolerable insult—the course of peculiar exasperation—against which he cautioned the House, was the undertaking to cure the distress under which she laboured by anything in the shape of new penal enactments. It was in these enactments alone that we have ever shown our liberality to Ireland. She had received penal laws from the hands of England, almost as plentifully as she had received blessings and advantages from the hands of Providence. What had these laws done? Checked her turbulence, but not stifled it. We might load her with chains; but, in doing so, we should not better her condition. By coercion we might goad her on to fury; but by coercion we shall never break her spirit. If the Government was desirous to restore tranquillity to Ireland, it must learn to prefer the hearts of the Irish people to the applause of the Orange Lodges."—(2 *Hansard,* [9] 1277-8.)

Yes, Sir; but the Government answer, no doubt, is that they do not deny the existence of grievance, and that they have a remedial policy. Sir, they did deny the existence of grievance last September. They cannot deny it now, for the Report of their own Commissioners, the evidence of their own officials, and, indeed, the common knowledge in the possession of everyone acquainted with Ireland, all combine to show that the position of the tenantry in the poorer parts of Ireland is absolutely desperate and calls for immediate relief. They say they have a remedial policy. Yes, Sir, and it has been the curse of successive English Governments in Ireland that they have been "everything by turns and nothing long." They have been half-hearted in remedial policy, they have been half-hearted in coercive policy, and they have failed in both. They halt half-way between conciliation and coercion. No remedial measure ever went to Ireland unaccompanied by coercive enactments; and I say whatever of good there may be in the land proposals which you are about to make will be robbed of all its value by the hateful and unnecessary Bill which is now before the House. Every measure of reform which ever proceeded from this House to Ireland was delayed until too late, and then accompanied by insult. You have never yet learnt the lesson that to rule the people of Ireland you must first win their confidence, and that you can only win their confidence by first trusting them. By your half-hearted remedial policy you have failed to conciliate Ireland, by your coercive policy you have failed to intimidate her; and yet, in spite of the experience of the past, you insist upon treading the same ruinous and blood-stained path. What a spectacle does not England present to the world to-day—in the Jubilee year of Her Majesty's reign, and in the 87th year of the Legislative Union. You claim success for the rule of your Imperial Parliaments, and you ask for renewed coercion. You point to the record of diminished serious crime with pride, and yet you ask for fresh powers to enable you to rule the country. But yesterday you enfranchised the mass of the Irish people, and to-day you declare that, so far from being capable citizens, they are not worthy of exercising the common rights and privileges of the Constitution. You call on Irishmen to be loyal to England, and you persist in keeping English law what it has been for centuries in Ireland—namely, an engine of national humiliation and oppression. On what sound reason or argument does this proposal rest? It is not called for by an exceptional state of violence or crime. There is no proof that the ordinary law has broken down in its dealing with outrages. All history tells you that coercive legislation has been a failure, and all your experience, and the evidence of your own officials, tell you that such disorder as does exist springs from the refusal of your Parliament to do justice to the people by remedying their grievances. Is Irish disaffection the reason for this Bill? Sir, this accusation of Irish disloyalty is a common one in the mouths of Englishmen. When I hear it I am often inclined to ask what does loyalty mean? What does it mean here in England? It means the loyalty of the people to a Government of their own; it means the loyalty of a free people to a free Constitution. What have we in Ireland to be loyal to? Is it to a Government, the very reason of whose existence is that it is opposed to the wishes and aspirations of five-sixths of our people? Is it to a Constitution, the blessings and privileges of which we have never in 86 years been allowed freely to share with our English and Scotch and Welsh fellow-subjects? Is it to a system of which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) once said—

> "It is a system which is founded on the bayonets of 30,000 soldiers encamped permanently as in a hostile country."

Henry Grattan once said—

> "Loyalty is a noble and a wise principle; but loyalty distinct from liberty is corruption."

You deprive the Irish people deliberately and persistently of the rights, privileges, and liberties which you freely give to the meanest of your Colonies, and yet you ask them to be loyal to your rule. No. Loyalty has never yet sprung from such a policy. The only loyalty you have in Ireland is the loyalty of a selfish class, animated by, perhaps, the basest of all human motives, the desire for continued ascendancy; but that loyalty which unites in one common bond of interest and affection, and which grows stronger in time of danger and trial—that loyalty, under the present system, you do not deserve, and most assuredly you shall not obtain. Let me ask this one question in conclusion. Will this Bill, if passed, do good in Ireland? Will it tend to diminish crime? Will it produce amongst the masses of the people of Ireland greater sympathy with law, and with the administration of justice? Sir, in 1866 the senior Member for Birmingham used some very memorable and very significant words in this House. He said—

> "All history teaches us that it is not in human nature that men should be content under any system of legislation and of institutions such as exists in Ireland. You may pass this Bill. You may put the Home Secretary's 500 men in gaol. You may do all this, and suppress the conspiracy and put down the insurrection; but the moment it is suppressed there will still remain the germs of this malady, and from those germs will grow up, as heretofore, another crop of insurrection and another harvest of misfortune. And it may be that those who sit here 18 years after this moment will find another Ministry and another Secretary of State to propose to you another administration of the same ever-failing and ever-poisonous medicine."—(3 *Hansard*, [181] 693.)

Sir, 18 years after these words were spoken we had a literal fulfilment of them. I ask Englishmen and Scotchmen, are they willing for 18 years more to tread the same blood-stained and disgraceful path. There are men who will rejoice at the introduction of this Bill. I ask English Members to consider who they are. The Ulster Tory Party will rejoice. But are they safe guides for Englishmen on this Irish Question? Why, these are the men who opposed the Ballot, the extension of the Franchise, the Church Act, the Land Act—every effort ever made by the English Parliament to remedy Irish grievances. They are the men whom the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) thus described. He said—

> "The Ulster men have stood in the way of improvement in the franchise, the Church, and the land. They have purchased Protestant ascendancy, and the price paid for it has been the ruin and degradation of their country."

Are English Members to-day prepared to take their Irish policy from these men? But there are others who may rejoice at the introduction of this Bill—those who constitute what has sometimes been called the extreme faction of Irish politics, who openly tell you that they hate the idea of reconciliation between the two nations; men who fear reform, who hate open agitation, and who welcome coercion because it tends to drive discontent beneath the surface, and to give new vitality to secret organization. I am here to-night to declare my deliberate conviction that in the introduction and the passage of this Bill you are playing directly into the hands of such men. But, on the other hand, all those who hope for a peaceful and a speedy settlement of the Irish Question will deplore the introduction of this Bill to-night. Sir, we upon these Benches have often been called "Irreconcilables." If I were an "Irreconcilable" I should vote with a free heart in favour of this Bill. But it is just because I am one of those who hope for the near approach of the day when this great question at issue may be settled upon peaceful and honourable lines, and within the limits of the Constitution, that I deplore the introduction of this Bill, that I denounce it, and that I shall do all in my power at every stage to defeat it.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH** (Bradford, W.): I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Illingworth,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

## *ORDER OF THE DAY.*

—o—

### METROPOLITAN OPEN SPACES ACT (1881) EXTENSION BILL.—[BILL 171.]

(*Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Dalrymple, Sir Charles Forster, Mr. Houldsworth, Mr. Reid, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Salt.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Interpretation Clause).

**MR. CHANNING** (Northamptonshire, E.): Mr. Courtney, I beg to move to insert, after "respectively," in line 15, page 1, the words "and the expressions 'rural sanitary district' and 'rural authority' respectively." The object of this and the other Amendments which stand in my name is simply to extend the powers of the rural sanitary districts as well as the urban sanitary districts.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 15, after "respectively," insert "and the expressions 'rural sanitary district' and 'rural authority' respectively."—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

**DR. TANNER** (Cork Co., Mid): At this point I should like to say that some time since I put a block on the Books against this Bill. I removed the block on the distinct understanding that the progress of a similar Bill relating to Ireland would not be interfered with. I find that the understanding has not been kept; and, therefore, I shall certainly put down a number of Amendments against this Bill.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Words *inserted.*

**MR. T. M. HEALY** (Longford, N.): I beg to move, Mr. Chairman, that you do now report Progress and ask leave to sit again, and I do so upon the ground that we took our block off this Bill upon the distinct understanding that the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) would put down Amendments making the Bill applicable to Ireland. We had brought in a similar Bill dealing with Ireland, and two Ulster Members had blocked it. It is impossible to expect us to keep faith with you if faith is not kept with us. We distinctly understood that the opposition to the Dublin Open Spaces Bill would not be persisted in, and that the hon. Baronet would apply some of the provisions he proposes to Ireland. I have looked through the Amendments of the hon. Baronet; but I do not see any to that effect. I have no desire that this Bill should not be proceeded with; indeed, I have a strong desire it should be passed; but what I want to know is why our Open Spaces Bill should be blocked while yours is proceeded with? Under the circumstances, I shall certainly object to the English Bill being proceeded with, unless our Bill on similar lines is also allowed to be proceeded with.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK (London University): I am very sorry there should have been any misunderstanding on this point. I think hon. Members around me will bear me out when I say that what I said when the Bill was last before the House was that I would put off the Bill for a few days, in order that hon. Members below the Gangway should have an opportunity of putting down whatever Amendments they thought fit. Certainly I have no objection to the Bill being extended to Ireland; but that might be done on Report. I hope the Committee will now proceed with the Bill.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I am bound to say, in support of my hon. Friends (Mr. Healy and Dr. Tanner), that the impression left on my mind was that there was an understanding between the other side and this that fair play should be given to the Irish Members in respect to what they proposed in reference to open spaces in their own country. I understood at the time that a Bill had been introduced relating to open spaces in Ireland; but I do not know in what way the understanding was to be carried out—whether by the amalgamation of the Irish Bill with this, or otherwise.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): It is perfectly evident that the hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock) misunderstood me on the last occasion the Bill was brought forward. I laid it down as a matter of agreement that I would remove my opposition to his Bill if the opposition to the Irish Bill were removed. The hon. Baronet came to me and expressed astonishment that, as we had a Bill on the Paper proceeding on exactly similar lines to his, I should enter a Notice of opposition to this Bill. I must say I never made any such agreement as the hon. Baronet appears to think. I never said anything about putting down Amendments to this Bill, and never had any intention of doing so. What I suggest is that the further consideration of this Bill in Committee should be deferred until some arrangement is arrived at with respect to the Irish Bill. I do not care in what way a *modus vivendi* is arrived at. Perhaps the hon. Baronet's Friends who sit upon the Ministerial Benches will yield to his remonstrances, and withdraw their opposition to our Bill; or, possibly, the hon. Baronet will propose Amendments making this Bill applicable to Ireland.

Mr. W. H. JAMES (Gateshead): I have often observed that agreements made outside break down when matters come to be discussed in the House. The reason in nine cases out of 10 is that no two Members can be expected, in a private agreement made in the Lobby or Library, to bind all the other Members of the House. I do not know anything about the difficulty which has arisen; but I hope my hon. Friends below the Gangway will allow this Bill to be proceeded with to-night. Several Members, including the hon. Baronet the Member for Walsall (Sir Charles Forster), who are deeply interested in the question of open spaces, have remained to assist in the passing of the Bill. At present, the Preamble relates to England and Wales only; the difficulty which has occurred could be surmounted by the insertion of the word "Ireland."

Mr. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): As I have put down a block to the Irish Bill, I wish to explain that I shall be very glad to withdraw it. I think the system of blocking has been carried on to too great an extent; but the hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) certainly set me the example. If he will remove some of the blocks to the Bills brought in by hon. Members on this side of the House, I shall be very happy to remove mine.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): My recollection of what took place on the former occasion is that hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway complained of the blocking of the Irish Bill, and said that what they would have to do, under the circumstances, would be to endeavour to engraft on the Bill of the hon. Baronet the Member for the London University (Sir John Lubbock) the provisions of the Irish Bill. Personally, I am very much interested in the Dublin Bill. I consider both Bills to be of great utility.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): After what has been said by the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Belfast (Mr. Johnston) I will not press the Motion to report Progress. Perhaps it is as well that some progress should be made with the Bill, but that we should not altogether lose our grip of the Bill. Under the circumstances, I ask leave to withdraw my Motion; but I shall renew it before you, Mr. Courtney, absolutely leave the Chair, so that we shall reserve to ourselves the opportunity of amending the Preamble and title of the Bill.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. W. H. JAMES (Gateshead): I beg to propose the omission of all the words from "the expression 'burial ground,'" in line 16, to the end of the clause. The object of this Amendment is to provide that the definition of a burial ground shall be that in the Act of 1881.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 16, leave out from "the expression 'burial ground'" to the end of the Clause.—(*Mr. W. H. James.*)

Question,

"That the words 'the expression "burial ground" shall mean a burial ground, whether consecrated or not, which has been at any time set apart for purposes of' stand part of the Clause,"

put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Extension of provisions of Metropolitan Open Spaces Act to urban sanitary districts).

Mr. HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.): The Amendment which stands in my name is rather a consequential than a substantial one. It is to prepare the way for introducing some words which will bring in the Act of 1877 as well as the Act of 1881. The Act of 1877 was the first Act which gave these powers to the Metropolitan Board of Works; and it is very desirable that, in extending the powers to rural or urban authorities, the powers contained in the Act of 1877 should be conferred, as well as those contained in the Act of 1881. I beg to move my Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 23, leave out "Act," and insert "Acts."—(*Mr. Houldsworth.*)

Question, "That the word 'Act stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the word 'Acts' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

On the Motion of Mr. W. H. James, Amendment made, in page 1, line 23, after "Act," by inserting "as amended by this Act."

On the Motion of Mr. Houldsworth, Amendment made, in page 1, line 23, after "except," by inserting "Sections four, five, six, seven, and eight of the Metropolitan Open Spaces Act of 1877, and of the Act of 1881."

On the Motion of Sir John Lubbock, Amendment made, in page 1, line 25, by leaving out "1885," and inserting "1855."

On the Motion of Mr. Ritchie, Amendments made, in page 1, line 26, after "thirteen," by inserting "of the last mentioned Act;" and in page 1, line 27, after "district," by inserting—

"And any and every rural sanitary district in respect to which the sanitary authority shall have been vested by the order of the Local Government Board."

On the Motion of Mr. Channing, Amendment made, in page 2, line 2, after "authority," by inserting "and every such rural authority."

On the Motion of Mr. W. H. James, Amendment made, in page 2, line 6, after "Act," by inserting "as amended by this Act."

On the Motion of Mr. Channing, Amendments made, in page 2, line 10, by leaving out "urban," and inserting "such;" and in page 2, line 10, at end, by leaving out "urban," and inserting "such."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Expenses).

On the Motion of Mr. Long, Amendments made, in page 2, line 17, by leaving out "defrayed as if they had," and inserting "deemed to have;" and in page 2, line 18, at end, by adding—

"And shall be defrayed accordingly, and the purposes of this Act shall be deemed to be the purposes of 'The Public Health Act, 1875.'"

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Extent of Act).

On the Motion of Mr. LONG, Amendment made, in page 2, line 19, by leaving out "to the Metropolis or."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Bye-laws) *struck out.*

Clause 6 (Short title) *agreed to.*

MR. W. H. JAMES (Gateshead): I beg to move the insertion of the following clause after Clause 1:—

(Amendment of "The Metropolitan Open Spaces Act, 1881.")

"(1.) The principal Act is hereby repealed to the extent in the first column of the Schedule to this Act mentioned.

"(2.) In any licence or faculty granted by a Bishop under the principal Act or this Act in relation to any consecrated ground, there may be specified such conditions as to the mode in which such ground may be used for purposes of recreation as to the Bishop may seem fit."

New Clause (*Mr. W. H. James*) *brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Clause be read a second time," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause *added* to the Bill.

MR. W. H. JAMES (Gateshead): I now beg to move the following clause:—

(Amendment of "The Disused Burial Grounds Act, 1884.")

"In 'The Disused Burial Grounds Act, 1884,'—

"The expression 'burial ground' shall have the same meaning as in the principal Act as amended by this Act, and the expression 'disused burial ground' shall mean any burial ground which is no longer used for interments, whether or not such ground shall have been wholly or partially closed for burials under the provisions of any Statute or Order in Council."

New Clause (*Mr. W. H. James*) *brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam): I am afraid I cannot accept this clause, because it leads hereafter to a clause getting rid of the prohibition against the playing of games in these disused churchyards. I am perfectly well aware I shall be told that the Act of 1881 expressly imposed on the Metropolitan Board of Works the duty of forbidding games in open spaces as well as in disused burial grounds. If it were only a question of allowing games in open spaces, I should have no objection to the clause. The public have had no notice of such a provision as this, and therefore it would scarcely be wise to adopt it.

MR. W. H. JAMES: I cannot hold that any acts of desecration would be permitted by the Local Authorities.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): No games are allowed to be played in churchyards, and I think that if a provision were imported into this Bill which would allow games of all kinds to be played in burial grounds, there would be a certain shock to public feeling. Not only so; but many of these churchyards are so situated that games could only be indulged in to the danger of the buildings and the windows of the buildings surrounding. The Government cannot consent to the insertion of this clause.

MR. HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.): I am sure we all share the view of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie), that no games should be allowed in burial grounds. At the same time, it would be very undesirable to prevent games being played on other open spaces.

MR. RITCHIE: I propose to move an Amendment which will enable Local Authorities to allow games to be played on open spaces other than churchyards.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (London University): I sympathize with the object of my hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. James); but, in view of the understanding arrived at on the second reading, I feel bound to support the Government upon this occasion.

SIR CHARLES FORSTER (Walsall): I also fully sympathize with the view of the hon. Member for Gateshead; but I trust he will not endanger the passing of the Bill, which I regard of much importance, by pressing the clause to a Division.

MR. W. H. JAMES: I fear I must yield to the appeal of my hon. Friend (Sir Charles Forster).

Question put, and *negatived.*

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. LONG) (Wilts, Devizes): I beg to move the insertion of the following clause:—

(Bye-laws.)

"All the provisions with respect to bye-laws contained in sections one hundred and eighty-two to one hundred and eighty-six (both inclusive) of 'The Public Health Act, 1875,' shall apply to all bye-laws from time to time made by a Sanitary Authority under the powers of this Act, and the penalties imposed by any such bye-laws may be recovered in a summary manner."

New Clause (*Mr. Long*) *brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Clause be read a second time," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause *added* to the Bill.

MR. W. H. JAMES: As a point of Order, Sir, I should like to know whether it is not competent for me to proceed with my Amendments in regard to the Disused Burial Grounds Act, 1884?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member, in putting his Amendments on the Paper, has proposed to "insert the following Clauses 1 and 2." Well, those have been incorporated in the Bill, and all the rest of the ground is covered.

MR. HOULDSWORTH: The next Amendment I have placed on the Paper is one of considerable importance in large, populous towns where there is property of the kind dealt with in this Bill, especially property held by Ecclesiastical Corporations. It is for the purpose of enabling such Corporations to make gifts of land for the recreation and exercise of the public. Many cases in the country exist where Ecclesiastical Corporations have land which they would gladly dispose of in this way if they were not prevented by the present state of the law. I propose to insert the following new clause:—

(Power to Corporations to make free gift of land.)

"Any Corporation or Corporations, person or persons, having power to sell and convey land under any Act, charter, letters patent, or otherwise, may, in like manner, voluntarily give and convey any open space, as defined in the principal Acts, to any Urban Sanitary Authority, and such Urban Sanitary Authority may accept the ownership thereof, and hold the same in trust for the perpetual use thereof by the public for exercise and recreation, and may from time to time make bye-laws for the regulation of such open spaces."

New Clause (*Mr. Houldsworth*) *brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I agree to accept this clause; but as it has been decided to extend the operation of the Bill, it will be necessary to make some alterations. It will be necessary to leave out, after "bye-laws," the words "for the regulation of such open spaces," in order to insert other words which I shall propose.

MR. WHITLEY (Liverpool, Everton): Corporations cannot convey land without the consent of the Lords of the Treasury.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): This is an extremely wide clause to insert in a Bill of this character on the Motion of a private Member. It seems to me a very objectionable thing to give permission to a Corporation to give away its land for this purpose without laying down definite restrictions, and I do not think the clause is drawn at all in a workmanlike manner. It seems to me highly objectionable and reprehensible to allow a clause of this nature to be put in a non-contentious Bill like this without its having been carefully considered, and I would take leave to suggest that the proper course to adopt would be this—namely, for the Government, before they attempt to amend the clause, to put down upon the Paper the alterations they propose, so that hon. Members may have an opportunity of considering them. They should be printed, so that we can see them and discuss them on Report. In some Corporations you have a great deal of jobbery, and you can never tell how a clause of this kind will work unless you take the precaution to lay down distinct limitations. I think the clause as it stands at present is open to very grave objection. I should like to know if the Government have considered the matter in all its bearings?

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): I agree with the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down that this is a most startling proposition to put before the House in a Bill of this kind. The hon. Member, in moving the clause, says that Ecclesiastical Corporations are prepared to make use of land for open spaces. Yes; but we have to ask whether the lands that these Ecclesiastical Corporations are prepared to give away so freely are really theirs to give? Then lands of this kind might be given away in a most improper manner, and in a most improper spirit. The property may really belong to a large area, and yet may be given away for the benefit of a very small area. I would ask the Government to give us more time to consider the matter before requiring us to give Ecclesiastical Corporations, or any other Corporations, such powers as these.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): My own constituency is very much interested in this clause. In a very poor suburb of Manchester that forms part of my constituency there is a large amount of unutilized land. It is the only land out of which a recreation ground can be obtained for an especially poor population — factory workpeople, and so forth. This land belongs to the Dean and Canons of Manchester. They are willing to give a sufficient amount of this land to form recreation grounds, none of which at present exist, for this population. But they cannot now do it without the leave of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. As the law now stands, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners do not feel justified in allowing any of this land to be given away for this or any other purpose. They only allow it to be sold. This clause will enable the authorities to give it away for the purpose of exercise and recreation grounds. All parties are desirous that this power should be conferred on Ecclesiastical Corporations, and it is only required that this House shall give the necessary legal authority. I would entreat the Committee not to throw any obstruction in the way of this clause, because I assure hon. Members that it is the only way these poor people can obtain recreation grounds. The passing of this clause will not injure anyone in the country.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I rather suspected, from the quarter from which this clause came, that there was some political move at the bottom of it. I am convinced of it now. Since the Redistribution Act you have towns divided into different constituencies. Some of those are of a Liberal character and some are of a Conservative character, and the Ecclesiastical Corporations that exist in connection with these constituencies may have a majority on them that may be Liberal or Tory. You may have gifts made under such a clause as this by a political majority to a constituency of the same shade of politics for the purpose of preserving it, or to one of a different shade of politics for the purpose of converting it. I maintain that you would open the door to some extent to most improper practices; and I submit that it would be well for us to see what the Government propose as an Amendment before giving an opinion upon such a clause. What are the suggestions the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board has to make? Whatever they are, I think it desirable that we should have further time to consider them.

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: The Amendments my right hon. Friend is proposing are only to bring the clause into harmony with other clauses which have been agreed to. Without them the clause would be inconsistent with those other parts of the measure. The Amendments are only of a verbal character. I can inform the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, in reply to observations he has just made, that there are a great many poor Irish people in the district to which I have referred, and in which the Dean and Chapter desire to present land for recreation grounds. These poor Irish people will be greatly benefited by these recreation grounds, for at the present moment they have no places of the kind to avail themselves of.

MR. FINCH-HATTON (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I would point out that it is not proposed, by the powers contained in the clause, to hand over land to irresponsible persons. They will be exercised in favour of properly appointed, responsible persons, and I think that is a sufficient safeguard.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam): It may be as well to remind the Committee of what is the law as regards the Metropolis. According to the Act of 1881, owners of open spaces are allowed to avail themselves of the powers of the measure, and the

Interpretation Clause says that owners may be Corporations.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): I am not at all satisfied with the explanation given by the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. This land, which we are told is vested in the Dean and Chapter of Manchester, really belongs to the whole of the diocese, like the Cathedral. It may be situated in the district which the right hon. Gentleman represents, as also may the Cathedral; but that does not alter the fact that it belongs to the whole diocese, and that it would be a misapplication of public property to give it to a single locality. I say, as my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. T. M. Healy) has stated, that there is a deal of jobbery in matters of this kind on the part of Corporations. I suppose, if the people of Manchester want open spaces, they can obtain them as the people of other towns do. If the Dean and Chapter have open spaces in the right hon. Gentleman's district, I suppose they have not got them in other localities. What, then, are those other localities to do? I object to this probable action of the Dean and Chapter in giving away public property to a particular district, and I hold it to be a total misapplication of trust funds. This land is public property, and I maintain that it is quite contrary to the functions of such a body as the Dean and Chapter to act this part, and to come forward and distribute, after their own fancy, particular parts of property within a small area. I feel bound to add that it is altogether unworthy of a place like Manchester to come here begging in this way for land for recreation grounds. The town I represent has gone to work in this matter in a legitimate manner. They have made themselves liable for the cost of these recreation grounds out of the rates of the community. Open spaces are required as much in other places as in Manchester. I would urge the Committee to insist on some time being afforded us to consider the clause and the proposed Amendments before any attempt is made to advance them.

MR. RITCHIE: The hon. Gentleman loses sight of the fact that the clause will not put an obligation on these Corporations in any way. It will merely give power to the Corporations to sell and convey. I think the clause is of too much importance to be discussed and decided now; it would occupy too much time at this hour of the morning (1.55 A.M.); therefore, I would suggest to the hon. Member (Mr. Houldsworth) that he should withdraw it now and bring it up again on Report.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The clause says, "voluntarily give and convey any open space;" and I object to public property being given away in this eleemosynary manner to a place like Manchester, particularly under the circumstances described.

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: The hon. Gentleman's insinuations are perfectly gratuitous. He is speaking from his own inner consciousness, without the slightest knowledge of the facts of the case to which I referred. The open space I alluded to is not in Manchester at all, but in a poor suburban district which can get no assistance at all from the wealthy Corporation of Manchester. There is no district in the United Kingdom more dependent as this on a free gift of land for recreation purposes.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I based my statement entirely on what fell from the right hon. Gentleman himself. What he said was that the Dean and Chapter of Manchester were willing to give for the benefit of these poor people land which they hold in trust, and I say they have no right to do so. I base my whole case on the statement of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I should like to know whether it is really competent for a private Member to propose a clause of this kind? It would be contrary to all the Rules of the House to allow such a thing as this to be done. Of course, if the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) is to be allowed to postpone the clause I cannot help it.

MR. HOULDSWORTH: As there is so much objection to the clause I will withdraw it now, and will bring it up again on Report.

THE CHAIRMAN: On the point of Order, I may say I had serious doubts whether this clause could be proposed by the hon. Member; but, on referring to the principal Act, I saw that it empowers trustees to make these gifts, therefore I thought the Motion might be made.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. LONG) (Wilts, Devizes): I do not know if I am in Order, but I should like to propose to alter the title of the Bill.

THE CHAIRMAN: No. We come next to the Preamble.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I think I am correct in saying that it will not be contrary to the understanding which seemed to be arrived at a short time ago if the Chairman now reports Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

MR. LONG: I was about to suggest to the hon. Gentleman that it would be desirable to reprint the Bill. He will see the necessity of this when he considers that both the title and the Preamble have to be amended. The hon. and learned Gentleman will not lose control over the measure by allowing the present stage to pass.

MR. T. M. HEALY: If we can adopt that course and be in Order I should be glad; but I understand you, Sir, to offer a negative nod. The promise of the hon. Member (Mr. Johnston) is somewhat militated against by the fact that the Dublin Bill is also blocked by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge (Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald).

THE CHAIRMAN: It would not be possible to make the proposed alteration in Committee.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT) (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam): It is very desirable that this Bill should be reprinted.

MR. T. M. HEALY: If the Government will re-commit the Bill, I will consent to withdraw my Motion.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am afraid I cannot come to any absolute engagement, because the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. T. M. Healy) will see that the provisions of this Bill apply to Local Authorities in England, and are not at all applicable to Local Authorities in Ireland.

MR. T. M. HEALY: It is rather unusual for the right hon. Gentleman to throw over his own Under Secretary. I merely fell in with the suggestion. If the Government will agree to re-commit the Bill, it will enable us to take the course now suggested of amending the Preamble. The Government will not be bound to accept our Bill. All we want is discussion. If the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) will consent to the course suggested by one of the Members of his own Government, we, or I at least, will repudiate anything like an agreement on the part of the Government to accept the principle of any Amendment we may propose.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (London University): I do not think the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. T. M. Healy) would lose anything by allowing us to take the Preamble and to have the Bill reprinted.

MR. T. M. HEALY: There is a favourite saying in Ireland, "Keep a firm grip while you have a hold of it."

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I cannot see what objection there can be to deferring the further consideration of the Bill until Thursday. One Bill comes on a Wednesday, and if hon. Gentlemen do not behave in the way they are expected to behave, and carry out the arrangement entered into, we shall be perfectly free to take whatever course suggests itself to us. I trust the hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock) will now allow us to report Progress.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I should like to say I have already requested the Clerk at the Table to remove the block which stood in my name, and I have no doubt the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. Penrose Fitzgerald) will do the same.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again on *Thursday.*

## *MOTION.*

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### METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT ACTS AMENDMENT (WESTMINSTER) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Burdett-Coutts, Bill to amend "The Metropolis Management Act, 1855," in relation to the Parishes of Saint Margaret and Saint John the Evangelist, Westminster, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Burdett-Coutts, Mr. John Talbot, Mr. Tomlinson, and Mr. Seager Hunt.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 208.]

House adjourned at a quarter after Two o'clock.

# HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Tuesday, 29th March,* 1887.

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MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Army (Annual)* (55); Isle of Man (Customs)* (56).

*Committee*—Railway and Canal Traffic (32).

## RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.—(No. 32.)

(*The Lord Stanley of Preston.*)

### COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clause 1 (Short title and construction) *agreed to.*

### PART I.

### COURT AND PROCEDURE OF RAILWAY AND CANAL COMMISSIONERS.

### *Establishment of Railway and Canal Commission.*

Clause 2 (Establishment of new Railway and Canal Commission).

THE EARL OF JERSEY said, he moved to omit the first "three" and to insert "two," as he thought two appointed Commissioners with a Judge of the Supreme Court to preside on all occasions would be much better than having such a Judge to preside every now and then. It was for the interest of all that the Court should be a strong one, and he was sure that his noble Friends who took special care of the railway interest would agree with him that it was essential that the new tribunal should be one which would inspire confidence. The fact of one of Her Majesty's Judges being a Member of the Commission would give it a status which it would not otherwise possess.

Amendment *moved,* in page 1, line 18, leave out the first ("three") and insert ("two.")—(*The Earl of Jersey.*)

LORD HERSCHELL said, he had spoken in that sense on the second reading of the Bill, and he supported the Amendment in the interests of traders and economy. The proposed change would be of advantage to all the parties who came before the tribunal. The existing Railway Commissioners sat on 30 days in 1873; on 114 days in 1874; on 88 days in 1876; on 81 days in 1877; on 42 days in 1878; on 55 days in 1879; on 30 days in 1880; on 49 days in 1881; on 48 days in 1882; on 42 days in 1883; on 59 days in 1884; on 44 days in 1885; and on 23 days in 1886. It was obvious that if the tribunal had a legal Commissioner assisted by a Judge in all important matters there would be a great waste of judicial force. There would be a large number of days in the year on which the legal Commissioner would be entirely unoccupied; whereas, if they had a Judge in all cases, it seemed to him the Judge would be able to do the whole of the work of the Commission; and, in addition, he could do a great deal of most excellent public work in performing the ordinary duties of a Judge of the High Court. It would, therefore, be an economical arrangement to the public to have the Chief Commissioner a Judge.

LORD BRAMWELL said, the noble Earl, in introducing the Bill, said the Commission had worked satisfactorily; but the opinions of at least some of the counsel who practised before it did not bear out that statement. He did not see why those questions should be tried in a different way from the ordinary cases which came before the Courts of Law. To have a Judge to preside would involve no extra expense, because, when not engaged in the railway business, he could perform ordinary judicial duties. If it were thought desirable that a Judge should have assessors that could be provided for, as in the case of the Admiralty Division of the High Court. The Amendment seemed to him a desirable one.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Lord STANLEY of PRESTON) said, it had been the wish of the framers of the Bill to make the Court as strong as possible, so that it should have the complete confidence of those — traders and others — who resorted to it. The proposed form would, in his opinion, tend to a continuity in the decisions of the tribunal. He did not think the figures quoted by the noble Lord supported his conclusions, and he thought that they rather proved that the legal Commissioner would amply suffice for the work which had to be done. There would be many things to do which would not require the attendance of a Judge of the Supreme Court; but any man who had some legal knowledge would be able to transact the business. He submitted that the clause, as it stood, would be the most advantageous, would work satisfactorily, and would do all that the trading community required. He could not, therefore, agree to the Amendment.

LORD GRIMTHORPE said, he strongly maintained the necessity of having legal authority on the Commission. Lawyers were in the habit of seeing both sides of a question, which few of what lawyers called laymen were able to do, even if they were clergymen. In the long run, it would be far cheaper to have a good Judge constantly engaged in this tribunal, because there would then be fewer appeals. He did not see that it need add to the cost, seeing that such Judges already existed. The noble Lord at the head of the Board of Trade had been induced to make the proposal contained in the Bill by people who wanted a strong Court—not a legal one, and strong enough to overrule law and everything else. It was put forward as a reason for continuing the present Railway Commissioners in office, or some of the same kind, that they had a great deal more experience in railway matters than Her Majesty's Judges. Were their Lordships aware of the nature of the decisions given by them? In one case they ordered the South Eastern and the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Companies to expend money in making a new station. Luckily, in that case there was a remedy by prohibition, and they were told they could do nothing of the kind. If it were left to the discretion of Sir Frederick Peel and Mr. Price, the aid of a Judge would never be invoked. That was shown by the fact that in nearly every case in which there was a discretionary appeal they refused to allow it. There were other reasons why a Judge should be placed permanently on this tribunal. Many fresh matters, some of which had hitherto been under the sole cognizance of the Courts, were to be placed in the jurisdiction of the new tribunal created by the Bill. They were to have authority in the matter of parish rates; they were to decide on the expediency of new works; and they were to decide as to what were reasonable facilities and undue preferences. These were not powers which should be intrusted to a tribunal not presided over by a Judge. The fact was that traders really wanted protection, and to have the legitimate effect of railway competition in reducing rates abolished. The only persons qualified to decide questions of mixed law and fact in a manner which would be satisfactory to all parties concerned were Judges.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY) maintained that the railway and trading interests would be better satisfied by the Court as constituted by his noble Friend (Lord Stanley of Preston). He did not know whether the noble Lord who had just spoken was against the proposed tribunal altogether, or only against that particular form of it which was touched by the Amendment. He was aware that there were some persons who attached more importance to the decision of a Judge than they did to that of a jury. But the question was whether, when they were about to erect a new tribunal, it was not better to appoint at its head those who were familiar with the peculiar class of questions that would have to come before it? The noble Lord had remarked that a Judge would cost nothing, because we had plenty of them already; but the fact was, that our Judges had at present more work than they could get through, and that was the reason why the arrears of causes in the Courts had become almost a national scandal. If one of these Judges was to form part of the tribunal, he would have to accompany it to different parts of the country, so that the cost would certainly not be thereby decreased. The noble Lord had said that Judges would be better able to decide questions as to undue preference; but if some inflexible principle of law were to determine those questions this tribunal was not required at all; while if they were to be determined according to some equitable principle as between the railways and the traders, then a Judge would not be wanted. The noble Lord appeared to forget that under the present Bill an appeal was to be given in these cases for the first time. For his own part, he could not see that in a tribunal specially selected, with an appeal to the Judges, as was proposed by this Bill, there would be any element of weakness.

LORD BRABOURNE said, that it was desirable to settle one thing at a time. The question immediately before their Lordships was whether there should be a Judge at the head of this Commission, and if it was decided in the affirmative, the details could easily be arranged. He (Lord Brabourne) would leave it to his noble and learned Friend the Lord Chancellor to settle how the Judge should be obtained; and he could, at the same time, settle with his Colleagues whether, in all cases and in all parts of Her Majesty's Dominions, a jury was so infallible and superior a tribunal as he had seemed to indicate. This Commission would have to deal with cases which affected most important interests and property of very great magnitude, and such property and interests should not be dealt with by an inferior tribunal. His noble and learned Friend (Lord Grimthorpe) did not often understate a case; but in the instance which he had quoted—that of the Hastings case against the South Eastern and Brighton Companies—he had omitted one important point. In spite of the objection raised by the Companies, the Commissioners had insisted upon taking the facts before the points of law involved. For seven days they were thus engaged, and the parties were put to an entirely useless expense; because at the end of that time, their decision having been given against the Companies, the latter proceeded by way of prohibition, and the Superior Courts of Law reversed the decision, and pronounced that the Commissioners had acted *ultra vires.* This would never have happened if the Court had been presided over by a Judge. It was most desirable, in the interests of the public as well as of the Railway Companies and the traders, that this should be a strong tribunal; and, therefore, he was in favour of the proposal that it should be presided over by a Judge. He said that the Railway Companies desired that quite as much on behalf of the public as on their own behalf, and they did so emphatically in the interests of cheapness. For if the tribunal was strong, it would command the confidence of the suitors and the public, and the number of appeals would be much fewer than if the case were otherwise. He (Lord Brabourne) had not gathered from the speech of his noble Friend in charge of the Bill that he had a very strong feeling against the proposed alteration, and he earnestly pressed upon him its adoption.

LORD HENNIKER said, that last year the traders were very much opposed to the appointment of a Judge upon this tribunal, and they still held that view. He hoped the Government would consider very carefully before agreeing to the appointment of a permanent Judge. The traders desired a tribunal that should be easily available, and not one that would entail great expense on those appearing before it—a Court, too, which would command the confidence of both the traders and the Railway Companies. At the same time, he believed the traders would be glad to give way to some extent, and would be content to accept the proposition of the noble Lord that a Judge should be called in on certain special occasions.

LORD HERSCHELL said, that, in the interests of the traders, no useful purpose would be served by calling in a Judge for special occasions. He did not think that the cost of appealing to the Commission was likely to be greater because of a Judge being permanently appointed to preside.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY) said, the question appeared to be whether the Court ought to be dominated by a legal official or by expert laymen? So far as questions of policy were concerned—questions of policy as apart from the pure interpretation of the law—he apprehended that a body of expert laymen was as reliable a tribunal as a body of Judges. The only question was whether the intention of the Bill was purely to establish a tribunal to determine questions of law, or whether there was something beyond? If it were only to determine questions of law, why not go to the ordinary Courts of Law? Why need they have a special tribunal at all? In the determination of those questions some element of policy must be introduced. In the interpretation of the principles laid down in the exercise of the powers and discretion of the Commission there was an element of policy of a grave character in which the balance had to be held fairly between the two great and important interests of the trader and the Railway Companies—a policy which required knowledge of a special kind that Judges, with all their omniscience, did not possess in a greater degree than other subjects of Her Majesty. For those reasons it seemed to him that it was wise to provide that the expert element should predominate in the Court. As to the argument that if they were to have a lawyer they should have one of the best, his only answer to that was the question of expense, and who was to pay it. He did not feel any objection to a Judge as such; nor did he feel any objection to a £5,000-lawyer as compared with a £3,000-lawyer. It was very possible that the £5,000-lawyer might be the better lawyer of the two, but he certainly would cost £2,000 more. What he wished to impress upon their Lordships was that if they had a Judge they must have the whole of a Judge, as there was no portion of the existing judicial strength which could be cut off and applied to this purpose. He was not certain, however, that the same feeling would prevail in the other House. At the same time, if the House of Commons were inclined to appoint a special Judge, he was not disposed to withstand what appeared to be the dominant desire.

LORD BRAMWELL said, the objection was that a Judge of an inferior character was to be appointed and was to sit with two laymen, who would have an equal voice with him both on questions of law and fact.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment *moved*, in page 1, line 19, after the word ("shall") insert ("be a superior Court of record and.")—(*The Earl of Crawford.*)

LORD STANLEY OF PRESTON said, that the proposed Amendment would make a considerable alteration in the constitution of the Commission. He would, therefore, ask the noble Earl to withdraw his Amendment at present, and it could then be considered on Report.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Appointment and tenure of office of *ex officio* Commissioners).

LORD GRIMTHORPE, in moving to leave out the words "styled the Chief Commissioner and shall be of experience in the law," in order to insert "a barrister who has been in practice for ten years," said, that if two members were lawyers, one of them being a Judge and the other a lawyer of experience, there was no objection to their being assisted by an expert. The question was whether the Court should be mainly legal or mainly non-legal.

Amendment *moved*, in sub-section (2), page 1, lines 25 and 26, leave out from ("shall") to ("law,") and insert ("a barrister who has had a practice for ten years.")—(*The Lord Grimthorpe.*)

Amendment *negatived.*

On the Motion of the Earl of JERSEY, Sub-section 2 *omitted.*

Amendment *moved*, in page 2, lines 10 and 11, leave out Sub-section 6.—(*The Earl of Crawford.*)

LORD FITZGERALD opposed the Amendment.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Appointment and attendance of *ex officio* Commissioners).

Amendment *moved*, in page 2, line 23, after ("years,") add—

> "And in case of the inability of the *ex officio* Commissioner to attend, the Lord Chancellor or the Lord President of the Court of Session, or the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, as the case may be, may appoint another Judge as deputy for the one who is unable to attend, for such time as may be necessary."—(*The Lord Grimthorpe.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY) said, he would accept the Amendment, with the alteration that the Judge appointed should be "in lieu of" instead of "as deputy for" the one unable to attend.

Amendment, as amended, *agreed to.*

LORD BRAMWELL suggested that before Report this clause should be amended so that a Judge might not be appointed a Commissioner without his consent. That was done by Lord Cairns at his (Lord Bramwell's) suggestion, with reference to the Court of Appeal.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Cases requiring attendance of *ex officio* Commissioner) *struck out.*

Clause 6 (Sittings of Commissioners).

On the Motion of The Lord BRABOURNE, the following Amendment made:—In page 3, line 11, after ("preside") insert ("and his opinion upon any question of law shall prevail.")

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 7 (Provision for complaints by public authority in certain cases).

THE EARL OF CRAWFORD begged to move an Amendment, the object of which was to give a *locus standi* before the Commissioners to any association of traders or freighters, or Chamber of Commerce or Agriculture, duly certificated by the Board of Trade as being associated. The Bill proposed to make it necessary that such association should receive a certificate from the Board of Trade that it was a proper body to make complaint, the object of the Amendment being to withdraw the option of refusal from the Board of Trade.

Amendment *moved,* in page 3, line 25, leave out ("may obtain,") and insert ("shall have obtained.")—(*The Earl of Crawford.*)

LORD STANLEY OF PRESTON said, he objected to the Amendment on the ground that it went a great deal too far, and might cause great inconvenience.

Amendment *negatived.*

LORD BRABOURNE said, that he had given Notice of Amendments requiring that authorities complaining of Railway Companies should show that their cases were proper subjects of complaint, and that those whom they represented had been aggrieved by the action of such Companies. As, however, he found that there were practical difficulties in the way of these Amendments, and that the strengthening of the Court by the enactment that a Judge should preside would lessen the fear of ill consequences, he would withdraw those Amendments, and only move to amend the clause by inserting words requiring associations of traders and Chambers of Commerce and of Agriculture to give security for costs, so that the Companies might not be exposed to wanton attacks from penniless suitors.

Amendment *moved,* in page 3, line 29, after ("determine,") leave out all the words to the end of the clause, and insert—

("Provided always that the Commissioners shall first be satisfied that such authority has, or those whom it represents have, been aggrieved by the matter complained of, and that such authority shall, previous to the hearing of the said complaint, give such security as may be approved of by the court for the costs of such hearing.") — (*The Lord Brabourne.*)

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN said, he thought the proposal was a very strong one.

THE EARL OF SELBORNE thought that it would be impossible to obtain costs from these associations.

LORD HALSBURY pointed out that the individual members of such associations might be made personally liable.

LORD BRAMWELL said, he was desirous that it should be clearly understood that the individual members of such associations were to be personally liable, in which case there would be no necessity for requiring security for costs.

LORD BRABOURNE expressed himself satisfied with the understanding that the Government would introduce words carrying out the suggestion of the noble and learned Lord the Lord Chancellor.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

On the Motion of Lord STANLEY of PRESTON, Amendment made, in page 3, line 30, at end of clause, by inserting—

("And any of such authorities may appear in opposition to any complaint which the commissioners have jurisdiction to determine in any case where such authority, or the persons represented by them, may be aggrieved by any determination of the Commissioners upon such complaint.")

LORD BRABOURNE said, he had a similar Amendment on the Paper; but he would accept that of his noble Friend (Lord Stanley of Preston) in lieu thereof.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

### *Jurisdiction.*

Clauses 8 and 9 *agreed to.*

Clause 10 (Jurisdiction over tolls and rates).

Amendment *moved,*

In line 17, at end of clause, add—"In addition to the difference mentioned in section eight of the Railway Act, 1873, any difference arising between an individual, company, or corporation, and a railway company, under any agreement in writing between such individual, company, or corporation, shall be one of the matters of difference which shall, on the application of either party, be settled by the Commissioners.

"Section nine of the Regulation of Railways Act, 1873, shall be read so that the Commissioners shall hear and determine the difference therein referred to on the application of either party to the difference."—(*The Earl of Crawford.*)

LORD STANLEY OF PRESTON opposed the Amendment.

LORD BRABOURNE also objected, on the ground that the tribunals selected by the parties to an agreement was often of the essence of the agreement, and it would be a strong and unjust measure to alter that tribunal, in the interest of one party to the agreement, by a clause in this Act.

Amendment *negatived.*

Clause *amended*, and *agreed to.*

THE EARL OF JERSEY moved to insert, after Clause 10, the following new clause:—

"A railway company shall, at the request of any person delivering or desiring to deliver to them goods for transmission, furnish a through rate, and shall, for that purpose, take such action as may be necessary under section two of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1854, and section eleven of the Regulation of Railways Act, 1873, and such person shall be entitled to be heard before and to obtain the decision of the Commissioners in relation to such through rate. The rate to be charged for the carriage of merchandise traffic shall be calculated by the shortest route for such traffic between the point of departure and the point of destination."

He would observe that he had proposed the addition for the convenience of traders.

LORD BRABOURNE said, that there was no difficulty in obtaining through rates at present where there was sufficient traffic to justify the demand. There was no public need of this clause, and a similar one, after full discussion, in 1873 had been refused.

LORD STANLEY OF PRESTON said, he must oppose the introduction of the new clause on the ground that it was unnecessary.

New Clause *negatived.*

Clause 11 *agreed to*, with Amendments.

Amendment *moved*,

In page 4, line 26, at end of clause, insert new clause—"11A. All questions arising under section seventy-six of the Railways Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, shall be within the jurisdiction of the Commissioners, who shall have power, notwithstanding the restrictions and conditions in such section, to make such order as they may think reasonable for enabling the junctions of the branch railways in such section referred to to be made with any railway at such point or points as the Commissioners may determine, and no agreement already made or to be made with any railway company shall prevent the use of any existing or future branch railway by any person or persons for any traffic which the owners of such branch railway may authorise, and every facility shall be given for the passing of such traffic on, to, and from the line of railway with which such branch railway communicates or shall hereafter communicate, and the before-mentioned section seventy-six and this Act shall apply to the making of branch canals to communicate with any existing or future canal: Provided that no future branch railway shall run parallel with the railway so as to compete for traffic with the railway."—(*The Earl of Crawford.*)

LORD STANLEY OF PRESTON said, he was unable to assent to the introduction of the clause, because the subject to which it related did not come within the proper scope of the Bill.

THE EARL OF CRAWFORD said, he would appeal to his noble Friend (Lord Brabourne), as representing the Railway Companies.

LORD BRABOURNE stated that, in his view, the proposed clause would be an unwise and unjust interference with the engineering of railways, and would have a tendency to restrict the giving of sidings and other facilities by Companies. Extraordinary demands were made nowadays, and he had recently received a circular from a gentleman who proposed that Railway Companies should provide sidings at every station for the reception of perishable produce, to be sent off to market by the next available train. On the ground of safety, however, as well as for other reasons, the clause proposed by his noble Friend was open to grave objection.

New Clause (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

Clause 12 (Power to award damages).

LORD BRABOURNE, who had an Amendment to substitute for ("for such damages as they may think fit") the words ("any damages to which he may be entitled by law,") said, he would withdraw it on the understanding that it should be considered on the Report.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

Amendment *moved*,

In page 4, line 32, at the end of clause, insert ("Provided that such damages shall not be awarded in respect of any matter arising more than one year before the complaint was made.")—(*The Lord Stanley of Preston.*)

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, it was not clear that the word "damage" included "overcharge."

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 13 (Orders on two or more Companies).

LORD GRIMTHORPE said, he rose to move to add, at the end of the clause—

> "But no company shall be required to execute any work which the Commissioners do not find and declare that they ought to have done out of their ordinary working expenses without raising any fresh capital."

So far as he could make out there was no limit whatever on the powers of the Commissioners. They might order the Companies to make a new station, and there was to be no appeal from their decision. Nothing could be more serious than such a possibility. How were the Companies to raise the necessary capital if they had not enough to carry out the works ordered by the Commissioners? Some restriction ought to be put upon the unreasonable exercise of those powers.

Amendment *moved,*

> In page 5, line 2, add ("but no company shall be required to execute any work which the Commissioners do not find and declare that they ought to have done out of their ordinary working expenses without raising any fresh capital.")—(*The Lord Grimthorpe.*)

LORD STANLEY OF PRESTON said, that with regard to the Amendment of his noble Friend, he thought some limiting words would be required in some part of the section. Undoubtedly, as the words now stood, they were without limitation, and required some amendment. If the noble Lord would withdraw his Amendment and give him the benefit of his advice with regard to the matter, he would move an Amendment on Report.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed* to.

Clause 14 (Jurisdiction as to rating appeals).

LORD BRABOURNE said, he wished to amend the clause by providing that rating appeals, to which any Railway Company was a party, should be transferred to the Commissioners, either on the motion of the Court of Quarter or Assessment Sessions itself, or upon the application of either party. As the clause stood, a Court of Quarter Sessions or Assessment Sessions could only transfer rating appeals to the Commission with the consent of both parties.

Amendment *moved,*

> In page 5, line 5, leave out ("with the consent of both parties,") and insert ("either of its own motion or upon the application of any party.")—(*The Lord Brabourne.*)

LORD STANLEY OF PRESTON said, he would accept the Amendment now, subject to its being freely considered in "another place."

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 15 *agreed to.*

On the Motion of The Lord BRABOURNE, Clause 16 *omitted.*

### *Appeals.*

Clause 17 (Appeals on certain questions to superior court of appeal).

LORD GRIMTHORPE begged to move an Amendment permitting an appeal from the Commissioners to a Superior Court of Appeal on questions of fact. He contended that, considering the importance of many of the cases which would come before the Commissioners, and the fact that the majority of the Commissioners was not likely to be composed of lawyers, it was of extreme importance that appeals on questions of fact should be allowed.

Amendment *moved,* in page 6, lines 1 and 2, leave out ("upon a question of fact.")—(*The Lord Grimthorpe.*)

LORD BRAMWELL said, he should support the Amendment. In his opinion it was most unreasonable not to allow appeals on questions of fact. Confessedly, this tribunal would be an inferior one to the Superior Courts, and he could conceive no possible ground on which appeals on questions of fact, which existed and always had in the Superior Courts, should be denied in the admittedly inferior tribunal. Moreover, until an appeal was heard, it was impossible to say whether it was upon a matter of fact or law; but, as the Bill stood, the Court of Appeal, after hearing a case and coming to the conclusion that the Commissioners made a mistake of fact, would yet be powerless to interfere.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, that the object of not permitting appeals on questions of fact was to reduce the expenses of litigation as far as possible. He feared that if these appeals were allowed, the Railway Companies, having the longest purse, would render the cost of litigation with them so great that people would be afraid of seeking justice against them. The limitation of appeals to questions of law was not unknown in our legislation.

Lord BRABOURNE said, that it was a dangerous doctrine that rich men should have a less effectual remedy than poor ones. Questions of law and fact were so mixed in these cases that unless an appeal was allowed on the facts justice could not be done. The present Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) had expressed a strong opinion, before the Committee of 1882, that "an appeal, both in law and fact, from the Commissioners should be as of right." With regard to the long purse of the Railway Companies, it should be borne in mind that the expenses to which they were put by these proceedings really fell upon their shareholders, many of whom were comparatively poor men, in the shape of diminution of dividends. He trusted the Amendment would be adopted.

On Question? Their Lordships *divided*:—Contents 20; Not-Contents 18: Majority 2.

Amendment *disagreed to.*

Amendment *moved,*

In page 6, line 18, to leave out ("unless special leave be given by such Court to appeal to the House of Lords.")—(*The Lord Henniker.*)

Lord HERSCHELL said, he thought that the noble Lord appeared to be unduly afraid of giving Railways a power of appealing to the House of Lords. During the last five years, although the Railway Companies had had the right to appeal in hundreds of cases in which they were concerned, they had only exercised that right in 12 instances, and the appeals against decisions in their favour had been 9. Where the parties had been left perfectly free, therefore, appeals had been very rare and infrequent. Leave to appeal would not be given in frivolous cases; it would only be granted when there was a really serious and important question of law to decide. If they rigidly shut the door to such appeals, they would have this difficulty—that when some important question had been decided, perhaps adversely to the traders, it would not be seen till afterwards, neither by those interested, nor even by the Court itself, how grave were the results of the decision that had been come to; and, in the absence of appeal, there would be no power of alteration or modification. The refusal of the power of appeal would tend to create a condition of uncertainty which would become a fruitful source of litigation.

Lord STANLEY of PRESTON said, he was decidedly opposed to the Amendment.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clauses 18 and 19, separately, *agreed to.*

Clause 20 *postponed.*

Clause 21 (Appointment of officers, clerks, &c.)

Amendment *moved,*

In page 7, line 15, after ("appoints") add:—"One of such officers, who is to be designated for that duty by the Chief Commissioner, shall be an *ex officio* member of the committee for the time being acting under the Railway Clearing Act, 1850, and shall have access to all the minutes of its proceedings, and shall be supplied with copies of all its bye-laws, resolutions, and regulations, and shall, subject to the approval of the Commissioners, give directions for the publication of such bye-laws, resolutions, and regulations as he shall judge to be of public interest."—(*The Earl of Crawford.*)

Lord BRABOURNE said, he strongly objected to the Amendment, and thought his noble Friend could hardly be serious in proposing it. There was certainly an Act of Parliament which enabled the secretary of the Railway Clearing House to sue and be sued; but the association itself was of a voluntary character to facilitate the internal working of the Companies, and apportion the receipts of through traffic between the Companies interested. It had nothing to do with the relations between the Companies and the public; and if his noble Friend was right in principle, he did not go nearly far enough, but should, to be consistent, propose that an officer of the Court should be an *ex officio* member of every Railway Board. The clause was a monstrous one, and his noble Friend must have been imposed upon by some clever outsider, since he never would have proposed such a clause as his own idea.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clauses 22 and 23, severally, *agreed to.*

House *resumed* (the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos sitting Speaker).

House to be again in Committee on *Friday* next.

## ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACT, 1869, AND AMENDING ACTS—SCHEMES OF THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS.

### MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

*Moved*, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying that Her Majesty will withhold her assent from the schemes of the Charity Commissioners relating to (1) the Foundation for a school and almshouses, and for other purposes, in the parish of West Lavington, otherwise Bishop Lavington, in the county of Wilts, founded under the will of Alderman William Dauntsey, dated 10th March 1542, and since further endowed ; and (2) for dealing with the Endowment of the Wilts County School, in the county of Wilts.—(*The Lord Stanley of Preston.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Ordered that the said Address be presented to Her Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

House adjourned at Eight o'clock,
to Thursday next, a quarter
past Ten o'clock.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Tuesday*, 29*th March*, 1887.

MINUTES.] — PRIVATE BILLS (*by Order*) — *Second Reading*—Manchester Corporation *; Regent' Canal City, and Docks Railway.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Leave*—Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) [*Second Night*], *debate further adjourned.*

*Ordered* — *First Reading* — Municipal Franchise (Belfast) [211].

## *PRIVATE BUSINESS.*

## REGENT'S CANAL, CITY, AND DOCKS RAILWAY BILL (*by Order*).

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Dodds.*)

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.): I am one of three hon. Members who have put a Notice down on the Paper in opposition to the second reading of this Bill. I therefore trust that I may be allowed to explain the reasons which prompted me to take that step. Several of the London Vestries, and among them the Vestry, of the Parish of St. Pancras, have petitioned against the Bill, not because they object to the construction of this railway, but because they did not believe that it was a genuine enterprise or that the promoters intended to carry it out within a reasonable time. They say in their Petition—

> "That great inconvenience and loss has been caused by the Company delaying so long the commencement of the work, and that in these circumstances their application for an extension of time should not be complied with, unless they can show that they have a reasonable prospect of commencing the works within the ensuing 12 months."

The House will be aware that the line was originally authorized to be constructed on the recommendation of a Hybrid Committee in 1882. For the construction of the railway a certain sum of money was raised, and the purchase of the Regent's Canal which is now worked by the Company was virtually completed ; yet, down to 1885, nothing further was done to carry out the work for which the permission and authority of Parliament had been obtained. In that year an application was made to have the Standing Orders set aside in order that the Company might pay interest out of capital. On that Motion a debate took place in this House. The opposition to the Motion was led by the hon. Baronet the Member for the Barnard Castle Division of Durham (Sir Joseph Pease) ; but the second reading was carried after a speech from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain), who was then President of the Board of Trade. In urging the House to pass the second reading of the Bill, the right hon. Gentleman said there was another consideration which at that moment was not altogether unworthy of the attention of the House. If permission were given to this Company to raise capital and the capital were raised as was proposed, a very large amount of employment would be given to the working classes of London of which they were sorely in need. The right hon. Gentleman concluded by stating that he thought the House would do wisely to pass a Bill of this kind, the proposal of which was undoubtedly a *bonâ fide* one. The promoters urge exactly the same reasons now. They say that if the Bill is passed there will be a further extension of time for three years for the construction of the line, and that—

> "The amount of money to be paid for wages and the purchase of materials cannot fail to benefit trade most materially."

To that proposition I am perfectly agreed; but what induced me to set down on the Paper a Notice of opposition to the Bill was, that during the whole of this time the neighbourhood affected by the proposed railway has been kept in a state of suspense, and the owners and occupiers of property have been most prejudicially affected. I could give many instances of this, but I will content myself with one—the example of Christ's Church in Maida Vale. I believe that that Church stood in need of repair, but the congregation have been unable to place it in a proper condition owing to the uncertainty which existed in regard to the progress of this Bill; for the Church, being in the prescribed area of the provisions of the Bill, would have to be under-pinned. This is only one of the cases of inconvenience and injury which the Bill has occasioned owing to the promoters not having taken steps to acquire possession of the property scheduled in the Bill. As a necessary consequence, a considerable amount of property has suffered most severely. Assurances, however, have been given to me and to other hon. Members that if this Bill is passed there will be a genuine attempt to commence the work within the next 12 months, and that the capital will very shortly be raised.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners;—

The House went;—and being returned;—

Mr. SPEAKER *reported* the *Royal Assent* to several Bills.

## REGENT'S CANAL, CITY, AND DOCKS RAILWAY BILL.

Mr. LAWSON resumed. There can be no doubt that the works proposed to be constructed under this Bill will be of great convenience and utility to the inhabitants of the Metropolis generally; and I think the promoters have made a weighty statement when they assure the House that the capital has already been almost subscribed, and that they propose to commence the works at once, and certainly within the present year. If that be so, and I believe they mean to commence the undertaking, I shall be very glad to withdraw my opposition to the second reading of the Bill.

*Mr. Lawson*

Mr. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): I thought it necessary, last week, on behalf of my constituents, to put down a Motion for the rejection of the second reading of the Bill which I now wish to withdraw, for very similar reasons to those which have been given by the hon. Member (Mr. Lawson). There has been a considerable amount of anxiety in the neighbourhood through which this railway is to be constructed, to secure the commencement of the works. It is now some five years since the original Act was passed; and the House will fully understand the great disappointment which has been felt, especially since 1885, by those who looked forward to a large amount of employment in consequence of the construction of the railway. I have, however, been privately informed by the promoters that there is now every reason to believe that they will be able speedily to go on with the work, and, therefore, I beg to withdraw my opposition to the present stage of the Bill. I shall, however, be prepared to renew it if I find at the next stage that matters are not in a satisfactory state.

Mr. PICTON (Leicester): I also beg to withdraw the Notice of opposition which stands in my name on the Paper, partly on the same grounds as those which have been advanced by the hon. Member for West St. Pancras (Mr. Lawson) and the hon. Member for East Finsbury (Mr. J. Rowland); but partly on another consideration, and one which I think also requires attention. This intended line will pass through the North Western portion of Regent's Park, and will practically divide it into two. It is feared that the construction of the line may inflict a great deal of damage upon this neighbourhood, and unless great care is taken in carrying out the works, permanent injury may be done to one of the principal resorts of the Metropolis, which in the spring and summer months is the delight of many thousands of the London people. The walk along the side of the canal extends for about half-a-mile in that part, and is really very attractive. In the summer time you will see crowds of children and grown-up people disporting themselves there for a holiday. This railway, it is feared, may destroy the amenities of this part of the Regent's Park altogether. I believe that this objection was taken when the Bill was originally brought forward, but after this neighbourhood, as well as others in the Metropolis, has been kept in a state of suspense and uncertainty, and has suffered so much damage during the last five years, I think they have a right to ask the Committee who will deal with the Bill to take such additional precautions as may be necessary to provide that these parts of the Regent's Park shall be secured for the enjoyment of the people. I do not wish to press my opposition to the Bill at the present moment, but I reserve to myself the right of doing so in case the duties which, in my opinion, lie on promoters of the measure are not properly fulfilled.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): I think it is satisfactory to find that the opponents of the Bill have practically withdrawn their opposition. Trade in this locality has been considerably depressed, and it will be of great advantage to the working classes that the line should be constructed. Owing to the depression of trade, the Company have not hitherto been able to raise the capital which they were authorized to raise. But I am now informed that if this House will give them an extension of time, they will be able to raise the necessary capital; and the construction of the line will no doubt afford a very useful means of communication between this district and the Great Western system, the London and North Western system, the Great Northern at King's Cross, and the Midland at St. Pancras. By means of this line, communication will be opened between all those important railway systems and the London Docks, and there will consequently be a considerable decrease in the cost of bringing coals from the Midland Counties to the London Docks. The line will also be of great advantage to the working classes, seeing that they will also be able to be conveyed for a distance of 12 miles at ½*d.* a mile. It will also give a large amount of employment to the unemployed, because I understand that the promoters propose to spend something like £3,000,000. When the Bill goes before the Committee, and if it is found that the promoters are in a position to raise the capital, I am told that the passing of the Bill will result in an expenditure of £10,000 a-week among the working classes of the Metropolis. I am, therefore, glad to see that hon. Gentlemen have withdrawn their opposition to the Bill, and I venture to hope that it will be sent up to a Select Committee, by whom, no doubt, it will be carefully considered and sent back to this House.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle): I desire to call the attention of the House to the fact that when the Bill was brought in, there were circumstances connected with it which induced me to oppose it. The proposition which I most strongly objected to was one for the payment of interest out of capital. I maintain that that was a provision which ought not to receive the sanction of this House. The proposal was defended by the right hon. member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain), who was then President of the Board of Trade, on the very plea which has been put forward now—namely, that the construction of these works would provide a large amount of employment for the poor of the Metropolis. Since then, no doubt, years of depression have passed over our heads; but the employment anticipated has not been provided, and the principle of paying interest out of capital has been found to be inoperative. I venture to say that as long as fraudulent principles of this kind are sanctioned in a Private Bill, the public will continue to treat them with the discredit they deserve. I do not desire to oppose the further progress of this Bill; but if capital is to be used in this country in the employment of the poor, it must be spent in those things which are productive and not dead, and when the capital reproducing again finds employment for other people. Many of the speculations sanctioned by this House have, in my humble opinion, interfered with the interests of those who have to send traffic over the railways. No doubt this House has the right to grant monopolies; but it should take care that those monopolies, when granted, are carefully and properly used. When you begin to spend double the amount of capital which is required for performing a particular object, it is plain that the principle is one which must in the end be detrimental to the best interests of the trading community. I will not occupy the time of the House with further observations upon this Bill; but as long as these clauses remain in it for paying interest out of capital, I believe the shares will not be taken up by the public.

MR. THOMAS (Glamorgan, E.): I am very glad that the hon. Members have withdrawn their opposition to this Bill at this stage. I support the Bill for this reason: Hon. Members will notice that the Great Western is the great coal-carrying railway to and from South Wales. The Great Western Company carry coals from places in South Wales for something like 6*s.* 3*d.* per ton; but in order to take them from Paddington down to the London Docks, they are charged at such a rate as practically prevents them from using the Great Western Railway for the carriage of coals. Therefore it is that I am so much interested in this Bill, and that I am glad that the opposition is withdrawn. The charge of 2*s.* 6*d.* per ton now imposed will, I believe, be reduced to 1*s.* 1*d.* if this Bill is allowed to proceed.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

### BELFAST MAIN DRAINAGE BILL.

#### CONSIDERATION OF LORDS AMENDMENTS.

Order for Consideration of Lords Amendments read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Lords Amendments be now considered."—(*Mr. Dodds.*)

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I beg to move that the debate be adjourned until Thursday next.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be adjourned till Thursday next."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

SIR JAMES CORRY (Armagh, Mid): On behalf of the promoters of the Bill, I am willing to consent to the adjournment proposed by the hon. Member opposite, because I believe the House is anxious that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) should have an early opportunity of addressing the House on the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill, and I have no desire to delay that opportunity by a Private Bill discussion.

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *Thursday.*

## QUESTIONS.

### NORTH SEA FISHERIES—DEPREDATIONS BY FOREIGN ON ENGLISH FISHERMEN—THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE.

SIR SAVILE CROSSLEY (Suffolk, Lowestoft) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, What is the reason of the great delay in presenting the Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the depredations by Foreign on English fishermen in the North Sea, and when the Report will be placed upon the Table of the House?

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The Report in question was laid on the Table of the House last Thursday.

### SCOTTISH UNIVERSITIES—ENDOWMENTS—LEGISLATION.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he can give any indication of the time when he expects to be able to introduce the Bill for the better endowment and reform of the Scottish Universities, which Her Majesty's Government have promised?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities): This Bill would probably have been introduced by this time, as it was in active preparation when my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant left the Office of Secretary for Scotland. That change necessarily caused some delay; but it is hoped that it may be introduced shortly.

### ROYAL COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SURGEONS—FEES FOR ADMISSION.

MR. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether, by the Charter of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, the fee chargeable for admission as a Member of the Royal College is limited to a maximum of thirteen guineas; whether this is confirmed by Statute; whether, by the Regulations affecting the examinations for the diploma of the Royal College, applicants who have studied at the

Veterinary College in Edinburgh, or elsewhere, may be caused to pay very much more than thirteen guineas, in some cases as high as thirty guineas, before obtaining admission; and, whether, in the event of such Regulations being contrary to law, he will take such steps as may be competent to him to secure that right is done in the matter?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The fee chargeable for admission to the Royal Veterinary College is £13 13*s.* which is fixed by a Charter of 1883, in conformity with the Statute 44 & 45 *Vict.* c. 62. When a student comes up for the necessary examinations and passes, no larger sum than £13 13*s.* is paid; but should he fail he is permitted to present himself again, on condition that he pays the fees for the new examination. If in any case the sum of 30 guineas has been paid, it must have been in consequence of the student having been accorded many chances of passing after repeated failure. I do not see any ground for interference.

### POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—POST OFFICE AT GRANGEGEITH.

MR. O'HANLON (Cavan, E.) asked the Postmaster General, What reply he received to his telegram as to the proposed post office at Grangegeith?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The Report in reference to Grangegeith, for which I telegraphed, duly came to hand. It appeared from that Report that a post office at Grangegeith, with a postman from Slane, would not be warranted at the cost of the revenue, even though the post was confined to three days a-week; but I directed further inquiry to be made as to the guarantee that would be required to make good the loss if a post six days a-week were established.

### SEED SUPPLY (IRELAND) ACT, 1880—ISSUE OF SEED.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, before the passing of "The Seed Supply (Ireland) Act, 1880," the Local Government Board issued a Circular to various unions, stating the maximum amount of seed which they could issue to each tenant under the Act; if the amount of seed so named was totally erroneous; if, in consequence of this mistake on the part of the Local Government Board, considerable delay was caused in putting the Act into force; if this mistaken Circular was the cause of much subsequent hurry in the issue of the seed; and, will he cause an inquiry to be made into the mistakes originating in the issue of this Circular?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): It is not the case that there was any mistake made by the Local Government Board in regard to the Seed Act. The facts are that, owing to the urgency of the matter, the Government of the day authorized the Board to communicate with the Guardians of certain unions enabling them to anticipate the passing of the Bill and to purchase seed to be distributed under certain conditions. The Bill was, to some extent, modified when passing through the House, the effect being somewhat to enlarge the powers of the Boards of Guardians. I am not aware of any ground for a general inquiry into the matter.

### LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—ROBERT KELLY AND THOMAS SCULLY.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Robert Kelly and Thomas Scully have been arrested and returned for trial to the Court of Assize, recently held in the City of Cork, on a charge of threatening to shoot one Michael Keohane; whether these young men have been imprisoned for a period of five weeks, bail having been refused for their appearance at the Assizes; whether, when they appeared to answer the charge, the Crown refused to send a Bill before the Grand Jury; and, if the foregoing statements are true, what redress is to be made for the injury inflicted on these young men?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University) (who replied) said, the statements contained in the first two paragraphs of the Question were substantially correct. Upon considering the informations, he came to the conclusion that the prosecution should not be conducted by the Crown officials; but he did not admit that any injury was inflicted on the persons referred to. They were returned for trial in the ordinary course, bail being refused.

Mr. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) asked, could the right hon. and learned Gentleman say by what magistrates the bail was refused, and whether one of them was a Resident Magistrate?

Mr. HOLMES said, he could not say.

### POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTIONS—BANTRY UNION.

Mr. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether District Inspector Crane, stationed at Bantry, attended at a recent Poor Law Election in the Seafin Electoral Division of the Bantry Union; whether he instructed Constable Quinn to give a voting paper, belonging to a Mr. Johnson, to Mr. J. E. Barrett, J.P., one of the candidates; whether Constable Quinn, knowing his duty, declined to obey the District Inspector's instructions; and, whether it is in accordance with the Police Regulations for District Inspectors to interfere in Poor Law Elections?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The District Inspector was present on the occasion, in the discharge of his duty, for the preservation of the peace. He denies that he in any way interfered with the election, or gave such instructions to the constable as are alleged in the Question.

### WEIGHTS AND MEASURES—CORN MEASURES—LEGISLATION.

Mr. RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether it is the intention of the Government to propose any legislation with a view of simplifying the weights and measures now in general use, and especially those used in the sale of corn; and, if so, when they propose to introduce their Bill?

The SECRETARY (Baron Henry De Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The question of legislation in connection with the Weights and Measures Act is, as I informed the hon. Member for West St. Pancras (Mr. Lawson) last month, receiving the attention of the Department. In view, however, of the important questions now engaging the attention of Her Majesty's Government, I can give the hon. Member no pledge that any measure of legislation on the subject will be introduced this Session.

### ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—FORCE IN MILLTOWN.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If a large force of Constabulary, accompanied by the County and District Inspector, was drafted into Milltown on the 6th and 7th instant; if such a large force was necessary; and, if its presence there will entail any expenditure on the barony or on the County of Galway?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): An extra force was drafted into Milltown on the dates named, as a precautionary measure, there being reason to apprehend some lawless acts. No extra cost will be entailed on the locality thereby.

### THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—VACANT CORONERSHIP OF DONEGAL.

Mr. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that there is a vacancy in the office of Coroner in a district of the County of Donegal; whether there are at present only two polling places at which the poll for the election of Coroner for the said district can be holden; whether the qualification of electors, voting at the election of a Coroner, is the same as the qualification entitling a person to a vote at the election of a Member to serve in Parliament; whether upwards of 7,000 persons are entitled to vote for the election of a Coroner for the said district; whether the fact that the polling places are limited to two will, in effect, disfranchise the greater part of the constituency, regard being had to the distance of the polling places from the residences of the voters, and the grave inconveniences thereby entailed; whether he has power, under the provisions of the 9 & 10 *Vict.* c. 37, or under those of any other Statute, or at all, to direct a Special Sessions of the Magistrates of the said district, to be holden for the purpose of fixing and determining the place or places within the said district at which the poll in such election shall take place, or whether he has any, and what, powers to increase the number of the polling places; whether he will take any, and, if so, what, steps to remedy the inconvenience to which the voters are at present subjected, and to increase the number of polling places; and, whether, pending the taking of these steps, a stay will be put upon the issuing of the writ for the election of the Coroner to the Sheriff of the County of Donegal?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I understand that no such vacancy has been as yet notified to the Lord Chancellor of Ireland; and I do not, therefore, know to which of the five Coronerships in the County of Donegal the hon. Member refers. If, however, he will be good enough to repeat the Question, specifying the Coronership, I shall endeavour to answer it.

### PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—ARKLOW HARBOUR WORKS.

Mr. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, What was the cost of repairing the damage to the Arklow Pier, caused by the giving way of the foundations during the progress of the works; what was the expenditure, beyond that originally contemplated, in strengthening the work to enable it to resist further damage by storms; have the Board of Works followed in any material way the recommendations of the engineers appointed by the Treasury to report upon the work, with a view to avert further disaster; and, is it a fact that a serious formation of silt has already formed at the entrance to the Harbour, near the end of the South Pier?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): The cost of repairing the damage caused by the giving way of the foundations of the Arklow Pier was £1,228 10*s*. The expenditure of the strengthening of the work has been £3,085. The Board of Works has followed in a material way the recommendations of the engineers; but at the unanimous request of the Town Commissioners and the Local Committee, who were appointed to watch the progress of the works, they did not carry out these recommendations fully. Some shoaling has taken place on the outer end of the pier, but the entrance to the harbour has been very materially improved, transhipment by lighters not being required, as heretofore. It is probable that still further improvements would be effected by the completion of the north groin.

### LABOURERS' ACTS (IRELAND)—WORKING OF THE ACTS.

Mr. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will give a Return, in the form shown on to-day's Paper, showing the working of the Labourers' Acts (Ireland), from the beginning up to the 25th March, 1887?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I have no objection to the proposed Return, except on the ground that it would be somewhat defective, as it would only deal with cases in which orders have been actually made, leaving out all pending cases. I shall communicate further with the hon. Member as to the alterations in the form which, as I am advised, would lead to a more complete and useful Return.

### POOR LAW (IRELAND) — DONEGAL WORKHOUSE — THE BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

Mr. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware of the condition of the Donegal Workhouse for the past four years, through the action of the Protestant majority of the Board of Guardians of that institution; whether these Guardians, under the Chairmanship of the Orange Grand Master for County Donegal, have systematically excluded Catholics from every official position in the house; whether, when on two occasions a vacancy for schoolmistress arose, they at each time set aside the Catholic candidate, though more eligible, and appointed a Protestant; whether they refused several applications for a catechist to teach prayers and Christian doctrine to the Catholic children; whether, afterwards, they on several occasions declined to appoint a Catholic assistant teacher to the workhouse, although strongly recommended and sanctioned by the Local Government Board; whether he is aware that 90 per cent of the inmates, and nearly all the children, are Catholics; whether he is aware that Sir George Trevelyan, when Chief Secretary in the

Liberal Government, and the Local Government Board expressed disapproval of the conduct of the said Guardians; whether the parish priest, the Very Rev. Hugh M'Fadden, resigned the chaplaincy of the said workhouse, on account of the persistent refusal of the Protestant majority of the Board to grant a religious education to the Catholic children; whether, in consequence, the workhouse of Donegal is without a Catholic chaplain for the past four years, 90 per cent of the inmates without divine service in the house on Sundays and holy days, and without the opportunity of practising their religious duties; and, whether the Government will take any, and, if so, what, means to remedy grievances suffered so long?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): This matter has been frequently before the House during the last few years, and I fear I can add nothing to the answer given to a Question in similar terms last April, by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley.) It is greatly to be regretted that the local differences cannot be arranged; but neither the Government nor the Local Government Board has any power to interfere.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) asked, if the Local Government Board had power to disband, if he might so call it, Boards of Guardians, as they did in the case of the New Ross Board of Guardians?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes; the Local Government Board have power; but it could not be exercised in such a case as this.

## CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—DEATH OF HANLON — ARREST OF SUB-INSPECTOR SOMERVILLE AND CONSTABLE WARD.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) (for Mr. MAURICE HEALY) (Cork) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the statements made in *The Cork Daily Herald* of the 24th instant, with reference to the conduct of the police on the occasion of the arrest of Sub-Inspector Somerville and Constable Ward for the murder of the man Hanlon; whether it is true, as stated therein, that, at the Youghal Station, before the departure of the two prisoners—

> "All the policemen in the train (being the men under the command of Sub-Inspector Smith) raised a boisterous cheer for Mr. Somerville,"

and that, notwithstanding the efforts of Sub-Inspector Kerin, "the cheering was renewed again and again;" whether this demonstration was renewed at the Killeagh and Mogeely Stations, and at other stations along the line; whether the Regulations of the Royal Irish Constabulary permit bodies of the Force to cheer persons under arrest and charged with serious crime; and, what action the Police Authorities propose to take in the matter?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am informed that the only foundation for these allegations is that shortly before the departure of the train one cheer was given by the men in the railway carriage. The Inspector General does not approve of this having been done, and he will so inform the men. It is not, as I am informed, a fact that the District Inspector had to use any efforts to restrain the men from further demonstrations, or that the cheering was renewed along the line.

## LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—SUB-INSPECTOR MILLING.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) (for Mr. MAURICE HEALY) (Cork) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Sub-Inspector Milling has received a favourable record in respect of his behaviour on the occasion of the dispersal of a public meeting held in Cork in December last, in connection with which he was charged with assault by the hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner), and returned for trial by the local Bench of Magistrates; and, whether a number of the constables engaged with him on that occasion, and also implicated in the assault, have been similarly rewarded?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am informed that the officer named, and a number of his men, did, upon the strong recommendation of their superiors, receive a second-class favourable record for promptitude and firmness shown upon the occasion of disturbance at Cork on the occasion referred to.

### EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION—STATISTICAL TABLES.

CAPTAIN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether he can give any further statistical information with regard to the emigration and immigration from and into the United Kingdom of foreigners to and from countries in Europe; and, whether he will consider the expediency of so altering the form of the statistical tables relative to emigration and immigration from and into the United Kingdom, as to more clearly distinguish between movement of population within the Empire, and loss of population to the Empire, by emigration beyond its limits?

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): A Memorandum on the subject of Emigration and Immigration Statistics has been prepared in the Department of the Board of Trade, which fully answers all the questions raised by the hon. and gallant Gentleman. This Memorandum I will give to the House.

### POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—WAGES, &c., OF LIMERICK POSTMEN.

MR. H. J. GILL (Limerick) asked the Postmaster General, Whether, at present, the Limerick postmen labour under the following disadvantages, amongst many others:—that whereas in Belfast postmen receive 26*s*. per week, in Limerick, with the same number of working hours, only 22*s*.; that for sick pay Dublin postmen, when married, receive full wages, when unmarried, two-third wages, whilst in Limerick both married and single postmen receive only half wages; that in other first-class offices good conduct stripes are given every fifth year, whilst in Limerick at very irregular and long intervals; whether, in Limerick, promotion is very seldom given to deserving and qualified postmen; and, whether he will consider the case of the Limerick postmen, with a view of placing them on an equal footing with the men in other first-class Irish offices?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that at Limerick the wages of the postmen are 18*s*., increasing by 1*s*. a week annually to 22*s*.; that these wages are the same as at Plymouth, Bath, Paisley, and other towns; and that as they have proved amply sufficient to procure and retain the services of well qualified men, there is no intention of raising them. I am not aware that in Dublin or elsewhere any difference of treatment exists, in the matter of sick pay or otherwise, between married and unmarried men; or that at any town good conduct stripes are given every fifth year, or at the end of any other stated period. In the United Kingdom there are three or four towns, of which Dublin is one, where, by virtue of an old regulation, which it is not proposed to extend, the postmen, when absent ill, receive two-thirds of their wages. At all other towns they receive only half. Good conduct stripes are bestowed as they become vacant.

MR. H. J. GILL asked, if these other towns were ranked as first-class offices same as Limerick?

MR. RAIKES: I believe they are; but I am not sure.

### LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—ARREST OF JOHN MALONE AND RICHARD MAGEE.

MR. J. E. REDMOND (Wexford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he can state if John Malone and Richard Magee were inmates of the workhouse at New Ross when arrested on the night of the 21st ultimo; what charge was made against them; by whom, and where, was the charge first made to the constabulary; whether they were arrested in the workhouse; at what hour of the day, and under what authority, the arrests were made; whether he will give a copy of the charges which were entered against them in the charge book on admission to the police barrack, and also a copy of the convictions; whether any of the workhouse officials, or any other persons, were examined as witnesses for the complainant, and the nature of the evidence given in support of the charge; and, whether he will state the name of the complainant, and give the date on which Malone and Magee became inmates of this workhouse?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University) (who replied) said, that Malone and Magee were both inmates of the New Ross Workhouse, the former since the 10th of December, 1886, and the latter since the 18th of December, 1885. The charge against them, which was made by the master of the workhouse, was that they were found, between the hours of 12 and half-past 12 o'clock at night, in the female section of the workhouse for the purpose of committing a felony. They were arrested by constables, who found them secreted there. A large hole had been broken by them in the wall of the nursery, and a ladder was discovered against the wall. The master of the workhouse and the two constables were examined, and proved the facts already mentioned. The complainant was the master of the workhouse. As regards the charges and convictions, these were public documents, and could be obtained by the persons interested in the usual way.

Mr. J. E. REDMOND asked, was he to understand that these men, for an offence committed while inmates of the workhouse, had been convicted under the Vagrancy Act?

Mr. HOLMES said, there was nothing in the Vagrancy Act to prevent them from being so convicted.

### POST OFFICE (SCOTLAND) — POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK AT ARCHIESTOWN AND DALLAS, MORAYSHIRE.

Mr. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked the Postmaster General, Whether the Government will establish a Post Office Savings Bank in the village of Archiestown, and also in that of Dallas, Morayshire?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): The matter to which the hon. Member refers is still under consideration, and I hope to be in a position to arrive at a decision very shortly.

### RIVER THAMES—POLLUTION BY HOUSE BOATS, &c.

Colonel DAWNAY (York, N.R., Thirsk) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the Thames Conservators have decided to take any effectual steps to put a stop to the pollution of the waters of the Upper Thames, by preventing house boats and steam launches draining their sewage directly into the river?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I have been in communication with the Conservators of the River Thames on the subject of their proposed bye-law prohibiting the casting, or suffering to fall or flow into the river, any sewage or other offensive matter, and the effect of that bye-law with regard to house-boats and steam launches. The Conservators have forwarded to me a copy of a letter which, as soon as the bye-law referred to has been approved, they propose to address to the owners of house-boats and steam launches requesting that they will, without delay, make the necessary arrangements in the fittings of their vessels in order to comply with the bye-law referred to. They state that any closet communicating with the river would obviously be an infraction of the bye-law, and cannot, therefore, be permitted.

### CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT (IRELAND)—THE DEBATE—THE CHIEF SECRETARY'S SPEECH.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will consent to refer the cases he quoted to the House on Monday, 28th, as proofs of the necessity for increasing the stringency of the Criminal Law in Ireland, to a Select Committee, for investigation as to their truth or otherwise?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I do not think a Committee would be in a better position than myself to test the accuracy of the statements of fact which I laid before the House.

### LAW AND JUSTICE — COLONIAL JUDGMENTS — THE COLONIAL CONFERENCE.

Mr. OSBORNE MORGAN (Denbighshire, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce, during the present Session, a measure dealing with Colonial Judgments; and, whether the amendment of the Laws relating to the operation of such Judgments in this country, and to the operation in the Colonies of Judgments obtained in the Courts of the United Kingdom, could be included among the subjects to be discussed at the approaching Colonial Conference?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Sir Henry Holland) (Hampstead): It is intended that this subject shall be discussed at the Colonial Conference; and the question whether there should be legislation respecting it will be decided after the opinions of the Colonial Representatives have been so ascertained.

### THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—YOUGHAL—COUNTY INSPECTOR BROWNRIGG.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether County Inspector Brownrigg has paid the fine lately imposed on him by the Youghal Bench of Magistrates for assault?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The fine having been in the nominal sum of a farthing, without costs, I have no doubt that, as usual in such cases, it was neither paid nor levied.

### CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS)—INOCULATION FOR ANTHRAX.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether the Government will take steps to draw the attention of farmers to the success in France of M. Pasteur's system of inoculation as a preventive against anthrax, and otherwise encourage its adoption generally in this country?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY (Lord JOHN MANNERS) (Leicestershire, E.): Experiments in inoculation with the virus of anthrax and other diseases are being carried on; but, up to the present, the results are not so satisfactory as to justify any recommendations as to its general adoption in this country.

### PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—PALACE YARD—A GLASS SHELTER.

MR. W. BECKETT (Notts, Bassetlaw) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he has fulfilled his promise, made in August last, that, before the present Session of Parliament, he would do his best to provide some protection from the weather for Members alighting at and leaving the House; what has prevented the work being done; and, if he will have a plan prepared of a suitable glass and iron roof extending across the causeway outside the Star Court, with the view of effecting the much desired object?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): Provision has been made in the Estimates (£300) for a covering in the Star Chamber Court to protect Members from wet when alighting from carriages; and if the House should see fit to vote the money, the work will be taken in hand at the earliest opportunity.

### NAVY—H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT—INSPECTION AT ADEN.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Duke of Connaught proceeded a few weeks ago to Aden to inspect that station in a Government troopship; and, whether it is the custom of Commanders-in-Chief of the Bombay Presidency to be furnished with one of Her Majesty's ships on such occasions; and, if not, why this mode of transit was adopted when all Indian troopships were required for the service of the troops in Burmah?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The Duke of Connaught proceeded a few weeks ago, in the ordinary course of his military duty, to Aden, not in a troopship, but in a despatch boat kept especially for such service. The despatch boat in question was not required at the time, or at all, for the service of the troops in Burmah.

### EGYPT—DETENTION OF ZEBEHR PASHA.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Zebehr Pasha is still in confinement at Gibraltar; and, if so, how long it is intended to retain him there; whether he has ever been condemned to imprisonment by any tribunal; and, whether he has ever had an opportunity to reply to any charges which may have been brought against him, or even been made aware of the charges; what these charges are; whether it is in accordance with law to retain a man in prison in a British fortress for above two years; who is not a subject of Her Majesty; who is the native of a country with which this country is not at war; who has never been condemned to imprisonment by any tribunal; and who has never been informed of the nature of the charges against him; and, whether any individual, either a subject of Her Majesty or other, may be seized in his own house in the night, placed on board a British vessel, conveyed to a British fortress, and there detained as a prisoner, and the action of Habeas Corpus suspended in his respect by an order of the Governor of the Fortress in Council?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Zebehr Pasha is still detained at Gibraltar. On every ground, Her Majesty's Government are very desirous to release him as soon as this shall be deemed expedient with reference to the security and tranquillity of Egypt. The question of doing so is at this moment under consideration. Similar Questions to those of the hon. Member were asked and answered in 1885. My Predecessor, Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, informed the House that he had been arrested on grounds of military necessity; and Mr. Evelyn Ashley subsequently stated that an Ordinance was passed by the Governor of Gibraltar authorizing his detention there. The then Attorney General (Sir Henry James) also explained that the necessary steps had been taken to render it legal. I may mention, as the hon. Member speaks of retention in a fortress, that, as a matter of fact, Zebehr Pasha has all along inhabited the summer residence of the Governor, and his detention has been rendered as little disagreeable as possible.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Will the Under Secretary give an answer to the last part of the Question?

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON said, the Question was a hypothetical one. The necessary steps were taken to render the detention of Zebehr Pasha possible at Gibraltar.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) wished to know whether this gentleman had not a right to sue on a writ of Habeas Corpus?

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: Certainly not. An Ordinance was passed in Gibraltar legalizing his detention there. As to the legal point, he must refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer given by the then Attorney General on the 30th of March, 1885.

MR. O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.) asked, when the Government would be in a position to state upon what grounds Zebehr Pasha was detained; whether it was a fact that the British Government had utilized the services of this man during a considerable period in Egypt for the purpose of communicating with the rebels in the Soudan; and, whether it was not upon the failure of these negotiations that Zebehr had been arrested by the British Government on account of having communicated with the rebels, although it was at the instigation of the British Government that those negotiations had been opened by Zebehr?

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON said, he could not give any further information than that given by the late Government as to the detention of Zebehr Pasha; it was on the ground of military necessity or expediency.

MR. DILLON gave Notice that, on the earliest opportunity, he would call attention to the cruelty of the continued detention of this Arab.

### THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. JEREMIAH HEGARTY, J.P., CO. CORK.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, On whose recommendation was the name of Mr. Jeremiah Hegarty forwarded to the Lord Chancellor of Ireland as being a fit and suitable person to appoint as magistrate in the County of Cork; whether it is a fact that Mr. M'Carthy O'Leary, D.L., Millstreet, County Cork, a local Catholic magistrate, refused to recommend Hegarty for the Commission of the Peace; whether Hegarty stated, on oath, at the trial of Martin Forrest, of Rathcoole, this winter, that he was bailiff to the Cork Defence Union; and, whether he owns and occupies the premises in a part of which it is stated his son sells porter and spirits by retail?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I have already stated that Mr. Hegarty was appointed upon the recommendation of the Lieutenant of the County and other local persons of influence. I do not know who may, or may not, have declined to join in the recommendation. I have seen no report of the trial referred to; but, from the nature of the assurances which have been given to me, I cannot think that Mr. Hegarty gave such evidence as is alleged. I do not think it is any part of my duty to make inquiries, or announcements, as to the private property of individuals.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) asked, if this was the same Mr. Hegarty who was severely reprimanded by the Master of the Rolls some time ago for advancing money belonging to a minor under the protection of the Court?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR asked the hon. Member to give Notice of the Question.

Dr. TANNER asked, whether it was not a fact that Hegarty was held in universal detestation in that part of the county?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR did not answer.

### ARMY AND NAVY ESTIMATES — A SELECT COMMITTEE OF EXAMINATION.

Mr. MASON (Lanark, Mid) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, When the Government intend to move for the appointment of the Select Committee, already promised, to examine and report upon the Army and Navy Estimates?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I am prepared to move for the Committee at once, if an understanding is arrived at that the Motion will be accepted without debate.

### CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT (IRELAND) BILL.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention had been called to the fact that the House of Lords proposed to adjourn for the Easter holiday before the second reading of the Land Bill; and whether, under these circumstances, he would ask this House to read the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill a second time before Easter?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): My attention has been called to the arrangements of the other House; and it is the intention of the Government to ask this House to give a second reading to the Bill for the amendment of the Criminal Law in Ireland before Easter, notwithstanding that the Bill for the amendment of the Land Laws will not be read a second time before Easter. That Bill will be printed immediately after it is introduced into the House of Lords on Thursday.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman be content to have the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill printed in the same way immediately after its introduction?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: As a matter of course, the Bill will be printed immediately after it is ordered to be brought in.

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What appeal did he propose to give under the provisions of the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill in cases to be dealt with under the summary jurisdiction to be given to the magistrates?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): An appeal to the Chairman of Quarter Sessions and the Judge of Assize.

### PARLIAMENT — DIVISIONS OF THE HOUSE (PAIRING) — DIVISIONS ON THE 21st MARCH.

Mr. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) asked the hon. Member for the Norwood Division of Lambeth (Mr. Bristowe) a Question of which he had given private Notice, Whether the Division Lists of the Sittings of the House on Monday, March 21, in which his name appeared as having voted in the Divisions No. 78, 79, and 80, were correct; whether it was not the fact that he paired with the hon. Member for West Nottingham for the night before Division No. 78 was taken; and, whether he could state any grounds for having so voted in face of the recognized Rule governing the practice of pairing between hon. Members of the House?

Mr. BRISTOWE (Lambeth, Norwood): In reply to the Question of my hon. Friend, I beg to say that his statement is correct. Probably from inexperience, on the morning of the 22nd I arrived about 10 o'clock and entered into the Lobby, taking part in the first Division. On the second Division, having heard that there was some doubt about the Regulations of the House, I applied to the Whips for information, and was told that it was competent for me to enter into the Division Lobby. Consequently, I did so. Afterwards the hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) arrived, and in his presence we consulted, among others, my right hon. Friend the Member for the Dartford Division of Kent (Sir William Hart Dyke), who stated that he, having been a Whip for 12 years, considered I was quite entitled to vote. Under these circumstances, I took part in the three Divisions; and I hope, Mr. Speaker, that this may serve as an occasion for having this matter settled; for it is a most unpleasant thing that there should be any question in regard to a matter of this kind—and that a private Member should be suspected of doing something which he ought not to do—a practice which I should be the last to enter into.

Mr. ARNOLD MORLEY (Nottingham, E.) asked the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Akers-Douglas), as the senior Ministerial Whip, the following Question, of which he also had given private Notice :—Whether 25 Members of this House supporting Her Majesty's Government had paired for the night during the Sitting of the House on Monday, March 21 ; whether, notwithstanding that they so paired, they voted in several Divisions, such Divisions taking place during the continuance of the Sitting; whether the act of so voting is not in opposition to the recognized Rule governing the practices of pairs between Members of this House; whether it is a fact that during the same Sitting of the House the junior Member for Bolton (Colonel Bridgeman), supporting Her Majesty's Government, was paired for the night with the hon. Member for Cardiganshire (Mr. W. B. Rowlands), and during the night, without the previous consent of the hon. Member for Cardiganshire, the name of the hon. Member for Kirkcudbright (Mr. Mark Stewart) was substituted for that of the junior Member for Bolton; and whether, notwithstanding the pair was still in existence, the junior Member for Bolton voted in several Divisions?

Lord RANDOLPH CHURCHILL (Paddington, S.): I rise, Sir, to a point of Order in regard to the Question that has just been put. I wish to ask, whether there is any precedent for discussion in this House as to arrangements which may take place between Members with regard to Divisions; whether the practice of pairing has ever been formally recognized by this House; whether pairs are ever recorded by the House in any of its records; whether it has ever been the practice of this House, in its corporate capacity, to take any cognizance whatever of the practice known as pairing; and, whether, if such be the case, a departure from the ancient practice might not be attended with the utmost possible inconvenience?

Mr. SPEAKER: I was informed that it was the intention of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. Morley) who acts in an official capacity for Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House, to ask a Question on this point of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Akers-Douglas) who acts in a similar capacity for the Supporters of the Government. I was not aware that any Question on the subject was going to be put to a private Member of the House. That, I think, was rather irregular. I thought it would be for the convenience of the House, as a matter affecting, in some sense, the Business of the House, that I should throw no obstacle in the way of the hon. Gentleman asking the Question, especially as there was great doubt in the minds of hon. Members as to what the proper course was; and that I should allow a *quasi* official statement to be made which might set the minds of hon. Members at rest, and establish a precedent for the future.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): May I supplement the Question which has been put to the Secretary to the Treasury by asking, whether any of the Gentlemen referred to took part in the Division on the Closure?

The PATRONAGE SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Akers-Douglas) (Kent, St. Augustine's): In answer to the Question just put to me by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool, I beg to say that, as far as I know, no Member who was paired for the night voted in the Closure Division. In answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham, I believe that some 25 Members of this House, Supporters of the Government, paired for the night on Monday, the 21st instant; but I cannot admit that they voted "during the continuance of such pairs." Of these Members, 22 voted after 9.30 in the morning of Tuesday with my sanction; and, in so voting, I contend that they were acting in concert with, and not—

> "In opposition to the recognized Rules which govern the practice of pairs between Members of this House."

I have always understood that a pair entered into for "the night" is only intended to hold good until the morning, and that if two Members wish to pair for the whole Sitting, such an arrangement is specified in the Pair List by the words, "For Sitting." On the occasion alluded to, several hon. Members came down to the House desiring to vote in the Closure Division, but, acting upon my advice, refrained from voting until after 9 o'clock in the morning, at which time I considered there could be no question but that pairs "for the night" had lapsed. I was supported in this view by my right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) and by the Leader of the House, to both of whom I submitted the question, as well as by my own experience in being myself allowed to vote under similar circumstances after the All-night Sitting in January, 1881. With regard to the second part of the hon. Member's Question, I had, at the time, no knowledge of the action taken by the junior Member for Bolton. I may, perhaps, be allowed to add that if any doubt as to the definition of a "night pair" exists, I am as anxious as the hon. Gentleman himself to arrive at a clear understanding on the point. And I would suggest that those who are generally considered responsible for the organization of the various Parties in this House should meet and agree as to a ruling upon this point, of which ruling I am sure that hon. Members on both sides of the House will gladly avail themselves.

MR. R. W. DUFF (Banffshire): Will the hon. Gentleman kindly say when that Rule as to "night pairs" was established? As Whip from 1882 to 1885, when we had several All-night Sittings, I am quite satisfied that no such Rule was ever established. The invariable Rule was to pair for the Sitting, however long that Sitting was. In order that I might not trust to my own memory, I referred the matter to Lord Kensington, who was a Whip for 12 years, and he answers me that, to the best of his recollection, this is what has invariably happened.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: Perhaps I also might be allowed to say that I have consulted authorities on this point. I consulted my Predecessor, Lord St. Oswald, my right hon. Friend the Member for Dartford (Sir William Hart Dyke), my right hon. Friend the Member for Oxford University (Sir John Mowbray)—as one well acquainted with the Rules of this House—and my right hon. Friend the Member for Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth), who all agreed with me. I can only repeat that I am most anxious that this point should be settled. Whatever I did I did in perfect *bona fides*, and I sent for no Member to vote on the Closure Division, or until 9 o'clock in the morning, when his pair for the night I thought certainly must have expired.

MR. ARNOLD MORLEY explained that his only object in raising the question was in the interest of hon. Members on both sides of the House, and in the hope that it might lead to the adoption of some rule which would be generally recognized, and he gladly accepted the suggestion of the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury.

## *ORDER OF THE DAY.*

## CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT (IRELAND) BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE. FIRST READING.

ADJOURNED DEBATE. [SECOND NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [28th March],

> "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make better provision for the prevention and punishment of Crime in Ireland; and for other purposes relating thereto."—(*Mr. Arthur Balfour.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian) said: Mr. Speaker, I listened with great pleasure to the very able statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) last night, and the observations I made were, in the first place, that the issues were so extremely grave as to make it desirable, so far as I was myself concerned, to take a few hours for reflection before attempting to offer any suggestion or opinion to the House; and, secondly, that the House itself, whether from the gravity of those issues, or from being startled by the nature of the propositions which the right hon. Gentleman himself described as extreme propositions, was—particularly on the other side—under the influence of some degree of surprise, perhaps—it might seem hardly courteous to say bewilderment—but was in a state, at least, of momentary uncertainty, when the right hon. Gentleman, notwithstanding the ability of his speech, sat down amid the silence of his Friends. I have already stated my opinion of the character of his speech, and my opinion, if I am right in the observation I made—as to which I have not the smallest doubt, so far as matter of fact is concerned—and I hope I have not put it so as to convey the slightest shade of disparagement of the ability of the right hon. Gentleman. There can be no doubt that last night was an historical night in the proceedings of the House of Commons. It was, in some senses, a complement to an important night of the first Session of 1886, when I myself had the arduous duty of proposing to Parliament what was known as the Irish Government Bill. I then ventured to state that, in the judgment of the Cabinet which at the time existed, we had arrived at the point where two roads met, or, rather, where two roads parted—one of them the road which marked the endeavour to govern Ireland according to its well-understood Constitutionally - expressed wishes, within the limits of safety to the Constitution; the other the road which had been principally marked by extra-Constitutional—some would say un-Constitutional—measures, repressing the liberties of the people, and which, if it were pursued at all, it then appeared to us might threaten to grow more and more marked and pronounced in their character. At the same time, there was some dissent from that opinion, and a considerable number of Gentlemen—with whom we had been in close political alliance down to that date—considered that there was a third course open to them, a course of Liberal concessions to Ireland, stopping short of what we had proposed—namely, the creation of a legislative body with a responsible executive, and based upon the principle of concession, on the one side, which they deemed liberal and yet safe; but upon careful avoidance of coercion on the other side, which, therefore, they declined to admit was the alternative for a plan such as we proposed. Later on, I will refer again for a moment to the opinion which has now been brought to the test. But I will only now describe the views with which I have looked upon the state and prospects of Parties in the interval which has elapsed since the Election, so far as Ireland is concerned. I know, Sir, that at the Election, in the midst of the crushing defeat which the late Government sustained, their Friends were aware that in the midst of that crushing defeat, both Liberals dissenting from the course they pursued and large numbers of hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House expressed an anxious desire to make large concessions to Ireland in respect of the management of her own affairs. I did hope that we might have before us a course not so happy as that which I should have anticipated from a full and definite measure; but, at any rate, a course in which we should be engaged simply in discussing what opponents, if we were obliged to differ from them on the question whether the measures proposed by them, and admitted to be beneficial in themselves, were or were not sufficient. In such discussions I am certain that there would have been many of us who would have had every disposition to meet the Party now in power without compromise of our own opinions. Yet, to accept readily and thankfully measures which were good in themselves, and which might also be good as tending to exhibit some degree of increased confidence on the part of the Conservative Party, and those linked with them in the conduct and dispositions of the people of Ireland. We were desirous that no time should be lost by the Party opposite in the preparation of such measures; and we expressed the desire, but the expression was treated as a kind of treason against the existing Government, and we were at once rather peremptorily told that no attempt should be made to hurry the Government in its pace. We were disappointed in respect to Ireland by such a warning, but unwilling to raise controversy on the subject. And we did not utter a word of complaint. Eight months had now elapsed since the accession of the present Government to Office. Where is that fair vision of promises, falling short of our extravagant designs, but at the same time kindly beneficial, in a liberal and conciliatory direction? They have all vanished into the thin air—with the exception, of course, of the vision of the future Land Bill, of which the main thing we know is that it is admitted that it has omitted and excluded the chief recommendation of the Royal Commission of Earl Cowper appointed by the Government. With that exception, there stands before us nothing but the figure of coercion—bare, gaunt, and bald, but, alas! too familiar to all our recollections. Sir, I intend to oppose the Motion for the introduction of this Bill. No Amendment has yet been moved, but I see that there stands in the name of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) an Amendment—"That the House do resolve into a Committee on the state of Ireland." I certainly should support that Amendment as being, I believe, the Parliamentary form. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Well, Sir, I hope I have said nothing offensive. I will not knowingly say it. It is impossible to speak upon a subject of this kind in weak and emasculated language; but gravity and calmness are important, and to be valued on such matters just in the same proportion as they are difficult to maintain. I will, however, honestly, and to the best of my ability, endeavour to maintain them, and I certainly do not depart from them in re-stating what just now fell from me—namely, that when objection is taken upon the very broadest grounds to the policy of an important and extra-Constitutional measure proposed by the Government, there can be no more regular and no more convenient method of opening the question than by moving for a Committee of the Whole House on the state of Ireland, which, according to well known and familiar Parliamentary precedents, opens the whole subject of Irish policy, and enables hon. Members to bring into contrast with the course proposed the various, and, possibly, very numerous grounds upon which they think another course should have been preferred. I shall oppose the Motion, and I shall support the Amendment—if it be moved—upon grounds which I will shortly state—namely, that the allegations upon which this proposal is founded are absolutely insufficient and unsatisfactory—that they do not cover the grounds upon which alone, on all former occasions within my recollection, Parliament has been asked to pass measures in abridgment of public liberty; that the Bill, which has been described as extreme, seems to have been raised in its stringency in proportion to the thinness and the poverty of the statements which were alleged; and that, so far as I am able to form a judgment, in which I cannot expect and do not ask hon. Gentlemen opposite to concur, the measure, instead of being a cure, instead of being a palliative, will do nothing, can do nothing, but aggravate in their deepest seat and foundation the worst disorders of Ireland. This is no dilatory plea. I do not deny that the case of Ireland is a grave case—God forbid! We never should have put aside all the course of Liberal policy last year, and subjected ourselves to, temporarily, almost destruction as a Party, which we knew was our possible fate, if we did not believe it to be a grave and extreme case. But this we knew or thought. We knew that Ireland must be compared with herself. The right hon. Gentleman has returned to a subject from which he will get no profit whatever—namely, an observation of mine—a common-place observation and a truism—that, in considering crime in Ireland, you must not look solely at its amount, but you must look at its character, its area, its roots, and consequences. If there be one common-place more familiar than another in discussions upon Irish social disorder, it is the observation that in Ireland certain classes of crime are symptomatic, and must not be considered simply with regard to the person guilty and the person injured, but with regard to the feeling they manifest, and the sympathies or antipathies they draw forth. But that handy common-place observation has no effect whatever in supporting and strengthening the present case, because that comparison of crime, in the case of Ireland, in reference to character, and not as to quality, with crimes in other countries, has no force at all. Where a Government is proposing to introduce a coercive measure for Ireland, it is bound to show the existence of some strange and exceptional state of affairs, that exceptional character being measured not by the reference of Ireland to other more happily conditioned countries, but by comparison between Ireland as it is at one time and Ireland as it is at another. One word more upon the position of the House in reference to this matter. I am extremely sorry to find that the sharpness of the issue which the Government has found it necessary to raise may, and it is likely even to be, aggravated rather than allayed by the methods of proceeding adopted. In the first place, there has been withheld from us all the information—official information—which, in a matter of this kind, is habitually placed before us. In the second place, we have been required to submit to an absolute suspension of our free initiative on every subject, and a majority of more than 80 Members has sustained the Government in exacting a new and indefinite suspension of that initiative; and now the Leader of the House acquaints us that, in consequence of the fact that the Government has a certain power, which power all former Governments, on every occasion, have subordinated to the Rules and usages of Parliament, and in some degree to those alleviations of public toil which nature demands and custom has established—that those are all to be set aside, and we are told that no Recess or adjournment of the House will be allowed until the Bill has been read a second time. Do not let the right hon. Gentleman think that he entirely removes the sting from an announcement of that kind by stating that he does not use it as a threat. If I am walking in Parliament Street, and am met by a man who says, "If you walk another yard I will knock you down, but I do not mean it as a threat"—in such a declaration I do not think there is much comfort. But there would be more consistency in such a declaration, or more comfort in the alleviating addition made to it than by informing us—as the right hon. Gentleman does—that while he means to ride over us, as he has hitherto done in respect of information, and by the entire absorption of the time of the House for months now rapidly multiplying, he expects us also to do what I have just indicated. I will not dwell upon that point, and should not have referred to it save that I had always observed that it was possible for the Government, by much consideration for the usages of the House, and even some for their opponents, to avoid sharpening, and to procure mitigation, of the bitterness of political strife. Now, Sir, what is the case made by the right hon. Gentleman? I affirm that he has not even attempted to make good the allegations which it has been the fixed custom of Parliament—and of Parliaments less reformed than this, and less based on the broad foundation of popular suffrage—uniformly to exact. He has withheld from us all figures, except a very few extracted across the Table last night. He said something of the enlargement of crime in Ireland in the last three years; but he did not refer to Parliamentary figures. He gave us no means of testing his allegations. If, nevertheless, by the kindness of a friend I have obtained what is sufficient, I undertake to show the House the nature of the ground over which he takes the Government, and on which the Government rests in proposing what they feel compelled to call an extreme measure in restraint of national liberties. He said that for three years there had been an increase of crime in Ireland. Sir, I shall decline to examine the increase of crime in Ireland between 1884 and 1885, because, such as it was, it occurred before the present Government were in Office at the close of 1885—an increase which they did not deem at that time, nor did they deem it during the months of the autumn when the Elections were approaching, nor at the close of the year when the Elections had taken place—they did not deem that the increase justified the proposal of a repressive Bill, and they met Parliament reserving that question for future consideration. But I have got—and I take—the figures for 1885 and 1886. Do not let the House think there was much change, but there had been a change undoubtedly between 1884 and 1885. There had been an increase in the number of threatening letters, from 422 to 512. That increase the Government of that day—identical, except as to one or two individuals, with the present Government—did not deem a sufficient ground to justify them in asking Parliament for an increase of the stringency of the law. I have got the figures for 1885 and 1886; and I have got the crime Returns by the Constabulary divided into "threatening letters" on one side, and "cases other than threatening letters" on the other. Now, Sir, with respect to threatening letters, they are a social inconvenience—a social mischief; but it would be ridiculous to speak of them in connection with such a question as the legislative restraint of the liberties of the people. Otherwise, we have to grant that, whereas in 1885 there were in Ireland 432 threatening letters, in 1886 there were 507 threatening letters. That difference in the increase of 75 letters, I presume, will not be alleged by Her Majesty's Government as the broad ground on which they ask Parliament to give its sanction to an extreme measure of repression. How does the case stand with reference to cases other than threatening letters—because that is the first count in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman? He kept back the figures, but I have got them. He prudently had no desire——

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): They are all before the House.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Before the House! Before the compilers of public papers—before those who can go and bury themselves in the papers of successive years, and in the Library, and add up the figures, and do the work which ought to be done in Public Offices for them, and which, on every occasion that I have known, has been done.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman asked me for a Return of the figures a few days ago. I put it in the hands of those whose business it is to prepare such Returns—and the Return is now on the Table of the House—at the first opportunity.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: In supplement to that, I may say I return my thanks to the right hon. Gentleman for the mercy he has shown me. I am not finding fault with the right hon. Gentleman or the Government for want of courtesy. I am speaking of their total failure to discharge a public duty, such as is, by usage and precedent, bound to be performed by the Government asking Parliament for extreme powers of this kind. I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he has ever read of the way in which Lord Althorp introduced the Coercion Bill of 1833—the great precursor of an important series of measures? He will find that Lord Althorp did as Mr. Forster did in 1881. He at once put before the House the necessary information. I will not go further in this matter. I will at once put the House in possession of the whole breadth and substance of the Government's case. The right hon. Gentleman went so far towards enlightening us when he came to the point of his speech last night as to say that there had been an increase for the years 1885 and 1886, which I am going to test. The cases reported in 1885, other than threatening letters, were 512. The cases reported in 1886—which the right hon. Gentleman describes as exhibiting an increase of crime that has had to do with and apparently forms the main part of the foundation for the demand for what he calls an extreme measure—had risen—how much does the House think—from 512 to 518. [*Laughter from the Home Rulers and cheers.*] I shall make good my point—my first assertion—of the total insufficiency of the allegations of the right hon. Gentleman in support of his demand of such a grave and extreme nature.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I said I did not rely on these figures.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: If the right hon. Gentleman did not rely upon them, why did he use them? That does not in the least mend his case, because our contention is—and it is proved by Parliamentary history—that the right hon. Gentleman, as the practice of Parliament invariably has been, has failed to produce and make good these allegations of an exceptional extension of the prevalence of crime, as the necessary ground for an application for increased stringency of the law. I ask the Government to meet that allegation, and overthrow it if they can. Then the right hon. Gentleman does not rely upon an exceptional state of crime in order to justify the case for coercion. He does not rely upon that which all Governments and all Parliaments have been accustomed to give as an essential condition. Well, Sir, was his account of the charges of the Judges complete? I get no answer.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: What was the point?

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: My words are—Were the accounts of the Judges' charges complete?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman asks for an answer. I think my account of the Judges' charges was complete—for the counties I mentioned.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: What does the right. Gentleman say in regard to the County of Tipperary? Did not he quote anecdotes of outrages there? I believe he did in the County of Tipperary. The County of Tipperary, then, was within his view. Why did not he give the Judge's charges there? I have the honour of knowing that Judge, because he was Solicitor and Attorney General in a Government with which I had the honour to be associated; and he is a man whose abilities are well known to many hon. Members of this House. But the charge of that Judge was totally contrary in its effect to the apparent bearings of the charges quoted by the right hon. Gentleman; and I again ask, why have we not an impartial and complete representation—if it was to be made at all—of the charges of the Judges? And, Sir, what were the charges quoted by the right hon. Gentleman, as far as the extracts are made to enable us to judge? The rest of the charges I have not had an opportunity of reading. They were totally different, I will only say, from the charges which I have commonly heard quoted to influence debate, as having been delivered by Judges; because the charges upon which I have known reliance to be made have been charges in which the Judge was dealing with judicial facts, and gave his opinion upon those judicial facts, and, consequently, could have his opinion tested by men of ordinary reason and information. But these charges were passages detached altogether from the consideration of judicial facts. They were passages soaring into the region of speculation. In more cases than one the only judicial fact noticed by the Judge was the smallness and the fewness of the offences; and then the Judge indulged in reasonings in order to prove that with this absence of extensive crime there was a most formidable state of things, in which the Judge may be right or wrong, but in respect of which he carried no judicial authority whatever. He is entirely exempted himself from those tests to which, in his ordinary duty, he is subject when he is dealing with judicial facts in a judicial manner. Then, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman goes on from the charges of the Judges to the anonymous evidence. I am far from saying such information must necessarily be unreliable; but the right hon. Gentleman appeared to be under the impression that when a Minister or a Government has had certain information, and has satisfied himself upon it, he has nothing to do but to come down to this House and state that he has satisfied himself upon it, and thereupon obtain increased stringency of the law. Again, it appears to me that the right hon. Gentleman's Government have emancipated themselves from all regard for Parliamentary precedent and usage. There is an alternative. When they have got a very grave state of facts, either in Ireland or in a Colony, or in any portion of the country, it sometimes happened that it would be too great a responsibility for the Government to take upon itself the production of the names of all the persons who have been instrumental in establishing that state of facts. That I admit; but the course that is repeatedly taken, and which was taken by the Government, is to go to a Committee of this House, to lay before that Committee the facts and the names, and it is in the discretion of that Committee to call for further proceedings, and then for the Government to come to this House fortified with the judgment of that Committee formed from all quarters of the House. Why has that not been done? I decline to accept unanimous assurances that the right hon. Gentleman seems to think, for the first time, so far as I know, that this duty ought to be imposed upon Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman mentioned one pointed case of outrage, where the name was withheld. He mentioned one horrible case of an outrage—I am not sure whether the name was Hogan—an outrage upon a girl, where her hair was removed and pitch poured upon her head. It was a very bad and abominable outrage indeed. The right hon. Gentleman, speaking with perfect simplicity, appeared to think that removing of the hair and pouring pitch upon the head was a Nationalist invention. If he turns to his Irish history, he will find it was an invention of the Governors of Ireland. It was the practice of the soldiery and the yeomanry, in whose traditions some hon. Members of this House have declared their glory, in the unhappy and disgraceful period preceding the unhappy incorporating Union. The right hon. Gentleman quoted another case in which I do not know why the name was withheld—a case in which a tradesman had apologized to the National League for having unwarily dealt with some persons that he ought not to have dealt with. Why should the gentleman's name be withheld? He had made good, apparently, his footing with the National League. He had what is called eaten humble pie. He had nothing to fear. If the gentleman's name was withheld, it was withheld for fear he should be Boycotted from very different quarters, and I must presume that there were possibly very good reasons for withholding the name. Then the right hon. Gentleman proceeded to the point that referred to Boycotting. Some hon. Gentlemen, under an irregular impulse, which it is always best to endeavour to suppress, cried out—"How many of those Boycotted were Protestant Home Rulers?" The right hon. Gentleman sneeringly said—"Is there such a thing as a Protestant Home Ruler outside of this House?" Yes, Sir; there are Protestant Home Rulers, and there are Protestant Home Rulers who have come under the lash, not for their Protestantism, but for their Home Rule, notwithstanding their Protestantism. The cases are very rare in which Boycotting does anything worse—and God knows that is bad enough—than to deprive people of the sole and honourable means of subsistence—some persons on account simply of disapproval of their political opinions. Well, Sir, I had a case made known to me a few weeks ago, when I was called upon to subscribe for the support of a Protestant clergyman who was turned out of his curacy in the Disestablished Church for this reason—and no other reason was even alleged—that he was a Protestant Home Ruler. The right hon. Gentleman, if he will examine a little, will find that there are not only Protestant Home Rulers, of whom he may hear in the course of time, but likewise that there are Protestant Home Rulers who have suffered for their opinion. Well, Sir, I come to the subject of Boycotting. That really, I think —as far as I can pretend to give an opinion—is pretty well the foundation of the case of the right hon. Gentleman, because the rest—and particularly this part of it—is either of a very insufficient character, or is so shrouded by the anonymous, that it is hardly fit that ordinary Members of Parliament should intrude into all that mystery and reserve. But the Boycotting can be dealt with, and the figures which the right hon. Gentleman was good enough to give us across the Table at our request showed that there was a total of 836 persons in Ireland either partially or totally Boycotted. Now, that, I am not wrong in saying, appears to be a principal part—aye, the principal part—of the foundation for this extreme demand which is made on the House. Well, Sir, has that ever happened before? What happened in October, 1885? In October, 1885, there were partially Boycotted 714, totally Boycotted 165—total, 879. The Government have 836 cases, and they form a conclusive ground for changing the law in respect of liberty. But in 1885 there were 879 such cases, and they formed no such ground at that date, which was a month before the General Election. And not only so, but Lord Salisbury grappled with the fact that there existed this large number of Boycotted cases, and he boldly contended that they formed no ground for legislation, and it could not be dealt with by legislation. I ask any Member of the Government who may next enter into this debate to show us the difference between the Boycotting which prevailed in 1885, and which was inaccessible to legislation, and the Boycotting of 1887, which not only is to be accessible to legislation, but which is to form a main —the main—ground of the demand of the Government for it. Beyond this, what have we from the right hon. Gentleman except generalities? Intimidation! "Intimidation," says a Member of the Government, in citing from a high authority —namely, Sir Redvers Buller—"Intimidation is rampant." Yes, Sir; but there is a point of the utmost importance to be observed in order to form a sound and thorough comprehension of what is meant by intimidation. Exclusive dealing, which in the general sense of Boycotting—at any rate, of Boycotting until it assumes an extravagant form—is divided by a thin and fine line from intimidation. Intimidation is a word which requires much sifting and scrutiny before you can judge what value attaches to it as the demand for extra-Constitutional legislation. Now, Sir, there is one mark which attaches to intimidation in its grosser forms which is infallible, and it is this—that intimidation, wherever it is real and prompted by an illegal spirit, breaks out into crime. In 1881, when we had to propose a great measure of coercion with respect to which my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James) says—and, I believe, rightly—that it was an ill-chosen measure, our proposition was this—that as to the agitation which was then carried on —whether we were right or wrong is not now the question—the question is what allegation we made and what allegation was generally accepted by the House and felt to be generally necessary for our case—the allegation we made was that "wherever agitation went crime dogged its footsteps," and through the country crime increased, and not only intimidation, but intimidation with crime and outrage, were becoming rife through the land in proportion as the movement then going on, being generally against the payment of rent, gained head. But now the admission has been generally made by men giving a cordial and almost a delighted support to Her Majesty's Government, though some of them sit on this side of the House—the admission has been made that the intimidation which now prevails in Ireland is generally detached from crime and outrage. Do not let them suppose that I am endeavouring to entrap them in quoting that admission or assertion of theirs. Nothing of the kind. It is no dangerous admission or assertion made by them. It lies upon the face of the facts, because, whereas the essential condition of any legitimate or tolerable application for increased stringency of the Criminal Law is that you should prove the exceptional predominance and prevalence of outrage, it is admitted and undeniable that at this moment there is no such exceptional prevalence and predominance of outrage. Therefore, Sir, this intimidation, which is said to be rampant, and which I have no doubt in certain parts of the country is rampant —and it is a very painful circumstance that it should be rampant against any individuals in the exercise of their legal rights—this intimidation seems to be generally separated from outrage. That is the last ground upon which the Government appears to place this extraordinary demand for what they describe as an extreme measure. We have, therefore, this extraordinary state of things—that the demand is now made upon the reformed House of Commons to do what, in my opinion, would be one of the most formidable breaches of trust that any popular Assembly possibly could perpetrate. [*Laughter.*] I wish I could qualify these words. I do not dispute the taste of hon. Gentlemen. On the contrary, I assure them that if I use a word beyond the necessities of the case, as I measure it, I would gladly soften it. In my opinion, it would be one of the very gravest and grossest breaches of trust which a Representative Assembly could commit to relax the conditions upon which alone it has been its rule to give a sanction to changes in the Criminal Law for the purpose of giving it increased stringency against a particular portion of Her Majesty's subjects. No case, Sir, in my judgment, has been made for such a demand; there has not even been, I might almost say, the shadow of a case presented to satisfy the ordinary conditions; while on the other side there has been a candid confession of the absence of evidence. The right hon. Gentleman has been good enough to give us a sketch of the provisions of the Bill. It was no fault of his if a person like myself, or many other persons, felt it impossible to form any accurate estimate of the exact value and extent of each provision as he delivered it. We shall certainly ask for full opportunity to examine its provisions when they come before us in proper shape. We shall ask and press reasonable requests to the effect that, in the first place, every Representative of an Irish constituency, and, in the second place, that every Representative of a constituency on this side of the water who values liberty himself, or who knows that it is valued by those who sent him here, shall have full and ample opportunity to sift and scrutinize and weigh the extreme proposals which the Government have felt it their duty to place now before us. I shall not, therfore, go into particulars now; but I shall mention only two points. The first is, that Irish trials in the cases defined by the right hon. Gentleman are to be held in London before English juries. There have been some sinister predictions in the newspapers of a proposal of this kind. I thought it my duty to the Government not to believe them. I did not believe that I should live to see the day when a proposal so wounding, so insulting, so exasperating, so utterly in contrast with the whole of the lessons that Irish history teaches, would have been submitted to a British House of Commons. We shall have an opportunity of saying more upon this when we have the exact definition before us. But this I know—that as trial by jury means trial by our Peers—trial by those who are as nearly as possible in the same circumstances—according to the favourite language of modern science, in the same environment—with ourselves, that this is the exact reversal of that fundamental principle that, whenever we do interfere with trial by jury, it is above all things to be desired that you should avoid the capital and fatal error of sacrificing the substance while you keep the form; and that nothing can be worse than to give to the Irishman the cruel and the grievous wound that such a proposal as this would inflict. I never saw such a blow struck at the national feeling of Ireland. I may be quite wrong—I have no authority on the subject—but the impression I derive from anything I know about the history of Ireland is that an Irishman feels and suffers more profoundly in his nationality than in any other thing whatever. I might, perhaps, quote a famous sentiment of Mr. O'Connell to illustrate in some degree my meaning. Mr. O'Connell, as a very young man of perhaps 25, took an active part and gained his first distinction as an opponent, together with the bulk of the Irish Bar—much to their honour—of the measures of the British Government and a portion of the ascendancy party in enforcing the Legislative Union of Ireland against the will of the nation. Mr. O'Connell, as a lawyer, defended his social position, but he solemnly and publicly declared that whatever his own individual position might be, he would far rather see the whole of the Penal Laws restored by an Irish Parliament and an Irish authority, and continue to subsist in Ireland under Irish authority, than he would see a law pass for the purpose of giving away the national existence of Ireland by the extinction of her Parliament exercising that authority. I think if hon. Gentlemen opposite would construe that declaration in the spirit in which it was uttered, they would feel that there was a great deal of nobleness in that declaration, and that the country where it was uttered was a country where national feeling was, above all things, within the limits of safety and prudence, to be considered. Well, Sir, before people condemn that excess of national feeling, if it be an excess, they should recollect how the whole history of Ireland has gone to intensify that feeling, and to make it the governor and the regulator of every other feeling that the people possessed. If that be so, I must own I do not believe—I make no complaint, imputation, or insinuation against the honest intention with which this provision has been devised—but I claim my right to form an impartial estimate of it. I do not believe the wit of man could possibly have devised a scheme more likely to aggravate every mischief that exists in Ireland, and to stimulate rather than allay the anti-national feeling of hatred and enmity. I would say one word with reference to the provision, or rather absence of provision, as to duration. The right hon. Gentleman humorously said that the absence of limitation of time compensated for the presence of the limitation of space—a limit, however, apparently entirely dependent on the will of the right hon. Gentleman and the Lord Lieutenant.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I used the words "intentional limitation."

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Well, Sir, that I must say makes one's blood run cold. It is, indeed, a very sad state of things that, after 87 years of the working of the Legislative Union—which was, no doubt, intended by many even of those who used such incredibly guilty means to effect it, to be the harbinger and certain seal of peace and goodwill between the two countries—after three generations of men have gone on cobbling at the business of coercion, struggling as we could—with good intentions, no doubt, and here and there with intervals when the sun of liberty might rise unclouded upon Ireland—at least for a time—that now, what we proposed as a temporary remedy is to become a rule for the subsistence of the Irish people. The brand of inferiority is to be placed on them for ever, and they, in the full enjoyment of a representative system, are expected to acquiesce in, to welcome, and to embrace and hug the law which salutes them with such favours. In fact, Sir, this is the first attempt, as far as I know, to work into an affirmative proposition the contrary to that which has often been delivered in this House as a negative proposition. I believe it was the right hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) who first declared that "force is no remedy," and that expression has in our hearts and sentiments obtained an almost universal acceptance. We are now called upon to entirely reverse the order of our thoughts and proceedings on this point, and to support a Bill which embodies the affirmation of the principle that force is a remedy. This Bill, it will not be denied, is a complex one when considered as a Bill to amend the Criminal Law. All I heard of it last night—although I must not presume to speak as a lawyer—shows that it is a complex measure, and I need not apologize to the House for not endeavouring to enter further into its provisions, such as in their general character they have been described by the Government. Now, by whom are these provisions to be carried into law? We have been challenged by the Government to give our support to the Advisers of the Crown, and it becomes necessary to examine the question not only of what is the action, but who are to be the agents. Of course, the principal agents must be that Party which constitutes the largest—by much the largest—of the four minorities into which this House is divided. They will supply numerically the strength of the Divisions by which the matter will be decided. What is their responsibility? In my opinion, a very great responsibility, and yet, at the same time, as far as I can judge, it is far from being the greatest. If this Bill is to be carried, I cannot despair that some of these Gentlemen—I cannot but cherish the hope that if they think the case produced by the Government requires coercive provisions, would yet shrink from some portions at least of this Bill, especially from such unheard-of portions as those to which I have lately referred. I cherish that hope, and will not abandon it, because I have seen this—that Gentlemen of Conservative opinions go to Ireland with upright English minds, and warm English hearts, though perhaps with a bias against Ireland, to a certain extent, but with no hopeless obstinate, incurable determination or hatred against her, who after a little time have come to change their views as to Ireland. I see that Lord Carnarvon goes to Ireland and adopts opinions to an extent not precisely defined in favour of Irish national aspirations. Sir Robert Hamilton went to Ireland, and for all I know he may have been as good a Tory when he went there as any. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Does any Gentleman happen to know the contrary? This I can say—because I had a hand in sending him there—that he was not sent there as a Liberal, and I never heard in my life that he was a Liberal. He certainly had not the smallest element of a Home Ruler in him; but he appeared to me a fair average of the best men in the British Civil Service, with, probably, no strong political opinions. Undoubtedly, all his prepossessions were adverse to Home Rule, but his mind and his heart were open, and I should like to know what hon. Gentlemen think were his sentiments when he left? Well, Sir, I will not speak of other distinguished gentlemen; but I know there are other distinguished gentlemen in the Irish Civil Service at this moment who have gone to Ireland and undertaken practical work in connection with the Land Act, and who have, in consequence, become profoundly convinced that it is for the interest of us all to grant Ireland self-government in her local affairs. I therefore do not despair of hon. Gentlemen opposite, nor will I presume to censure too severely the course taken by any hon. Gentleman; but they must not censure me unless they can reply to me, because I am unable to give the vote which is going to be given or has been given by the right hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Birmingham, by the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington), by my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain), and by my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bury (Sir Henry James). Can I be wrong—can I deserve censure—when these great and tried friends of liberty give such votes? I am not now saying whether the vote is right or wrong. I am not censuring them—I am asking where the responsibility lies? Numerically, it so happens that although the highly distinguished section of Liberal politicians to whom I refer is the smallest of the four minorities in this House, although the Party opposite is far more numerous, yet, numerically, the cast is in their hands, but I do not look so much to the numerical as at the moral responsibility. The moral responsibility, in my opinion, covers and shields the action of hon. Gentlemen opposite in a manner such as their best hopes could scarcely have conceived. It cannot be supposed that I am questioning the responsibility of others, or that I am questioning the title and the duty of my noble Friend and my right hon. Friends and others to whom I have referred, to act according to their own consciences in this matter. They have done that. They have a perfect right to do it. We all have a right to give application to our principles, to speak for ourselves, to determine for ourselves, and act for ourselves in this most solemn matter; and to make it a matter of personal complaint and petty bickerings is, in my opinion, morally wrong and intellectually futile, childish, and contemptible. Each Gentleman retains his right of full, free agency as much at least as we do, though he could hardly do more, and his whole duty is to act according as his judgment and conscience dictates. Still, they cannot conceal from themselves that the question is whether they, and none but they, shall lay upon Ireland the yoke that is now proposed to lay upon her—without production of any of the proofs which it has been the uniform practice of Parliament to require of the Government to supply—to lay upon Ireland the yoke which would, certainly, be questioned. If I speak thus freely of others, I do not flinch from admitting the responsibility that rests upon those who sit in this portion of the House, and who form the great bulk of the Liberal Party, even in the House, and still more in the country. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland has made an appeal to us. He said—

> "I have said this was the first time that a Coercion Bill had ever been proposed without the assent of the two great Parties in this House."

The citation of the right hon. Gentleman was quite inaccurate, and the correction that I hastily supplied—though I think it was a great improvement on the citation—was not as accurate as it might have been. I have the power of reference. I never said, as far as I know, anything about the case of all Coercion Bills in that respect. What I think I said was, that I spoke of the case of the Bill of 1881; and I said my experience was, and my language was at the time, that we never could have carried that Bill except by the general concurrence, amounting nearly to unanimity, of the whole of the Members for Great Britain. The right hon. Gentleman, standing upon that ground, says that it has been the uniform practice of the Opposition of the day to support the proposals of the Ministry of the day in the main and in the bulk. I suppose he meant, and without reference to details, for increasing the stringency of the Criminal Law. The right hon. Gentleman is quite inaccurate, and has not borne in mind the Bill of 1846, on which not only did the bulk of the regular Opposition refuse to support the Ministry of the day, but they actually threw out the Ministry of the day upon it. But the question is, whether we are, in consequence of the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman, to abandon the attitude which we have taken up? Now, Sir, in my opinion, we cannot abandon it, and we cannot abandon it for the sake of the Government, as well as for our own sakes. A great change has been brought about in Ireland; and I believe it is quite true that, though grave social evils may remain in the country, and must remain until serious legislative changes take place and have had time to work, yet the position assumed by the bulk of the Liberal Party in this country has had the effect of applying a singular and a most valuable mitigation of what might have been a most intolerable evil. You must recollect what is involved in these two propositions, both of which seem to be undisputed—one, that in other times intimidation, exclusive dealing, and strong public feeling against the administrators and the administration of the law habitually broke out into extensive outrage, telling its own tale in the statistics of the country; but now this had ceased, and although there is a stronger feeling than there ever was, and a more national feeling than there ever was, with which the Government feel themselves in conflict, yet it is admitted, although that national feeling is charged as the author of combination and intimidation, that, as a rule, this combination and intimidation, whether mischievous or otherwise—that I am not going to discuss—has not broken out into outrage. Have hon. Gentlemen opposite—have the present Government—considered the enormous change that has been brought about in Ireland as regards legality and as regards abstinence from violence and crime? If not, let them listen to the case which I will give them in less than a minute as it stood in 1832, and why I quoted it in a speech last year on the 8th April. In 1832 the homicides in Ireland were 248; in 1885 they were 65.

The cases of attempts to kill, happily unfulfilled, in 1832 were 209; in 1885 they were 37. Serious offences of all other kinds in 1832 were 6,014; in 1885 they were 1,057. The total number of the whole criminal offences in Ireland in 1832 were 14,000; in 1885 they were 2,682. It is right to bear in mind that there has been a large diminution of population since 1832. On account of that diminution, reduce the offences in 1832 to bring about a corresponding reduction from 14,000 odd to 10,000; and the case stands thus—that the whole criminal offences in Ireland upon the same population in the course of these 53 years had diminished to one-fourth of what these were. It is under these circumstances when you find your difficulty in your way—and I do not for a moment diminish or extenuate the difficulty — that an extreme measure in restraint of liberty, and in augmentation of the stringency of the Criminal Law, first offers itself to your judgment and to your hands. Why is it that this has been the case? It has been because, in a certain sense—I am sorry to say a very qualified and partial sense, in a very chequered sense—the process of relief has been sadly intermittent. This period since 1832 has been the first period that any, even of the most sanguine and the mildest Judges of Ireland, have been accustomed to recognize as the period of reparation or improvement in British legislation. I heard an hon. Gentleman the other day, in an animated speech, say—"Surely we have a long period of atonement and reconciliation." That was a speech made from that side of the House—"atonement and reconciliation" —and the language from that side of the House. What have been the "atonement and reconciliation?" Measures which your conscience has always compelled you to denounce. Such has been the general effect even during the whole of that long period of very partial measures of benevolence, very partial forms of amended procedure, on the part of the Imperial Parliament. Now, since the General Election of 1885, since the deliberate Constitutional declaration of the voice of Ireland, since the judgment of the bulk of the Liberal Party was passed upon that application, to the effect that it was safe and just and ought to be complied with, the attitude of the people of Ireland has been removed from crime and outrage in a degree never before known. Why has there been this severance between intimidation and the natural consequences of intimidation? Why have you totally failed to make good the proof which, in all other applications for coercive legislation, has been made in abundance before the House? Because the Irish people know that they had here a large, if an insufficiently large, body of men who had deliberately adopted their interests as the interests of the Nation and the Empire, and were ready to abide by them to the last. Consequently, Sir, in my view, if we were to accede to the appeals made by the Members of the Government and to adopt their language, we should do them no good; we should not only do ourselves, but them also, an infinity of harm; and I believe their first effect would be and must be a retrogression of the Irish people in the great social progress that they have, happily, made, an increase of the space they have yet to traverse before they arrive at a thoroughly satisfactory conclusion and a decided return towards a condition of things which, I rejoice to say, through well-meant, even if partial efforts, has in great part passed away. We have upon us, in my opinion, a very great responsibility, because although we are a minority—and it is not the minority, but the majority which prevails—undoubtedly, I grant that the numerical strength which we give to the opposition to this Bill renders it a more formidable opposition, and I will not affect the humility of denying. I believe it will carry very considerable—possibly more than very considerable—weight with large portions of the people of this country. I have a duty as well as owning responsibility for others. I do exactly the same for myself and for all those who may be at all disposed to claim partnership with me or to give me the slightest portion of their confidence, and I say for myself and for any of them who allow me to ask for them we have a power—greater or smaller—but a real power to assist the Irish people and to commend their case to the people of this country; but it is a power which depends upon their moderation and their legality. So long as we continue to find that the action we pursue has had the effect of depriving the Government of those materials of criminal statistics which in all other cases the Government have produced in order to obtain more stringent legislation; so long as we find that our course powerfully tends to produce this restraint of crime, so long, undoubtedly, we shall be bound and shall rejoice to see others persevering in it; and I trust that—be we few or many—and I believe we are many, and we shall be more —[*cheers*]—and I believe that that belief of mine is shared by many men—not by all men—shared by many men who do not concur in our opinions. With that belief we certainly, as I hope, shall resist this deplorable proposal, and shall still remain convinced that in resisting it, and in serving the cause of Ireland, we are still more essentially and effectually serving the cause of Britain and its world-wide Empire.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Sir, the Government are not unaware of the immense responsibility which is placed upon them by the Bill they are now introducing; nor are they unaware of the degree to which their difficulties will be increased by the fact that the regular Opposition will do their utmost to defeat it. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, in his eloquent peroration, spoke of the assistance which was rendered to the Executive Government, by the fact that a large portion of the Liberal Party are now united to the National League, and of the restraints which are in consequence imposed.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE (Edinburgh, Mid Lothian): I did not say that. I think, Sir, it was a slip of the tongue on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. I said nothing of a union between the Liberal Party and the National League.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I am much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman. I then understand that there is no "union" now between the Liberal Party and the National League; but I listened, I cannot say with what anxiety, to hear from the ex-Prime Minister some words condemning the action of the National League, which has substituted its own authority for the authority of the Queen throughout Ireland. I listened, however, in vain. I did not hear a single expression fall from his lips which would seem to condemn any of the processes of the National League. The right hon. Gentleman does not object to that statement; but, having regard to what has fallen from hon. Members opposite, who either belong to the National League, or support it, I think we are entitled to know on what ground the right hon. Gentleman can say that there is no union between the Liberal Party and the National League. Or is his contradiction confined to this—that he did not say in so many words that there is such union? In some significant words which fell from him in his last sentences the right hon. Gentleman spoke of legality and moderation in connection with the present attitude of Irish Nationalists. "Legality and moderation" were his words, and I rejoice that there is so much of these qualities now displayed in the cause of the National League—whatever that cause may be — and that the League is not stained with outrage at the present time to the same extent as, even to judge from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, it has been stained in the past. But does not the right hon. Gentleman think that if there has been a cessation of outrages it has been in deference to the union which the Nationalists have established with the bulk of the Liberal Party? Sir, we rejoice in the fact; but I ask hon. Members on both sides of the House to consider the danger which is involved in the admission made by the right hon. Gentleman. Supposing that the union between the Liberal Party and the Members of the Irish Nationalist Party should not continue so cordial as at present, and supposing the present Government to be expelled from power, and the Liberal Party to return to power, and supposing that they could not meet the views of the Nationalist Party from Ireland, where, then, would be these influences of moderation and legality? The right hon. Gentleman and his Party would then be at the mercy of the National League. [*Cheers and ironical laughter from the Home Rule Members.*] I am deducing this from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. It is a most dangerous argument to insist on—that the absence of outrage in Ireland is simply due to a temporary alliance of Parties. I do not wish to say this by way of offence, but as a warning of danger. In the opening of the speech of the right hon. Member for Mid

Lothian he found fault with the Government because we had urged this matter on. He again alluded to the reproach he brought against us a few days ago —that we were suppressing individual initiative. I admit the argument of the right hon. Gentleman is perfectly conclusive, if, as he seems to consider, the present state of Ireland is not so dangerous to every interest, both of Ireland and of Great Britain, as it appears to Her Majesty's Government. Her Majesty's Government, and the great majority of the people of Great Britain believe, to use a strong but not at all an exaggerated expression, that the state of Ireland is intolerable, and that, notwithstanding the statistics to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred, the Government would be disgraced which allowed with equanimity such a state of things to continue. We do not desire to leave Ireland in its present condition; we desire to amend the law for the punishment of criminals, and then to proceed with our other Irish legislation. Several times the right hon. Gentleman spoke of this Bill as our remedy. We have stated over and over again that this Bill is not our remedy, and that we look to land legislation to be the true remedy for Ireland. We wish to pass this Bill, in order to frustrate designs which would render nugatory our measures of land legislation. The right hon. Gentleman said this Bill stood gaunt and bare. But that is not so. This measure is only part of a much larger programme, and its first object is to secure that liberty to all classes of the people without which all remedial measures would be futile. [*Ironical cheers and laughter from the Home Rule Benches.*] Hon. Members below the Gangway were extremely sensitive to the slightest interruption of the right hon. Gentleman. I admit that, after his 50 years' experience and service, he is entitled to special consideration; but at the same time hon. Gentlemen will, I hope, recognize that others are also entitled to a patient hearing. I was stating that our intentions are misrepresented, for this measure is intended to restore to Ireland that liberty which is necessary to the success of any reforms whatever. Let me now allude to a point on which the Chief Secretary had much to say, but which was scarcely referred to by the right hon. Gentleman—namely, to the amount of intimidation. The right hon. Gentleman laid great stress on statistics, and seemed to argue that, unless it could be shown by statistics, that outrages had largely increased, there was no ground for interference. The contention of the Government is of a different character. We say that the very triumph of lawlessness explains the fact that outrages are not so numerous as they have sometimes been. The National League has established its supremacy in almost every corner of Ireland, and hence the absence of those crimes which before were committed for the purpose of attaining this end. Does it strike hon. Gentlemen opposite, as a great advance in civilization, that the National League is at present supreme in the greater part of the country? The right hon. Gentleman has made no allusion to the tyranny of the League. He spoke of the moderation and legality of the League.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I said nothing of the kind. I said nothing of the moderation and legality of the League.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Well, what did the right hon. Gentleman say? I must press him for an answer.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I said that our power to assist the Irish people depended on their moderation and legality.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Not upon the moderation and legality of the League?

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: Upon the moderation and legality of the Leaders of the Irish people.

Mr. GOSCHEN: If the right hon. Gentleman is relying upon the moderation of the Leaders of the Irish people, does he rely upon moderation such as we heard in the speech of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon)? Before I deal with the particular point urged by the right hon. Gentleman, let me say a word upon the manner in which reforms are frustrated at present by the National League. I wish to establish this point, because it disposes of the assertion that we say that force is the only remedy. What we say is that it is necessary in order that reforms may have free play that the administration of justice should once more be made effectual. But I have to answer the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman and the inquiries which he has made. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman was as conspicuous for what was not in it as for that which it contained. I did not hear one word from the right hon. Gentleman in condemnation of the violent language with which the Judges of the Irish Bench were yesterday assailed — Judges most of whom had been appointed by the right hon. Gentleman himself. They were appointed by the right hon. Gentleman, and never in this House has anyone listened to a more violent attack on those Judges than we heard from one who is now engaged in the same campaign as the right hon. Gentleman, and whose speech was enthusiastically cheered by the right hon. Gentleman. Have we come to this —that the Judicial Bench in Ireland is not to be supported, or that attacks on its occupants may be passed over in silence by ex-Prime Ministers and ex-Ministers? I hope that before this debate closes we may have some expression of regret which may show the people of Ireland that however anxious hon. Members opposite are to redress their grievances they do not share in that view of the Irish Bench which is proclaimed aloud by their allies—I fear in such a manner as greatly to increase the difficulties with which that Bench has to deal. I was about to speak of free sale and the manner in which it is frustrated by the League. Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that because free sale illustrates the value of the tenancy at the existing rent, therefore that boon, which was given to the Irish tenants by Parliament, is at the present time being withheld by the action of the League, lest it should be seen that there are men willing to take tenancies at existing rents? Are hon. Members not aware of this? Let me tell them of an instance. There were two tenants who were hopelessly insolvent, who owed rents for three or four years. [*Interruption.*] [Mr. T. M. HEALY: Quote the case.] I am speaking of what I know. I know this from the landlord to whom it happened. [*Ironical Home Rule laughter.*] Then do hon. Members not believe the landlord? [An hon. MEMBER: Very often not.] I am sorry once more to have to turn away from my point; but this is so suggestive that I would put it to the House and to the general public. No evidence seems to be accepted by hon. Members below the Gangway unless it comes from their own friends. They do not accept the evidence of landlords; I do not think they accept the evidence of agents; they do not accept the evidence of the police, of Government officials, of Judges, of anybody connected with the Executive Government, or of gentlemen who write to Members of this House. I should like to know whose evidence they do believe? [*Laughter and interruption.*] Hon. Members below the Gangway will remember that we are not speaking exclusively to convince them — indeed, it would be a hopeless task—but to put our case before the British public; and the British public will know, and hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Bench will know, whether it is right to disregard the evidence of magistrates, of police inspectors, of landlords, and of agents, and only to accept the evidence of those who are connected with the National League. That is the essence of the demand that is made. If any speaker says that he has heard anything from policemen or magistrates, or anybody not connected with the League, there is a loud peal of laughter from hon. Members opposite. We may understand what it means in this House; but it is not so easily understood outside the House. At all events, let us establish this point in this most important debate—that there are truthful men in Ireland even outside the circles of the National League. I must ask the House to excuse me this long, but I think not entirely unnecessary, digression. I was about to relate the case of two tenants who were three or four years in arrear, and were hopelessly insolvent. The landlord offered one of them £100, and the other £80, for the goodwill of the land, and to excuse the whole of the arrears, if they would leave their farms. No; they would not do so. The parish priest was communicated with, and he made this remark to the landlord—"If you were to offer £1,000 they would not dare to accept your offer. The League forbids it." Is not that coercion? What would be the good of our introducing a measure to assist the tenants if the National League interfered to frustrate it in the manner in which they are now frustrating free sale? Under the tyranny to which they are at present subjected the tenants can on no conditions accept the terms offered to them either by the landlords or by the Government, in any form that is repugnant to the demands of the National League. I have spoken of the way in which attempts are made to coerce the tenants. I will now pass to the point on which my right hon. Friend dwelt so much—namely, the statistics of crime; and I will again repeat what I said the other day with respect to the Motion of my right hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. John Morley). They simply look at those crimes which can be put into statistics; and, if I understand aright the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, then, in his opinion, Ireland may to-day be in as disturbed a state as possible, the whole law may be set aside, the National League reign supreme and interfere with every department of civil life, may be the absolute ruler of the land, and may ruin the prosperity of the country, and cause farms to lie waste; but if there is no rising barometer of crime, then the Government is to stand helplessly by, the administration of justice is not to be carried out, and we are to do nothing. That has not always been the view of the right hon. Gentleman himself. What did the right hon. Gentleman say with regard to this? He used these words—

> "What we have founded ourselves upon has been, above all things, the failure of the administration of justice. It is the administration of justice which constitutes the safety of the private individual, and which is the true guarantee both of rights and liberties."

Well, is the administration of justice satisfactory at the present moment? That is a point which the country will understand, and it is one which was not dealt with by one sentence of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman cannot say that justice is administered and criminals are punished, but only that there are not sufficient statistics to enable him to judge of the present condition of Ireland. The House will remember the quotations read to it by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland as to the charges of the Judges in Ireland. They were alluded to in his speech by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and he spoke as if the Judges had gone out of their way in describing this state of things.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: In the quotations.

MR. GOSCHEN: I do not quite understand the distinction.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: I know nothing but the quotations. The quotations were given as proofs of a case, and I dealt with them as such.

MR. GOSCHEN: As the quotations stood does the right hon. Gentleman think that the Judges had gone beyond their province, and that what they say ought not to be considered because they were not dealing with any specific crimes which had been committed? I do not think I am misrepresenting the right hon. Gentleman; but it strikes me, though I may very possibly be wrong, that the people of England will not think that these quotations from the charges of the Irish Judges can be set aside on the technical ground that they were not at the time passing judicial sentences on any particular crime. I wish to call attention to this once more; I admit that it is part of our case. My right hon. Friend says we have made out no case. I think we have made out this case, that the administration of justice is breaking down in many parts of Ireland, and is breaking down by the confession of almost every party in Ireland. Hon. Members below the Gangway are not satisfied with the administration of justice, and certainly those who are concerned in the detection and prevention of crime are not satisfied. Here is what Mr. Justice O'Brien says, and the ex-Prime Minister will not repudiate his great authority—

> "No person can say that this country is not worse off in every respect than it was five years ago—worse off in obedience to the law"—

so says the Judge; but, as it was not put in tabular form, it is of no account, and we have got no Parliamentary case—

> "worse off in the peace and security of life and property."

Did I hear an hon. Member say this was monstrous? Is it monstrous of a Judge to have said it, or is it monstrous on my part to produce it, or is it not monstrous to disregard it? Here is what Judge Lawson says—

> "The country is in a state of great disorganization. The present state of things approaches as near to a revolt and a rebellion against authority as anything short of civil war could be."

Are we to disregard those charges of the Irish Judges? Are we to put them aside as evidence which is not worthy of the consideration of the House? Is it not notorious that for months and months past the administration of justice in Ireland has been attended with such difficulties that criminals have escaped, and that at three Assizes—I call the attention of the House particularly to this point — the prosecution in many serious cases has had to be abandoned because it was the opinion both of the Judge and the prosecuting counsel that with the existing panel of jurors no verdicts could possibly be obtained? I am, I trust, fulfilling that part of the duty which is imposed upon the Government by my right hon. Friend; I am endeavouring to establish whether or not there is a case for a Bill of this kind. But more than that, when the attempt is made to bring prisoners to justice, is it not a fact that jurors are in fear of their lives? And on this point let me deal with one of the weightiest parts of the indictment of my right hon. Friend. He spoke of that very strong clause in our Bill which changes the venue from Ireland and enables prisoners to be brought from Ireland to England. I admit the gravity of the change. I admit the gravity of any situation in which you have to interfere with that which has been the glory and the privilege of Great Britain and Ireland—namely, the jury system; but I ask in justice that it should be considered at the present moment not only what is the position of the jury system in Ireland and what is the position of the jurors. The secrecy of the ballot-box has been invaded. The names of the jurors who are in favour of a particular verdict are published. Is not that a violation of Constitutional practice? My right hon. Friend said, and said justly, that this was a great change which we were introducing; but is it not a great change that individual jurors should be held up to the odium of their fellow-countrymen for having done what their oaths demanded? We are deeply convinced that it is our bounden duty to do two things — to endeavour to bring criminals to justice, and at the same time not to impose a duty almost too heavy to bear upon the loyal and the law-abiding portion of Her Majesty's subjects in Ireland. Men say—"Why not continue to try by jury in Ireland?" But do they think of the perils to which the jurors in Ireland are exposed, having to choose very often between the safety of their persons and obedience to their oaths? I say it is our duty to endeavour to recognize this state of things, and if we can to remedy it. We have no business, because we may have some objections on Constitutional grounds, to neglect the consideration of the safety of jurors in Ireland. I invite a reply to that point. It is one which has been passed entirely by in the debate. What other securities can be found than those which are placed in the Bill? There was a provision in the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) for a Special Commission; but the Irish Judges were said to have objected to it. I think that jurors in Ireland, if consulted, would also object to the terrible duty which they have to perform; but they are not asked! They have to be summoned and put in the jury-box, and it is with a view to their security as much as anything else that we feel it our duty to propose a clause like this. But I should also allude to the challenge made by my right hon. Friend with regard to the administration of justice in Ireland. Let me say this—that in the year 1886, out of 1,056 cases of agrarian offences, there were only 64 convictions; out of six cases of murder there was only one conviction; out of 16 cases of firing at the person there was only one conviction.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): What year?

MR. GOSCHEN: 1886.

MR. PARNELL (Cork): How many of those were threatening letters?

MR. GOSCHEN: I have not got the exact number of threatening letters.

MR. PARNELL: Of the 1,056?

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): How many were in Belfast?

MR. GOSCHEN: All these matters can be exposed in the debate. Here are some statistics which I commend to the representatives of the unofficial tribunals in Ireland, where conviction and punishment follow very swiftly upon the commission of any offence—Out of 21 burglaries there were only four convictions; out of 43 cases of firing into dwellings there were no convictions;

and out of 73 cases of maiming cattle there were no convictions.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): How many people were made amenable?

Mr. GOSCHEN: I doubt whether that inquiry is relevant. And yet right hon. Gentlemen say there is no case for strengthening the Criminal Law. Is that a state of things which can continue, or which it is right should be continued? Well, then, the right hon. Gentleman dealt with Boycotting and intimidation, and I really must complain respectfully of one method of my right hon. Friend. I do not think that during the whole course of his eloquent speech he devoted two sentences to denouncing any of those evils which at present are rampant in Ireland. His method was this—the old, and what I thought almost exploded, method of showing that other persons behave as badly.

Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside): He did denounce them.

Mr. GOSCHEN: The enthusiastic supporter of my right hon. Friend keeps up a running commentary on my speech as I proceed; but perhaps he will remember the case of the girls who had pitch poured upon their heads.

Dr. TANNER: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman—[*Cries of* "Order!"] I rise to a point of Order. I want to ask the right hon. Gentleman, as the Member for the constituency in which the outrage is alleged to have been committed, what is his authority for the statement which I have had repudiated? I was told——

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman can state that later in the debate.

Dr. TANNER: I ask the right hon. Gentleman's authority for the statement, and let him give it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. GOSCHEN: The hon. Gentleman has not listened to what I was saying. I was not charging this against the National League, or against the constituency which the hon. Gentleman represents, but it was spoken of by the ex-Prime Minister. I do not know whether he called it an outrage or not; but when the right hon. Gentleman finds a case like that, instead of simply condemning it, he quotes some parallel case. I am sorry I have caused this interruption, but I wanted to call attention to the method of the right hon. Gentleman. Not only did he employ it in this particular case, but in another which I will presently mention. While speaking of this case the right hon. Gentleman could not resist putting forward, as if by way of palliation, some similar outrage committed even as much as 100 years ago. Now, what can be the effect—I do not want to say what is the intention—of that process of reasoning? It seems intended to supply an argument to ignorant people in Ireland and to enable them to say—"Oh! the same thing was done before by the Saxon." It was the same when the right hon. Gentleman came to Boycotting. When he came to Boycotting he said that, he too, could tell of cases of Boycotting. Does that make the matter better?

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I was answering simply the speech of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and I made the cases a present to the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. GOSCHEN: The right hon. Gentleman was answering the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who complained of Boycotting, by citing cases where there had been Boycotting on the other side. That is precisely the method of which, with all due respect, I complain. [An hon. Member: Can it be denied?] I do not know whether it can. It is possibly true; but the effect which is produced upon ignorant people by that process of reasoning is that Boycotting is a kind of legitimate weapon. I should have liked to have heard a full repudiation by my right hon. Friend of the practice of Boycotting, which no one could express in more eloquent words than he could have done.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: So I did. [*Cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. GOSCHEN: Well, if the right hon. Gentleman says he did condemn the practice, I can only say that he did so with something less than his usual eloquence.

Mr. W. E. GLADSTONE: I condemned it strongly.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I am glad to hear that the right hon. Gentleman has strongly condemned it; and I only wish that he could have condemned it without reference to the *tu quoque* argument. I desire, however, to ask a question of the right hon. Gentleman. Is Boycotting a subject with which he would recommend the House of Commons to deal, and, if not, why not? In this connection he used again the *tu quoque* argument, quoting from Lord Salisbury a passage to the effect that it was impossible to deal with Boycotting; but I think if I am not much mistaken that the right hon. Gentleman himself had clauses prepared to deal with this practice of Boycotting. I presume they were effective clauses, and possibly those clauses have assisted us in constructing this Bill which is to take away their liberties from the people of Ireland. Is the crime of Boycotting one that ought to be dealt with and can it be dealt with by Parliament? Boycotting is a most serious problem, and if it is not solved it will be ruinous to the happiness and prosperity of far more than the 800 or 900 people whose miseries seemed so little to impress the right hon. Gentleman that he was able to speak of them as a small number, and one not justifying the introduction of stringent measures in this Bill. But can Boycotting be dealt with? It is a remarkable fact that the number of cases of Boycotting at the end of the June quarter of 1885 was 300. The Crimes Act lapsed in August. [*Ironical Opposition cheers.*] Yes; and it appears to me to have been a great mistake. [*Ironical laughter and cheers.*] I am not thinking of the controversial part of this question. [*Laughter and cheers.*] I admit that the right hon. Gentleman is perfectly within his right to hurl these taunts at us; but in this crisis of the state of Ireland is it the best way of dealing with this question to hurl recrimination to and fro? Well, there were 300 Boycotting cases at the end of the June quarter. The Crimes Act lapsed in August, and at the end of September the Boycotting cases had reached 850; and, therefore, though the Crimes Act was not primarily aimed at Boycotting, the effect of the removal of the Crimes Act was that Boycotting immediately grew to threefold its previous amount. I leave the House to draw its own conclusion. It seems to me to be possible to deal with Boycotting. But is this system of Boycotting only the comparatively innocent Trade Union system, perhaps of exclusive dealing, or anything of that kind? I know that my right hon. Friend has read the Blue Book which has been presented to us; and when he says there have been no documents presented to Parliament to justify our case, he seems to me to forget that there is a large volume of evidence which has been placed in the hands of hon. Members. Well, looking only at the cases in the Blue Book, to what extent has not this system been carried so as to reach the utmost limits of immorality and barbarism? Can hon. Members have read, without emotion and horror, the case recorded where the father of a dying child was not allowed to buy the necessaries for that dying child because he had been Boycotted?

MR. T. M. HEALY: Where is this? [*Interruption and cries of* "Order!"]

MR. GOSCHEN: I will give chapter and verse if you want. The case will be found in the Blue Book, Question No. 24,507, and this is the extract—"Burke's child——

MR. T. M. HEALY: What Burke? There are plenty of Burkes in Ireland. [*Cries of* "Order!"]

MR. GOSCHEN: The hon. and learned Member should not scoff at the idea of this man's dying child. The case occurred in Wexford, not one of the most disturbed districts in Ireland. If the hon. and learned Gentleman wishes to refer to it, he will find it at page 24,507 in the Blue Book—"Burke's child became ill of bowel complaint. The coarse yellow meal produced this disease."

MR. T. M. HEALY: Rack-rents; rack-rents! [*Home Rule cheers, and Ministerial cries of* "Order!" *and* "Name him!"]

MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. and learned Member for North Longford not to interrupt so continuously.

MR. GOSCHEN: Rack-rents! This man had taken a farm which he was anxious to have. It was not rack-rents. He was willing to pay his rent, and he had the means of buying better things for his child; but the edict had gone forth from the National League that he was to be Boycotted, and he could not get the necessaries for his dying child. Talk of rack-rents! There are barbarities inflicted on the people of Ireland by others than the landlords, and evictions, too, are imposed on them by the inexorable decrees of that League to which hon. Members opposite belong. But let me continue the quotation—

> "He went to a neighbouring country shop to get white bread or white flour—I forget which—for his sick child, and he was refused

> it. They would not give it to him. That sick child was refused what was necessary for its health on account of Burke's crime of taking an evicted farm."

That is in the Blue Book that has been read by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, for he quoted from it, and yet things such as these did not seem to have attracted his attention. Again—

> "Last summer—a younger child still, one lately born—the local midwife refused to attend the wife in her confinement, and she was delivered by the aid of an old woman, who was the only person to do anything for her. The child that was lately born became ill and died. Not a person came to the wake. He could get no person to dig the grave for him, and he had to dig the grave himself for his own child. That is a thing unheard of in this country. It occurred last summer, and things are going on in the same way exactly."

These things do not appear in those tabulated statistics which are to form part of our case for the Bill. Hundreds of cases of this kind may be produced by all those who have evidence of what is going on in Ireland at this time. It is this class of misery with which you have to deal, and not only shots in the legs or violence to the person. Much of this misery is endured, not by landlords, but by labourers, and by tenant farmers themselves, and it cannot be tabulated by the police; but, at the same time, it is an outrage on the civilization of this country which we ought to attempt to put down. Careful study of the Blue Book will show many cases of the kind I have quoted—how a starving labourer is hired by a man and has to leave at the end of the week because his employer is obnoxious to the League. A system of this kind is destructive to the industry of Ireland, destructive to her agriculture, to her commercial prosperity; it is sapping the foundations of society. It is this state of things with which we have to deal, and with which we intend to deal. It has been our lot to have to propose stringent measures, I admit; but we have to grapple with an organization of which the measures are far more stringent than ours. We have to grapple with a tyranny which is established in every portion of Ireland. The late Prime Minister and his Colleagues do not seem conscious what a degradation it is to the Government of this country—of which they were the ornaments—that it should have to retreat in almost every portion of Ireland before the tribunals of the hon. Member for Cork. It is a disgrace to this country that it should have to do so. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian spoke of a breach of trust. He said this House would be committing a breach of trust by passing measures of this kind. We, too, have a trust which has been placed in our hands; we think we have a trust to which it is our bounden duty to be true. A trust has been placed in our hands by the people of the country, and the breach of trust will indeed be great if we cannot restore the authority of the Queen and the law, respect for the Judges, and liberty to all classes of Her Majesty's subjects in Ireland.

MR. LAWRENCE GANE (Leeds, S ): I ask the attention of the House as the Representative of a constituency which contains no inconsiderable number of Irish electors, and a much larger number of English electors who heartily sympathize with their Irish fellow-subjects in their present struggle, and who, through me, will protest with all their power against the proposed measure. I have been struck in this, and preceding debates, with the marvellous respect of Ministerial speakers for law, and, simply, as law. No man in this House respects law more than I do. As an Englishman, I instinctively respect and obey the law; and as one of Her Majesty's counsel, I shall be the last man to say one word in support of any unjustifiable resistance to the law. It is not, however, sufficient to tell people there is a law which they must obey, unless that law can be shown to be based upon justice. It has been impressed on the House the other evening that law should be enforced everywhere against everyone, irrespective of the justice or injustice of the law. I do not admit that proposition. Even now, there are on the pages of the Statute Book many laws which no sane man would dream of endeavouring to enforce. It would be quite easy, as every lawyer knew, to cite such cases by the dozen—laws which, although they have not been repealed in the letter, are nevertheless practically repealed, and which no authority would be idiotic enough to attempt to enforce. During many years our Irish fellow-subjects have heard enough of laws; and unless laws are recommended to them, because of their inherent justice, the future will record failures as disastrous and humiliating as the past. Serious as this question is, I cannot forbear reminding the House of a prayer once uttered by one of the greatest preachers of his time, "O Lord," he said, during a great national crisis—

> "O Lord, grant that we may not despise our rulers, and O Lord, grant especially they may not act so that we shall have to."

I heartily pray that our Irish fellow-subjects may not despise the law, but I also pray that we in this House may see to it that the law is not such that they cannot help despising it. Bearing in mind that now, for the first time since the Union—for the first time, indeed in English history—the people of England, as distinct from the classes, have the settlement of this question in their own hands; I think it is worth while to ask whether this measure, introduced with such a flourish of trumpets, and for which we are asked to set aside the Business of the nation in its favour, is, in the faintest degree, likely or able to deal effectually with the mischief it is sought by it to cure. To judge by the speeches on the other side, and after hearing the description of its provisions as given by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour), one would have thought that a perfectly God-given measure was about to be introduced. It seemed to me, in listening to those speeches, that a measure nobler, more statesmanlike, and more practicable than any the House had ever seen was about to be introduced. Was ever a great promise followed by such a humiliating failure? It was thought we were to have a great, sovereign, everlasting principle of justice to solve this great problem—that, smaller measures having been tried, at last we were to have a new departure, which while startling us by its novelty, would nevertheless justify the innovation. What have we seen? Simply a Bill containing the old, bad, stale, hackneyed remedies for dealing with this Irish Question. The worst of these remedies have been selected here, and put together to solve this great problem. In Ireland there is, undoubtedly, wide-spread misery and disaffection. I cannot believe that this results from any peculiarity in the Irish character. I believe, as a great statesman has said, whose voice is not now often heard in this House, that not only is force no remedy, but that, wherever we find there is this discontent, the cause is generally to be found in misgovernment. It is the Business of the Government and of Parliament to try to discover the true cause of the discontent and the misery of Ireland, and then to bring to bear upon them remedies which will go to their very root. If the National League has been the means of lessening crime, the proper policy of a wise Government would be, not to stamp out the League, but to ascertain what is the secret of its power to stamp out crime, and to endeavour to copy it, and to use it on behalf of loyalty and good government everywhere. So long as the National League promotes loyalty and order, so long we ought to work with it; so long as the Government produce measures tending to reproduce crime, so long let them be resisted. I would rather have a National League, though proscribed by the Government, than have a Government vaunting its wisdom and encouraging crime by initiating exasperating measures on every hand. Would not a wiser policy be to ask what is the cause of Irish discontent and misery? and then to bring to bear upon those causes remedies which go to the root of them. When a house is on fire, we may silence the alarm-bell, but that will not put out the fire. Can any sane man suggest that the measure of the Chief Secretary is likely to produce either prosperity, loyalty, or happiness in Ireland? At whatever sacrifice of consistency, would it not have been better for the Government to set themselves to see what is the cause of Irish discontent, and to remove it? Can anyone dream of the measure of the Chief Secretary as a remedial or healing measure? Is there a single clause in it which will tend to make the most earnest Irishman earnest in the desire to see the two countries united in a real bond of union, or which appeals either to his head for his wisdom or to his heart for his generosity? Looking at the Bill, and the flourish of trumpets with which it was introduced, has there ever been more dismal or certain failure suggested than this? Even supposing the Bill does not pass, its very introduction on the part of the Government is enough to raise fierce and angry antagonism on the part of the Irish people. Instead of being remedial in its character, it is calculated to exasperate the Irish people, and drive them into acts of recrimination, of Boycotting, and of outrage. The condition of things in Ireland is such that people are perhaps led by very extreme men into unwise action. What does the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer amount to? It shows simply that both Parties, such is the condition of Ireland, are burnt when they come to deal with it. I am the last man to say one word in defence of any outrage, or any breach of the law; but it does not do for those who are guilty of Boycotting in one fashion, to blame harshly those who are guilty of Boycotting in another fashion. What we have to do is not to cast recriminations from side to side; but to ascertain what has led to Boycotting and to outrage, and to remove it. In spite of what may be said about and against some of the verdicts of the juries, no man can look back through the long years during which Englishmen were battling with their opponents for freedom—as our Irish friends are now doing—and not be thankful for trial by jury. In the world's history has there ever been a case in which a nation has so persistently, through long stretches of time, maintained an attitude of intense antagonism to the ruling power; of disloyalty, of discontent, and a condition of misery such as has marked the pathway of Irishmen, generation after generation, without there being a cause for it? It is surely not to the advantage of the Irish people to have their country torn by these dissensions. With an elder sister like England at her side, there may be an Ireland so free and so glorious, and which should stand in the world so strong and so noble, that any Irishman may well be pardoned if, instead of gloating over her distresses, he longed for that more glorious possibility. The other night we were told that those who supported the Amendment of the right hon. Member for Newcastle-on-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) were mad. I hope there is not one of us who will not be proud to be considered mad, if the other thing is to be accounted sanity. In the long run the so-called madmen amongst politicians and theologians have not had a bad time of it; for madmen and fanatics of yesterday become the heroes of to-day. Surely, the madness is on the part of those who give Ireland a voice, and now refuse to listen to that voice. In the wisdom of Parliament, Ireland was given an opportunity of expressing her opinion, and now, when she speaks through her 85 Representatives, I do not say the House ought to grant what she demands, but it ought, at all events, to treat her demands with as much respect and dignity as the demands of any section of English Members. I ask those who represent the Liberal Party to resist this measure with all their power. Has there been known in this House, for many years, a measure in such direct and humiliating antagonism to all the glorious traditions which have made the House of Commons famous? The wisdom, the statesmanship, and the patriotism of the Kingdom are supposed to be, in this House, concentrated on this great problem of Irish discontent and Irish misery. At least, those who long for a new departure have a right to say that there is not a single suggestion, not a latent idea, in this Bill which has not been tried again and again, and that in proportion to the extent that it has been tried has been its failure. Law is only deserving of respect when it is based upon justice and tempered with mercy; and the Bill before us will be found lacking in everything which can commend it to a Constitutional Assembly such as this.

Mr. AUSTIN (York, W. R., Osgoldcross): I must ask for the indulgence always extended to Members addressing the House for the first time. At this moment the attendance of hon. Members is very thin.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present, House counted, and 40 Members being present.

Mr. AUSTIN, continuing, my excuse for rising at this hour is that I have the honour of representing an English county constituency that contains many Irish voters, and as I have heard a great deal from right hon. Gentlemen opposite about the necessity for this measure, I have resolved at once to give a firm and unflinching opposition to this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in speaking of this Bill, spoke of it as being in the interests of liberty and freedom in Ireland. When the right hon. Gentleman was speaking I was reminded of the painful circumstance of the Revolution of 1792, and of the saying of Madame Roland, which I recommend to the right hon. Gentleman, "Oh, liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!" The right hon. Gentleman, in speaking of the state of Ireland, only carried us back for some four or five years. He spoke of the disorder that now reigns in the unfortunate country. But I will carry the right hon. Gentleman back in the history of Ireland to the beginning of this century. I would point out to him that the lawlessness, the crime, and the disorder now in Ireland are as nothing to what they were at that time, and the difficulties of the Government are as nothing to what they then were. Some 44 years ago, a statesman whose name was illustrious in the House, the late Sir Robert Peel, in assuming the reins of Government, said—"Ireland is a grave and a great difficulty;" and Ireland has continued down to this hour during this long period of time the great difficulty of our statesmen. It has wrecked Ministries; it has broken up Parties. During all those 75 years Ireland has been governed by coercion, and the Government declare that that system must still be pursued. The history of Ireland has not yet been written, and when it is dark will be the chronicle of the wrongs of that unfortunate country. The right hon. Gentleman, in referring to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), made the charge against him that he had made an attack upon Her Majesty's Judges. I fail to see or to recognize in the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman anything in the nature of an attack upon Her Majesty's Judges. What he did say was that they went behind their charges to matters which were not strictly within their province. I happen to know something of the public administration of justice, and it appears to me that they have gone beyond their province in those charges. It is a remarkable fact that Irishmen were prosperous and successful everywhere but in their own country. A contrast is sometimes drawn between the state of Scotland and that of Ireland, but the two countries have been very differently treated. To Scotland its own laws and its own Church has been continued without change, and Scotland has practically enjoyed Home Rule, for that which the bulk of the Scotch Members want is always done. The Government has no mandate from the English democracy in favour of this Bill, which puts the Irish people practically outside of the Constitution. If the Bill is carried, they will find themselves in a similar miserable condition of despair at its non-success as their Predecessors. No real remedy for the state of Ireland will be found until the national aspirations of the Irish people are gratified. The present policy of the Government is doomed to failure, for the rights of 5,000,000 of people cannot be permanently trampled under foot. Sooner or later this Parliament will have to legislate in harmony with the wishes of the Irish people, and thus bring about a real union between the two countries. I do not believe that there is any desire on the part of the Leaders or of the people of Ireland for separation. On the contrary, their national aspirations may, by wise statesmanship, be gratified, and at the same time turned to the strengthening of the Constitution of the United Kingdom.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Dublin Co., S.) said, he was glad, as an Irishman, to have an opportunity of expressing his sentiments on what he took to be the most iniquitous and uncalled-for measure ever laid before Parliament. He regretted that he had not the language at his command properly to stigmatize the measure; he could only say that if it were passed and carried into practical effect, his belief in the sense of fair play and justice to which Englishmen laid claim would be very much diminished, if not altogether dissipated. He had listened with attention to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), and he maintained that as had been well said during the course of the debate, the right hon. Gentleman had made out absolutely no case for the introduction of such a measure. They had been told, before the introduction of the Bill, that the facts he would lay before the House would abundantly justify the measure; but on yesterday evening the right hon. Gentleman had laid absolutely no facts before the House. It was true that the right hon. Gentleman had told them that the statistics of crime showed an increase since 1880; but he had quoted nothing to support that contention. The Government had been asked to lay on the Table of the House a Return showing the number of the outrages in 1881, and in the present year; but they had not seen their way to doing so. The right hon. Gentleman had quoted a number of anonymous authorities in support of the position he had taken up—authorities which had been concocted in Dublin Castle—and when asked to give names, he sheltered himself behind the very convenient subterfuge that the persons who gave the information would be likely to suffer at the hands of the National League were their names disclosed; but they had had no verification of the facts quoted. The case made out by the right hon. Gentleman was not such as would warrant Members of that House passing a measure which practically abrogated the liberties of the Irish people. Had Boycotting increased so very much? The evidence of Captain Plunkett before the Cowper Commission proved that Boycotting had been quite as strong in Ireland, and had extended over as wide an area at the time when the Crimes Act was in force as at the present moment. Then the right hon. Gentleman had made a great deal of capital out of the charges of the Judges at the recent Spring Assizes. He quoted portions of certain charges made on one or two occasions; but he very conveniently overlooked the fact that there were many other charges made by Irish Judges at the recent Spring Assizes which showed there was no need for a Coercion Act. At the Limerick Assizes, Mr. Justice O'Brien, in addressing the Grand Jury of the city, had told them that there was substantially no crime with which they had to deal; in Queen's County, Baron Dowse said that the state of the country was much as he had found to be the case in Carlow; and Mr. Justice Andrews had found Kildare on the whole very peaceable; in Roscommon, Mr. Justice Murphy had spoken of the small number of crimes requiring the attention of the Grand Jury; in Fermanagh, Chief Baron Palles had congratulated the Grand Jury on the peaceable condition of the county. In Down, Lord Justice Fitzgibbon, at Dundalk, had spoken of an absolute freedom from crime; and in Sligo, Judge Lawson; Chief Baron Palles, in Cavan; Baron Dowse, in North Tipperary; Chief Justice Morris, in Tyrone; and Baron Dowse, in Waterford, of which county he (Sir Thomas Esmonde) was High Sheriff, congratulated the Grand Juries on the peaceableness of all these counties. The Chief Secretary made the Charges of the Irish Judges the one fact he advanced in support of his Coercion Act; but he (Sir Thomas Esmonde) would say that, if any weight could possibly attach to the utterances of the Irish Judges, it should be allowed that the condition of Ireland at the present moment was one of the most absolute peaceableness. They were also told that Irish juries would not convict; but, if that were the case, it was not because they had not been well packed, and it was certainly not the fault of Dublin Castle, for, as things went now, the practice of jury-packing had been raised to a fine art. But though the House had been told that Irish Juries would not convict, they were given no proofs that juries were so remiss in the discharge of their duties. To his mind, the only juries who refused to convict, in the face of the clearest evidence, were the Orange juries of the North, and he could point out two cases in which the juries who refused to convict were supporters of the Government. Such was the case in connection with the murderers of the boy Curran, who was chased into the Alexandra Dock, at Belfast, by a mob of Orange rowdies and drowned. The case was tried eventually at Downpatrick, and one of the murderers was sentenced to seven years' penal servitude; while a number of those who were charged with participation in the atrocity were acquitted by a thoroughly loyal jury. Altogether, the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, and the case he put forward in support of his Bill, was the most extraordinary exposition of a preposterous case ever made in the House; it might be best described, in the right hon. Gentleman's own phrase, as a "filled up vacuum." He (Sir Thomas Esmonde) did not deny that there was crime in Ireland; but it only existed in one or two places, and he would point out that there was more crime in England in one month than in Ireland in 12 months. If a measure of that kind was to be passed for Ireland, a similar measure should be passed for England. The Government, however, did not ask for such a measure to be passed for England, because they knew that the English constituencies would not tolerate such an outrage on their Constitutional liberty. In Ireland there was a certain amount of crime, and a certain amount of lawlessness; but that lawlessness was, to a great extent, on the side of the Supporters of the Government; and, in any case, the lawlessness in Ireland was directly due to their action. Shortly after the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) made his speech in that House, in which he threatened the Irish Members with something stronger than batons, the Irish police, stirred, he supposed, by that speech, in one case certainly distinguished themselves in an extraordinary way. A number of police were engaged near Tralee, watching for Moonlighters. They were in ambush in the house of a farmer named King, and they stated that, during the night, a party of disguised men came for the purpose of Moonlighting. At any rate, the cry of "Moonlighters" was raised. They fired, and shortly afterwards a young man named Lenahan was found dying in the house of his employer. He was perfectly riddled with buckshot. He was a farm servant, in the employ of the farmer in whose house he died; and in his dying deposition he stated that he was standing at the door of the house when he was shot by the police; and yet this was one of those cases which figured in the pamphlets of the Loyal and Patriotic Union as a Moonlighting outrage. Another incident also came under his notice. A short time ago a party of emergency men were engaged in protecting Park House against nobody at all. These men, after drinking in a public-house, came out and fired off their revolvers in the gaiety of their hearts. They reported that they had been attacked; but the police discovered that none of the firearms possessed by the farmers of the district had been recently used; and it subsequently transpired that the emergency men had fired off their revolvers in a drunken spree. At a place called Portumna, a policeman named Hayes fired his rifle into the house of a farmer, the inmates of which narrowly escaped; and yet, for this offence, Hayes was only fined the small penalty of 10*s*. He would like to ask, if any person suspected of Nationalist principles had fired a shot into a neighbour's house, would he have been allowed to escape on the payment of a fine of 10*s*.? In another case, the emergency men employed on the Brooke estate in County Wexford, whilst in a state of intoxication, threatened to fire their revolvers at unarmed people, for which offence they were let off on payment of a small fine. Almost all these cases testified to the laxity which prevailed in allowing armed emergency men to go about the country, sometimes in a state of intoxication, to the terror and danger of the people. With regard to the evictions on the Shirley estate, there could be no doubt they were being carried out under circumstances of great brutality. In one case, in which a widow asked to be allowed to remain in the house, because her child was dying, the agent refused to accede to the request, on the ground that he obtained a decree two years ago; but the woman's husband died, and she took advantage of it. That was the way things were done in Ireland; and he would ask fair-minded men if that was not, in a great degree, an excuse for much of the lawlessness which followed evictions in Ireland. During the evictions which were carried out at Coolgreany, the police rushed on the people and batoned them indiscriminately, without the slightest provocation, seriously injuring many of them. Only for the intervention of the parish priest of the district, no doubt, bloodshed would have ensued. This case, of which so much had been made in debate in the House, and in which the conduct of the people in merely defending themselves against open attack had been paraded before the public as an example of the lawlessness prevailing in the country, owed its serious nature directly and solely to the action of the police, who had attacked the people without the slightest provocation. He could only say that the wonder was that there was not more crime in Ireland, considering the condition of things in that country, and considering the provocation which was offered to the people by the Supporters of Her Majesty's Government. But the fact remained that, except in a few counties, where the misery of the people was greatest, and where the demands of the landlords were most exorbitant, there was absolutely no crime at all. Moreover, where there was most disorder the people were disorganized and defenceless, and were neither members of the National League, nor had they adopted the Plan of Campaign; and by attacking the National League the Government were going the very best way to work to stimulate secret societies. Where the people refused to fulfil their obligations, it was because they were unable to do so, and where they combined in self-defence, it was because there was absolutely no alternative; and he held that where they had done so the landlords were mainly answerable. He would ask the attention of hon. Members to the rental of an estate in County Clare, where evictions were then being carried on.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must call the hon. Baronet's attention to the fact that he is wandering from the Question before the House.

Sir THOMAS ESMONDE said, he would bow to the ruling of the right hon. Gentleman. He was absolutely unable to realize how the Government could have the audacity to declare that the state of Ireland was unsatisfactory, considering the depressed condition of the agricultural industry; or that the attitude of the Irish people warranted coercion, considering the gravity of the crisis through which they were passing. The Government, like every other English Government, knew absolutely nothing of the country which they undertook to govern. But this Government had succeeded, better than any previous Government, in making plain the rottenness and viciousness of the system under which they lived in Ireland. He held the Government also greatly to blame for having scoffed at the warnings given them last Session by the Irish Members, who then pointed out the dangerous consequences that would attend the rejection of the Bill brought in by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) to meet the exceptional condition of Ireland in the grave crisis which was upon them. He asked, what stronger proof of the incapacity of the Ministry to govern Ireland Constitutionally could be given than the fact that they had thrown the Irish people on their own resources to maintain the peace of the country during the last few months, and forced them to adopt exceptional expedients to neutralize the endeavours of the Supporters of the Government to disturb public tranquillity. The Government had imprisoned Father Fahy because he declined to admit that he was guilty of an offence which he had never committed; while in Belfast rioters were allowed to go unpunished. The Government, in fact, had shown over and over again that they could not govern Ireland, and, what was more, that they did not know how to govern Ireland. Because the Irish people had refused to take the law from Proclamations, which were not worth the paper they were printed on, their meetings were suppressed, and the people were bludgeoned. Now, all that having failed of its purpose, the Government asked for additional power to carry out their policy of fomenting anarchy. He would very much like to know, did the Government wish to stir up rebellion in Ireland? If they did, they were going the very best way about it. At any rate, the Nationalist Members had done their duty in endeavouring to withstand a measure which they believed would have the most deplorable result; and if this measure was passed and carried into effect, he trusted the British public would lay the blame at the door of those who were responsible for the consequences—the Tory Government. He charged the Government with directly inciting the Irish people to break the law. He charged them with endeavouring to stir up bad blood in all parts of Ireland by a Bill which could only make confusion worse confounded. What good did the Government expect from this Bill? What good ever had come from coercion? They had been favoured with it ever since what was called the Legislative Union. What they wanted in Ireland was remedial, not coercive legislation — alleviation, not aggravation. Coercion would not pacify Ireland, or attach the Irish people to the Imperial connection under whatever form it might be employed. Coercion had never succeeded in crushing out the national spirit and aspirations of the Irish people, and never would succeed. They had tried to govern the Irish people for 87 years, but they had never submitted to their government. They could never remove Irish discontent until they had won the affections and fairly consulted the interests of the Irish people; until the claims of the Irish people were conceded—claims which the Irish people intended, one day or other, to enjoy. They declared—and always would declare—that Englishmen had no right, under Heaven, to govern them; and so long as Englishmen persisted in governing them against their will, and so long as they refused them the concession of those rights which they claimed as a nation, so long might Parliament count upon the disaffection and the hatred of a people who were designed by Providence to be the natural friends of England.

Colonel BRIDGEMAN (Bolton): Sir, the speakers who have addressed the House from the Opposition side have made no attempt to grapple with the arguments which have been adduced in support of the Bill. The hon. Baronet the Member for the Southern Division of the County of Dublin (Sir Thomas Esmonde), who has just sat down, only attempted, in the early part of his speech, to grapple with the question of the charges delivered by the Judges. He maintained that some of those charges do not show the existence of a large amount of crime. But the contention of the Government is, that it is only in particular parts of Ireland, and in certain counties, that there is serious disturbance. What answer, then, is it to say that in certain other counties there is less crime and less disturbance? Then, as to remedial measures, they constitute the chief proposals of the Government, as they did those of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone); but the right hon. Gentleman has not to-day helped us by making any suggestion with regard to the present Bill. All the right hon. Gentleman said was that the Government ought to begin with remedial measures, instead of which they are beginning with coercive measures. Surely, the right hon. Gentleman failed to observe the very important announcement made by the Government that remedial measures will, in fact, form the best part of their programme. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has stated most distinctly that the reason why Her Majesty's Government have commenced with coercive measures is because remedial measures would not be permitted to pass by the Home Rule Members opposite. I have only risen, Sir, for one purpose. It has been said that hon. Members on this side of the House have come here as the Representatives of the Irish landlords. That is not the fact. Anyone who takes the trouble to refer to *Dod's Parliamentary Companion* will see that the constituencies who have returned the majority of Members on this side of the House include among them all the large cities of the Kingdom—such as Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Hull, Leeds, Bradford, and Nottingham. Surely, it cannot be said that great and important towns like these have returned the Representatives of the Irish landlords. On the contrary, I think the Ministerial Members may claim to represent the Democracy of England with quite as much justice as the Opposition. We are accused of wishing to enforce coercion, in order to obtain the payment of impossible rents. If that were the object of this Bill, I would certainly oppose it as warmly as hon. Members on the other side of the House. What I wish to see is that Moonlighters are coerced, and that freedom is restored to the Irish tenants, labourers, shopkeepers, and jurymen. It is because I believe that the Government have that object in view that I shall support them, and I am satisfied that in doing so I shall have the cordial sanction and approval of my constituents.

Mr. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucestershire, Cirencester): I ask the indulgence of the House for a few moments while I try to explain the position which I, as a Liberal Unionist, take up on this question of coercion. I am opposed to coercion, root and branch; and I intend to oppose the measure of the Government by every Constitutional method which is open to me. It is very hard to separate myself from those with whom I have been in political alliance, and to lay myself open to the charge which has already been brought against me of being a deserter and a traitor; but feeling, as I do, that the policy of coercion is not merely a tactical blunder, but that it is absolutely contrary to the best interests of the Unionist cause, and fatal to the prospects of Liberal Unionism, I cannot refrain from speaking out and saying that I shall give my vote without the slightest hesitation on every occasion against coercion. I oppose coercion, not because of Election pledges, although that is one reason why I might very well oppose it; but I have always spoken against coercion as an old, a worn out, and a useless remedy, and I oppose it on the ground which I stated just now—because I am a Unionist. I have always held that the very essence and kernel of Unionism is to maintain this Parliament intact in its constitution, unquestioned in its supremacy over the whole Empire, and in no way, Sir, do I believe that we can so much endanger the supremacy of Parliament as by bringing home to the hearts and minds of Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen, that we have no way of meeting the Irish difficulty or of governing Ireland except the old and hateful policy of coercion, which has been tried so often, and never successfully; that we have learned nothing from the study of history; that Unionists have nothing to offer for the solution of this most difficult problem, but that resort to a worn out remedy, and that we can still do nothing but attempt to govern Ireland by methods absolutely contrary to the wishes and desires of the great majority of the Irish people. Sir, I know that no words of mine can influence the action of the Government, and induce them to draw back from the course upon which, no doubt after full deliberation, they have resolved upon entering. I feel still more sadly that no words of mine are likely to influence many of my brother Unionists, and to divert them from a course which is absolutely suicidal from their point of view. I speak with sadness, because I think they are throwing away a grand and glorious opportunity for the Unionist cause. They have got a great Unionist majority in the House, and God knows when we shall ever again have such a chance of settling once for all upon safe lines this Irish problem, which has so long puzzled our ablest statesmen, demoralized our Parliament, and is ever present as a danger to the Empire. It is because I am a Unionist, and feel the responsibility of allowing Unionist opportunities to slip away, that I regret the course which the Government have thought fit to enter upon. We all know what the cause of the disease in Ireland is, and why have we not the courage to aim straight at it? We cannot pretend we do not know what the disease is. We have only to look at the past history of Ireland to discover what it is. Earl Grey, in 1846, in weighty words, after enumerating the past Coercion Acts, objected to their renewal, and said—

> "Again, in 1846, we are called upon to renew the same policy. We must look further—we must look to the root of the evil—the state of the land, and the habits of the people in respect to the occupation of the land, are almost at the roots of the disorder."

Speaking of the evictions then going on, he denounced them thus—

> "That such things could take place were a disgrace to any civilized country."

Let me read the words of Lord John Russell, in the same year—

> "We have here the best evidence that can be procured"—

he might be speaking of such evidence as that contained in the Blue Book of Lord Cowper's Commission—

> "and all tell you that the possession of the land is that which makes the difference between existing and starving amongst the peasantry; and that, therefore, ejections out of their holdings are the cause of the violence and crime in Ireland."

I have no wish to weary the House; but there is one more quotation which I must give—a quotation from a speech of the great tribune of the people, the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright)—

> "It is in the eternal decrees of Providence that so long as the population of a country are prevented from the possibility of possessing any portion of their native soil by legal enactments and legal chicanery—then outrages should be committed, were they but as beacons and warnings to call the Legislature to a sense of the duties it owed to the country which it governed."

Our own Commission proves it. Anybody who has carefully studied that Blue Book will find quite enough to account for all the disorder and all the outrage we have in Ireland. And yet we do not try to go to the root of the evil, but go back to that old and crooked policy which we have tried so often, and which has always proved a failure. And there is another point which we must not forget. Every Member of this House knows what was said by the late lamented Mr. W. E. Forster—a man of thorough honesty and conviction. He said that these Crimes Acts—this exceptional legislation—was only aimed at "a handful of village ruffians." That idea has been exploded long ago. We all know now that the coercion proposed by

Her Majesty's Government is aimed at an organization which, rightly or wrongly, possesses the confidence of three-fourths of the people of Ireland. By coercion, we are not fighting "village ruffians," but an organization which, in the words of of Sir Redvers Buller, the people look to as their salvation. We ought never to have allowed any organization to stand to the people of Ireland in such a relation as that, and it would not have been so if we had only done our duty. What is going to be the result of this coercion? We can easily imprison 500 or 1,000 people; but how long are we to keep them in prison? And when the imprisoned men come out, will they not come out with ten times more influence than when they went in? Indeed, I do not know that imprisonment under a Crimes Act would not be the hall-mark and stamp of a man as fit to be a future Member of Parliament; and any priest who is sent to prison will come out fit, in the eyes of the Irish people, to be a Bishop. I have, on many a Unionist platform, declared that what has been stated by many of my Liberal Friends, who disagree with me on this subject, is untrue and false—namely, that there is no alternative and no middle course between coercion and Home Rule. We have denounced Home Rule, and we have declared that we would show how mistaken a policy it is, if a Unionist majority was returned to Parliament; that we would show the English people that we are as anxious as possible to give to Irishmen all fair and reasonable powers for governing themselves with regard to their own local affairs. That was our Unionist platform. We denounced coercion again and again. We went in for equal laws and equal liberties, and I, for one, decline to be divorced from the declarations which I made upon many platforms in the course of the Unionist campaign. What we are now asked to do is to make the laws unequal and to abridge the liberties of Irishmen. I maintain that it is a great blunder to suppose that all Irishmen, or that all so-called Nationalist Irishmen, hold extreme views. I know many Irishmen who support Nationalist candidates, and yet are very far from holding extreme Home Rule views. They say—"You have attempted for 87 years to govern Ireland by constant resort to coercive measures, and by exceptional legislation, and you have failed. You have now come reluctantly to the opinion that there is no way out of the difficulty—that English prejudices and English methods are so deeply-rooted and deeply-seated that there is no way out of the difficulty but Home Rule in some shape or other." These are not men who ought to be driven into extreme opposition. The Government will be wise if they would appeal, while there is yet time, to moderate Irish opinion. I do not mean that coercion, in some circumstances, may not become possible and even right, and I wish to guard myself against saying a word that may be supposed to cast a reflection upon the conscientious and honest views of hon. Gentlemen opposite. No doubt they have come to the conclusion that they are right. I hold that they are wrong, and I, for one, will never consent to try coercion until all other means have failed. There are only two ways of maintaining the Union. The one is by a patient continuance of legislative remedial measures, not forgetting that we have not been free from blame in the past, and that English Members owe a debt to the Irish people. That is one course; the other course is the old course of coercion and brute force, which, in the past, we have been so ready to try, and which has always failed, but which, nevertheless, we are now going to try again in circumstances absolutely unjustifiable. Of these two courses I will never consent to give my voice in favour of coercion until we have tried and exhausted the other expedient which goes to the root of the matter. Put that right which your own Commission has told you is wrong, and then, having done justice to Ireland and established wise and approved laws, you can command the complete adhesion and obedience of Irishmen to those laws. It is from this point of view, retaining my Unionism most thoroughly, that I am willing to grant to Ireland local self-government; but not Parliamentary independence. I am altogether opposed to coercion, and I shall give to the proposition of the Government all the opposition in my power.

Mr. W. HAYES FISHER (Fulham): The hon. Member who has just sat down may be justly described as neither fish, flesh, fowl, nor good red-herring. The hon. Member appears to think that he is invited to vote for what he calls coercion only. Now, I have studied the Blue Book as well as the hon. Member, and I find that, although remedial measures are prescribed for Ireland, the Blue Book tells me that before remedial measures could take effect it is absolutely necessary that measures for the restoration of law and order should be passed. The hon. Gentleman went on to say that the Bill of the Government has been introduced to suppress an organization which has won the hearts of the Irish people. Now, the real object of the Bill is to meet the case of the "village ruffians," which were described by the late Mr. W. E. Foster, and the aim of the measure is to meet the dastardly acts which have been committed by those "village ruffians" in Ireland. I should like to know, when Her Majesty's Government propose a Bill of this character, why they are not entitled to expect the support of the hon. Member who has just sat down? He tells us that he is opposed to coercion, root and branch; but, proceeding with his speech, it was not long before he came to the conclusion that he was not opposed to coercion, under every possible circumstance. I should like to put a case to him. Suppose, for instance, that the hon. Member dared to assume that the Plan of Campaign has been organized by men who, acting with the most perfect sincerity and honesty, have taken up the Plan of Campaign, solely for the purpose of forcing rack-renting landlords to give proper reductions to their tenants—suppose the hon. Member takes that view, then I can understand that he might refuse to any Government the power of meeting that Plan of Campaign, and the action of those who are endeavouring to enforce it; but suppose that in the ensuing winter, Her Majesty's Government have to confront this state of things—suppose that hon. Members sitting below the Gangway issue a No-Rent Manifesto or that the Catholic Church in Ireland, headed by Archbishop Croke, embark in an opposition to the payment of all taxes, would the hon. Member refuse to give any power to Her Majesty's Government to enable them to deal with such a state of things? Would the hon. Member be prepared to give perfect immunity to those who advocate either a No-Rent or a No-Tax Campaign throughout Ireland? If he says that he is not willing to give immunity to those who advocate such a programme, then I ask him if he is willing to grant the Government sufficient power in case such a programme is put forward next winter for dealing with it. I am afraid that I have not been able to discover much argument in the speech of the hon. Member, and if the House will permit me I will leave the remarks of the hon. Member and turn to the case which Her Majesty's Government have put forward in favour of the Bill. We have heard from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) that he has founded his case against the Bill, to a great extent, on the fact that the Government have put forward a totally inadequate and inefficient case for coercive measures. In 1881, the right hon. Gentleman stated that he attached very little importance to mere terrorism, but that there was abundant proof of the gravity of the crimes committed. That remark was made in answer to the very charge which he himself has brought against Her Majesty's Government on the present occasion—namely, that the Ministry are relying upon altogether insufficient evidence and inadequate statistics as to the amount of crime and outrage which exists in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman on that occasion told us that it was on such a case that the Government were entitled to demand coercive legislation for Ireland. So far as the Government rely upon the Blue Book, they rest as the right hon. Gentleman said he rested in 1881 "on the graver and not on the more trivial cases. [*Ironical cheers from the Home Rule Members.*] Yes; we rely, as he then said he relied—

> "upon the aggregate of those cases and the circumstances connected with them, upon the source from which these offences have sprung, upon the combinations by which they are supported; and it is upon the total failures of the administration of justice in the attempts to detect and punish crime, and not upon those selected items and units that we rest our case."

That is exactly our case; but we do not rest upon this case only, but upon the acknowledged existence of Boycotting and intimidation which prevails throughout Ireland. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say that he was very much surprised that because Her Majesty's Government, when they were in Office at the end of 1885, did not introduce a Coercion

Bill, that they should be prepared to introduce one in 1887. I dare say it may be that Her Majesty's Government are wiser than they were in 1885; but I do not think it lies in the mouth of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian to upbraid Her Majesty's Government for introducing a Bill providing for change of venue and special juries to meet the difficulties of the present situation, seeing that the right hon. Gentleman in 1885 was anxious to have those powers given to his own Government, as appears from a letter addressed to the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach). Does the right hon. Gentleman recollect what occurred in October, 1885? I have here a copy of the letter which he addressed to my right hon. Friend the late Chief Secretary for Ireland; and he states in that letter—

> "As to the clauses which might be generally termed procedure clauses, and the most important of which related to special juries, change of venue, and Boycotting, our opinion was not that they should be absolutely re-enacted, but that the Viceroy should have power to put them in force together, or separately, as and where he might see cause."

Those words were written on the 10th of October, 1885; and I want to know, when the Government of the right hon. Gentleman were prepared to bring forward a measure of that kind, what were the statistics as to crime and outrage at that time in Ireland? I know that whatever is quoted from this side of the House is almost certain to be contradicted on the other; but perhaps I may be allowed to quote a passage from a speech of one of the staunchest allies and supporters of the Government at that time—Lord Spencer. Speaking in another place on January 12th, 1886, Lord Spencer said—

> "In 1881, the number of cases of agrarian crime was 4,439; in 1882 the number was 3,433; while in 1884 the number was only 762; but should there be a fresh outbreak of agrarian crime, I believe we should not be able to depend upon the ordinary law or ordinary juries."

Lord Spencer pointed out that crime had been constantly going down; and he goes on to say that—

> "At the time we left Office (*i.e.*, in June, 1885), outrages had fallen to a very low ebb indeed. But the fact remained that it was only recently that those organizations had been broken up, and condign punishment had been meted out to the offenders."

We have had the figures in regard to Boycotting given to-night, and they show that at that time—1885—when the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian was in power, and wished to renew the special clauses of the Crimes Act relating to the offence of Boycotting, the figures of crime and outrage were very much below what they are at the present moment, and Boycotting was far less extensive. [*Cries of* "No!" *from the Home Rule Members, and* "Hear, hear!" *from the Ministerial Benches.*] Therefore, the proposal of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian to re-enact part of the Crimes Act in 1885 amply justifies the Government in taking the course which they have determined to take now. I admit, however, that I would not support the Government if their case were based solely upon the tabulated agrarian outrages. I support the Ministerial policy, because I know that injured persons in Ireland dare not give evidence against those who have injured them, that jurors dare not convict, and that, if jurors dare to convict, they dare not go about their ordinary business without being attended by as many policemen as used to attend the movements of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian has treated with ridicule the extracts read from the Judges' charges. I think it was hardly decent on the part of the right hon. Member to throw ridicule on the opinions of men whom he had himself raised to the Bench. We have heard what was the opinion of one Judge, who was Attorney General in the right hon. Gentleman's own Government. Why, if the opinions of that Gentleman were to be received as truthful when he was sitting on the Front Ministerial Bench, should he be treated as a liar now that he has been elevated to the Judicial Bench? I could give thousands of instances of the most cruel forms of outrage and intimidation. [*Home Rule cries of* "Give them!"] I will certainly do so. I have heard it denied, in the course of this debate, that Irishmen are persecuted because they refuse to join the National League. That has been distinctly laid down and reiterated over and over again by hon. Gentlemen who sit below the Gangway on the other side of the House. Now, I have seen myself the following notice, which, on the 16th of January last, was found posted on the gate of the Roman Catholic Chapel at Achonry, in the County of Sligo:—

> "Notice.
>
> "Beware of the undermentioned 'Shoneens' who would not become members of the Achonry branch of the National League for the year 1886."

Mr. T. M. HEALY: What is the name of the place?

Mr. W. HAYES FISHER: Achonry. I may have mispronounced it; but that does not alter the fact that the notice was posted as I have described. The notice itself was followed by 60 names; and it can be well understood what would happen to the persons thus specified. What actually did happen I will tell the House. Several of them paid next day, but an apology for their past apathy was demanded. I will give now instances of the treatment of men who have been Boycotted because they had paid their rents. This is a copy of a notice posted all over the district in which Lady Kingston's estates are situated—

> "Boycott! Boycott! Boycott!
>
> "Fellow-countrymen, be not deceived. Boycotting is not done away with. Strike now or never at everyone who assists Anne Kingston to recover oppressive rents, or who pays them. Boycott that disgrace to her sex, Anne Kingston, the grass widow, the hard-hearted. Boycott and rend the pig-headed representative of the Church Body. Boycott Maria O'Grady; Boycott Benson the insolent whelp. Strike at the outposts of the Castle; you know who they are.
>
> "Boycott! Boycott! Boycott!
>
> "Let others, too, take warning and beware of their fate, or their turn will surely come.
>
> "N.B.—John Coughlan, of Flemingstown, has paid his rent. Boycott him and his short horns and his dairy farms. Dairymen beware!"

Let me give the House another instance in connection with the Philipstown branch, King's County. It is contained in a cutting from *The Midland Tribune* (a Nationalist organ) in January last, which says—

> "The usual fortnightly meeting was held on Sunday, the Rev. J. Bergin, P.P., presided. A complaint was made that the farm at Ballyowen, surrendered by Mr. Thomas Smyth, of Kell, on account of it being rack-rented, was lately grabbed by a person named Rylands, from Rahue. It was resolved that the rule of the League relating to land-grabbing be strictly enforced, and that any member of the branch found to be in communication with any of the parties concerned will be expelled."

Let me mention the facts of the case. Smyth held a farm under Sir Edward Grogan in King's County. Thinking the rent too high he surrendered the farm to the landlord three years ago, since which date it has been derelict. The other day Rylands took this farm. In consequence of the action of the National League, he thought it best to offer Smyth £20. A meeting of the League was held, and, acting under its shadow, Smyth demanded £140. Threatening notices were posted with the result that Rylands has given up the farm, being afraid to go near the place. [An hon. Member: What was the date?] The 23rd of January, 1887. I will now give the House a still more cruel instance of Boycotting, and it relates to an individual whose name has very frequently been mentioned in this House—Father Fahy.

> "A meeting of the members of the Abbey district of the Woodford branch of the National League was held on the 6th of February, 1887, Father Fahy in the chair. Michael Larkin, secretary, Abbey branch, spoke of the herding of farms in the locality, and asked if those who held the situations would give them up, and said the people knew how to treat these people, if they did not do so, and if there was any herd present for him to come forward and give it up publicly, or if not they would smell hell. Michael Coen's wife came forward, and said they were herding a farm, and she would give it up if they promised her any support. Pat Maddox, herd to Mr. Lewis, said he was willing to give up, but that he had nine children, and if they gave him any support he did not want to work for Lewis. Father Fahy said he would give no guarantee. Martin Egan proposed a vote of thanks to Father Fahy, and in response Father Fahy said he called those herds who did not give up miserable wretches. Maddox then came up, and said he was willing to give up if they gave him out-door relief; but that he could not die by the ditch. Father Fahy said he would wash his hands of the like of him. Maddox was then groaned at. Richard Donahue, herd to Mr. Lewis, gave up to-day for fear, and he has been herding the farm for 35 years; and has no means except the workhouse. This old man, Richard Donahue, came to Mr. Lewis, and told him with tears in his eyes that he would be obliged to give up herding for him, as he considered his life would not be safe if he continued in his employment after Sunday's meeting."

Mr. T. C. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour): May I be permitted to ask whether the hon. Gentleman is quoting from a newspaper report of the proceedings, or from a report supplied by a police constable?

Mr. W. HAYES FISHER: I am quoting a report received from the Royal

Irish Constabulary, supplied, I believe, from short-hand notes of the proceedings. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *and laughter from the Home Rule Members.*] Allow me to remind hon. Members below the Gangway opposite what was held by the Government of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian in 1881 as to the accuracy and veracity of the Constabularly Reports. I think they will find that on more than one occasion the right hon. Gentleman defended the accuracy and veracity of those members of the Royal Irish Constabulary who supplied reports of meetings to the Government. I do not propose to weary the House by reading any more instances of Boycotting. I am quite certain of this that those who read the Irish papers, and study what is going on, must be convinced that a system of terrorism and tyranny is prevalent in Ireland, which it is the first duty of Her Majesty's Government to put down by every means in its power. If hon. Members opposite refuse to join in supporting—at all events, the Boycotting clauses of this Bill, and its main provisions—I shall judge only that they feel no sympathy with the Government in the heavy duty they are called upon to perform — that they refuse from purely Party and factious purposes, apart altogether from the question of Home Rule, to give those powers to Her Majesty's Government which are essential for the restoration of law and order, and they refuse to show practical sympathy with those who are suffering in the most cruel way, in Ireland, from tyranny and despotism. Will they shut their eyes and ears to the sights and cries that come from those who are the victims of abominable crimes, outrages, and cruelties in Ireland? I say that it is our bounden duty to endeavour to restore two-thirds of Ireland to the same position of peace and prosperity that now exists in Ulster among the other third of the population. No one can deny that while the greater portion of Ulster is prosperous and happy, and is enjoying the liberties and privileges of free men, the other portion of Ireland is under a cruel despotism, and to a large extent given over to anarchy. Our main end and object is to bring about such a state of things as may enable us to paint the other two-thirds of Ireland in the same colours as we are now able to paint Ulster, and to bring about a state of things which will secure that deeds which are regarded as heinous crimes in the sight of God and in the sight of Englishmen and Scotchmen shall come also to be regarded as crimes by the main body of the Irish people.

MR. NEVILLE (Liverpool, Exchange): I trust the House will extend to me its indulgence for a short time while I address it upon this question; because I do not think I should be doing my duty to those I represent if I were to give a silent vote upon the occasion of this Motion. Certainly, it is not my intention to trouble the House with more than a few remarks with regard to the present measure; and it seems to me that it will be more consistent with the position which I take up, if I meet the Motion, in the first instance, with a direct denial; because it is not the details of the measure to which I object, but it is the whole principle of coercion. My profound conviction is that this Bill is not the way to meet the evils now existing in Ireland; but the only way in which a cure can be found for them is by generously meeting the legitimate demands of the Irish people for a fair measure of self-government. I am not without a true and deep sympathy with the Irish people in their troubles and in their trials. I can honestly say that. But I have always approached this question more directly from an English point of view. It is not that I fear the worst that can be done by 3,000,000 or 4,000,000 people in Ireland, for I have not so poor an opinion of the strength of the Empire as to believe that any course the Irish people may be driven to take would seriously interfere with the maintenance of the Empire. But, at the same time, I cannot see without regret England, year after year and decade after decade, keeping up a running sore in her side, and with her small military strength, wilfully weakening herself by maintaining a state of things in Ireland which necessitates the keeping up of a considerable military force in that country. Again, I cannot see without serious apprehension thousands and tens of thousands of Irishmen leaving the shores of Ireland year after year, and going to America and to the Colonies, with their hearts filled with the deepest hatred against the

Imperial Government. That is one of the most serious aspects of the case from an Englishman's point of view. As I have already stated, I do not propose to deal with the details of this measure of coercion; but I may congratulate the Government on one of the features of the Bill which, as I understand it, appears to be an ingenious contrivance to enable the Government to maintain the organization of the Orangemen, whilst, at the same time, they are able to put down and crush the organization which is resorted to by the majority of the Irish people. Well, Sir, I do not find any fault with the Government because they propose to make the Bill a permanent measure. On the contrary, I am glad of it. I am glad that the Government, and those who think with them, should throw off the mask, and should no longer pretend that they have any intention of governing Ireland as a free people. But there is one provision which I miss in this proposed measure, and which I miss with considerable regret. It is this: I find in this measure no provision for the disenfranchisement of every Irish constituency, and I say that the omission of such a provision, in such a measure as this, is totally inconsistent with the scope and with the intention of the Bill. To leave to the Irish people nominally a free representation, while permanently depriving them of the rights of a free nation. To my mind, it is a shameless mockery; and to force a measure like this down the throats of the Irish people in opposition to the voices of the Representatives of the vast majority of the country, is, to my mind, the grossest insult any Government could possibly offer to any nation which had the slightest right or pretence to call itself free. Now, Sir, in the interests of my own country, I ask the Government—inasmuch as they appear to have finally made up their minds that they will govern Ireland utterly without regard to the feelings and wishes of the Irish people—I ask the Government to dismiss hon. Members below the Gangway from their attendance here, which can be of no possible benefit in the future, and which will undoubtedly be accompanied by very considerable inconvenience. The other night we were told from the opposite side of the House that the measure to be introduced was a measure dealing only with criminals; and, therefore, it was suggested that those who opposed it must be criminals, or connected with the criminal classes. That was a proposition which was very much cheered on the other side of the House; but, surely, it is a curious misapprehension. As far as I understand the law of England, and I take it that the law of Ireland can hardly be different in this respect, you do not try criminals. No man is a criminal in the eye of the law until he has been tried and convicted. You punish criminals; you try men who are accused of crime. It is a matter of the deepest concern to every honest man in the country that trial by jury shall be maintained. It is not a question affecting the criminal class, but a question affecting the freedom of the mass of the people. I have heard that considerable difference of opinion exists as to whether or not the Crimes Act of 1882 proved a success, and we have been told by hon. Members on this side of the House that that all depends on what you suppose it to have been intended for. Having regard to what it was intended for, they say that it did prove an undoubted success. Now, Sir, what did it effect? After it had been in operation for three years, according to Lord Spencer, it left the country in a worse state than that in which it found it? Was it that which the Crimes Act was intended for; because if it is the fact that it left the country in a worse condition than it found it—and, if it carried out the object for which it was intended—it must have been intended to leave Ireland in a worse state than it found it? If the intention of the present Bill is the same, I prophesy, with considerable confidence, that that expectation will be realized, and that, if ever this measure becomes law, it will leave Ireland in a vastly worse state than it finds it. We have been taunted with the fact that an alliance exists between Members of this side of the House and hon. Members below the Gangway. So far as we are all of us pursuing a policy which we believe to be demanded by justice, and to be in the interests of England, as well as in the interests of Ireland, I do not hesitate to say that it is an alliance, and I am not ashamed of it. But, except in that sense, I do not know what right any man in this House has to say that there is an alliance between the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian and any other Party in this House, except the general Liberal Party. The result of this so-called "alliance" has been shown to be a diminution of crime in Ireland, and we have been seriously warned by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that it is a very dangerous thing, and that we are incurring a serious responsibility; because there has been a diminution of crime in consequence of our action. I confess that that is an argument which I find very difficult to understand. I want to know in what way are the interests of this country, or in what way are the interests of Ireland, imperilled? The moment the Irish people find that there is some chance of getting justice from the English people, and from the British House of Commons—the immediate effect of that is to diminish crime and to induce them to resort to Constitutional measures for the expression of their desires. If that is the fact, if the removal of despair and the infusion of hope in the breasts of the Irish people is the result of our action, I want to know why hon. Members opposite should be alarmed, and I ask what danger is such a policy to result in? If we have done nothing else we are entitled to take credit for the fact that we have given hope to the Irish people, and the result of that hope has already been the diminution of crime. It would seem that the Government only care for a diminution of crime when it is brought about by a Coercion Act. From what they tell the House we might gather that a diminution of crime which comes from the spontaneous self-restraint of the Irish people is rather a thing to be blamed than praised. My objection to the proposed measure is this: I care not whether a case for coercion has been made out or not; but I am prepared to say that I will never vote for any measure of coercion until we have given a fair trial to the policy involved in meeting the fair demands of the Irish people. If you do that, if you give them a fair trial, and if you find crime and outrage continued in the country, then all I can say is that I will be ready to vote for any Coercion Act, however stringent—and the more stringent it is the better it will be able to meet the necessities of the case. But I do not intend to take that course until we have tried what self-government can do; because I am firmly convinced that that is the only remedy. Let us for a moment take the case of the Government. Do not they see that the worse they make out the condition of Ireland, the more they damage their own case; because the policy they propose to pursue is the very policy which has brought Ireland to the condition in which she now is? What Ireland is now she has been made by a policy of coercion, and if the only policy of the Government is to continue in the future the mistakes that have been made in the past the worse it is for their own policy, and for the course they now propose to pursue. I thank the House for the indulgence which it has accorded to me on the present occasion, and I will only say, in conclusion, that I, for one, am heartily sick of the policy of approaching the Irish people with a whip in one hand and a lump of sugar in the other. I would ask whether the experience of the last 86 years has not been enough to condemn our system of Government? If the Government are not satisfied with the experience of the past 86 years, let me ask them, as a matter of common sense, what will satisfy them? Must they go on for 1,800 years before they will become satisfied that no good can come from pursuing a policy which has so signally failed in the past? Let hon. Members seriously ask themselves what they can expect from a fresh measure of coercion, when measures of coercion in one form or another have been tried throughout the whole of the century, and have resulted in bringing about the state of things which exists at this moment in Ireland—a state of things which hon. Members on the other side have described as intolerable. Let me ask hon. Members on this side of the House to remember that undoubtedly, in the eyes of the people, when the history of the country comes to be written, it is they, and they alone, who will be held responsible for what has occurred? We have been told that the Unionists bar the way. I entirely agree they bar the way to Liberal progress and reform. They stand forward, no doubt, with honest intentions, as the champions of prejudice, class interests, and religious intolerance, and they bar the way to the reconciliation of the English and the Irish people. They bar the way to a settlement of this Irish Question which has for so long a time occupied the attention of the House, and been so disastrous in its results to the public interests. I ask hon. Members to consider whether the time has not now arrived for settling the question once and for all, and whether that settlement can possibly be arrived at by pressing forward such a measure as that which has been submitted to the House by Her Majesty's Government?

MR. F. W. MACLEAN (Oxford, Woodstock): Mr. Speaker, I cannot help thinking that the speech which my hon. Friend the Member for the Cirencester Division of Gloucestershire (Mr. Winterbotham) has addressed to the House this evening betrays a very wobbly frame of mind on the Irish Question. I should like to point out to him, and to the House, that the real question raised by this debate is whether Her Majesty's Government are to have an opportunity of bringing in measures for the maintenance of law and order in Ireland; or whether that maintenance of law and order in Ireland can only be obtained by the measure suggested by my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), which embodied the principle of Home Rule. It seems to me that in a very short time my right hon. Friend the Member for the Cirencester Division of Gloucester will find himself between two stools, and I think that a juncture like this is not a time when an opportunity ought to be given, or when there is any opening for what I may call a political wobbler. Well, now, after the clear and specific statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) I think the House will arrive at the conclusion that the time has come when it must definitely make up its mind as to whether or not it will give to Her Majesty's Government power to maintain law and order in Ireland. When we reflect upon what we have heard from the right hon. Gentleman as to the opinion of the Judges in Ireland, as to the difficulty there is in inducing jurors to perform their duty, and to comply with their oaths; when we ponder upon what we have heard as to that social scourge in Ireland, the system of Boycotting—I entertain very little doubt indeed that this House will arrive at the conclusion that the time has come when the law of the Crown must be held to be paramount, and not subservient to the law of the National League. The first objection that is taken to the proposal of the Government is that remedial measures ought to be brought in before coercion. Well, Sir, subject to what I will say in a moment as to the necessity, to my mind, of preserving, in the first place, law and order in Ireland, I certainly do agree to this extent with my hon. Friend the Member for the Cirencester Division of Gloucester, that Her Majesty's Government, considering the large power that they have, considering the support which they have upon the Benches opposite, and the support which they will certainly get from the very serried phalanx of the Liberal Unionists on these Benches, have a great opportunity of passing remedial measures for Ireland; and I tell the Government frankly that, while I intend to support—as I do intend to support—the Bill that is before the House, I do so in the belief and in the faith that in supporting that measure I am supporting a measure which is only paving the way for the introduction of remedial measures. It is not only in relation to remedial measures in connection with the land, in the direction of giving leaseholders the benefit of the Act of 1881, in doing away with dual ownership, and I hope in giving to local bodies a discretion in relation to evictions. It is not only in that direction that I think remedies are required; but I go still further, and I express the hope that the Government's remedial measures will go so far as to give at least a very wide measure of self-government to Ireland. My right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), in the brilliant speech which he made to-night, stated that the position on the Irish Question taken up by Liberal Unionists last year was, that there was a middle course between coercion on the one hand, and the scheme of Home Rule on the other. He said the Liberal Unionists are now to be put to the test. The Liberal Unionists have before now been put to the test, and I think it will be found that they will come up to the mark. We still say there is a middle course; but, while we adhere to that belief, we are equally and strongly of opinion that it is no use proceeding with remedial measures until we have established something like law and order in Ireland. Well, Sir, I heard from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian to-night that if the Government had, in the first instance, brought in remedial measures for Ireland, those remedial measures would, in all probability, have received the support of himself and of his Friends. Well, Sir, perhaps I am a little doubtful upon that point; but what I venture to impress upon the House is this—what opportunity has the right hon. Gentleman and his allies below the Gangway given the Government of bringing in remedial measures? When we look back to the debates on the Address, to the debates upon the Rules of Procedure and in Committee of Supply, and to the very interesting event of last Monday week—namely, the All-night Sitting, we may fairly ask does that look as if hon. Members are desirous of giving the Government an opportunity of bringing in their remedial measures? But, Sir, supposing the Government had brought in their remedial measures, how would they have been met? They would have been met at once by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian and his friends and supporters with the statement that such remedial measures were quite inadequate, and that there is only one remedial measure for Ireland—namely, the institution in Dublin of a Local Parliament with an Executive responsible to that particular Parliament. I think the country has pronounced upon that question. Now, it has been said by many speakers who have preceded me that no case has been made out for coercion. I listened with attention to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. A. J. Balfour), and, personally, I have arrived at the conclusion that at any rate there is a strong *primâ facie* case, which abundantly justifies the Government in coming to the House and asking for leave to introduce this measure. It seems to me that if hon. Gentlemen would only consult the Report of the Cowper Commission, without paying so much attention to individual points of the evidence, they would find that that Commission reported that there was at least a very strong *primâ facie* case for the interference of the House in giving increased powers to the Government for the maintenance of law and order in Ireland. In the course of this debate we have been told that there was, in 1882, a strong case—and a very much stronger case than the present—for the granting of exceptional powers to the Government of Ireland. That statement has been supported, not only by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, but by the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), and by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dumfries (Mr. Reid), the last of whom supported his argument by the reading of various extracts from the evidence given before the Cowper Commission, and especially from the evidence of General Buller. I venture to submit to the House that that is by no means a fair way of testing the question; but that the true way to test the question is to look at the evidence as a whole. Of course, when you have a mass of evidence like this, it is quite possible to pick out fragments of it which support your case, or which go against your case, as it may be. But if any admissions are wanted that the Government are justified in the policy they are pursuing, I would refer to the speech delivered last night by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Haddington (Mr. Haldane). He admitted, in the clearest terms, that the law of the National League was supreme in Ireland. Do you want any greater admission than that—that the Government are justified in the course they are pursuing? [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members laugh; but the hon. and learned Member for Haddington is a very strong supporter of them and of their policy, and this is what he said—

> "How were the Government going to substitute for the *de facto* Government of Ireland, which he should like to see, the *de jure* Government, a Government which should discharge its duties with the good will of the Irish people?"

If the Government wanted an admission from hon. Members who support the views of hon. Members below the Gangway, in justification of the course they have adopted, they could not obtain a more candid admission than that made by the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Haldane). But what is the real issue that is raised by this debate? It is whether the Government are to have an opportunity of bringing in this exceptional legislation for Ireland which they say at the present is the only remedy at hand; or whether, on the other hand, the view of hon. Members below the Gangway is the sounder view to take of the Irish Question; whether this repressive legislation should be adopted, or whether there should be granted what is generally called Home Rule for Ireland? That, Sir, is the real issue raised upon this occasion. It is impossible, having listened to the speeches of hon. Members, not to have been struck by the recantation of views which has characterized many of them. There was a recantation made by the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries, which was very straightforward and very honourable. The hon. and learned Gentleman said that in 1882 there was a case for coercion, and he voted for it; but he was very sorry he did, and he did so in ignorance. That was a statement which was loudly cheered by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. At any rate, as between the supporters of the Home Rule policy and the Liberal Unionists, there is this, at least, of advantage upon our side—we have nothing to recant; we have not recanted in the past, and we do not intend to recant in the future. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dumfries is not the only Member who has recanted his opinion in relation to Irish policy. There are many hon. Members who sit upon the Front Opposition Bench who very suddenly recanted their opinions last year in relation to Irish policy; they did not call it recantation, they found a softer word, something more soothing to their consciences—they called it the "finding of salvation." "Finding of salvation!" They might just as well talk about the finding of Moses. At any rate, the last Election showed very clearly that the constituencies did not all take the view that these right hon. Gentlemen had found political salvation, but seemed rather to think that they had found something the very reverse of political salvation. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian prophesied to-night that the views in favour of Home Rule are growing in the country. [*Home Rule cheers.*] Hon. Members cheer that prophecy; but I remember very well that in that most brilliant speech which the right hon. Gentleman made just before the Division which was so fatal to his Government, he ventured to prophesy. I remember his words very well, and I remember the action by which his words were accompanied. Standing by that Table, he pointed to the Opposition, and used this language—"The ebbing tide is with you, and the flowing tide is with us." [*Home Rule cheers.*] I am glad to find, Mr. Speaker, that those impressive words made as much effect upon hon. Members below the Gangway as they made upon myself; but, Mr. Speaker, I think hon. Members below the Gangway are cheering a little too soon. The last General Election has shown conclusively that the flowing tide has been with us, and that the right hon. Gentleman and his political Friends are being carried far out to sea upon the ebbing tide. But, Mr. Speaker, why do I refer to these recantations of these apparent inconsistencies? I refer to them for the purpose of calling the attention of the House to an observation made by the right hon. Gentleman the other night. The right hon. Gentleman said—if I caught his words accurately—that no Government had ever brought in, or, at any rate, had ever hoped to pass, what is popularly called a Coercion Bill when three-sevenths of the Members of the House of Commons were opposed to that measure. But how is it that three-sevenths of the House of Commons are opposed to this measure? It is by reason of the very sudden alliance which has been formed between the right hon. Gentleman and the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), and that alliance is entirely attributable to the recantation of view, and the absolute change of Irish policy which was so suddenly adopted by the right hon. Gentleman himself. Well, Sir, the other night my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dumfries made an attack upon the Liberal Unionists. He said the Liberal Unionists are the real fathers of this Bill. I am not in the secrets of the Leaders of the Liberal Unionists; but, so far as I am aware, I do not think there is any justification for that remark. I am, however, not going to shrink from any responsibility, if responsibility there be. If by Coercion Act, hon. Members mean an Act which is only necessary to enable Her Majesty's Government to carry on the government of Ireland, then I am satisfied that there is no Liberal Unionist who will shrink for a moment from the admission that the Liberal Unionists are responsible, and are only too proud to be responsible, for such a measure. But, Sir, it does not occur to me that the Liberal Unionists require any vindication in this House. The position and the policy of the Liberal Unionists was fully vindicated at the last General Election by the voice of the country. For what are the Government now asking? They are merely asking, as I understand, subject to an observation I will make in a moment as to some details of the measure—they are merely asking for power to maintain law and order in Ireland. What is the present condition of affairs? Can anybody doubt for a moment, after having read the evidence of the Report of the Cowper Commission, that there is not only outrage, but that there is disorder, and, in many districts, an absolute contempt for the law in Ireland? When we regard—as we must regard—the difficulty which is connected with the process of evicting in Ireland, when we think of the system of Boycotting and intimidation of jurymen, when we think of the language in use on platforms in Ireland, and what is much more to the point, when we think of the attitude which is now being assumed by the priesthood of Ireland, it does occur to me that the time has arrived when Her Majesty's Government ought to ask for powers to deal with what they consider a state of social disorder in Ireland. I am not going to trouble the House by reading any portion of the Report of the Cowper Commission. I assume that hon. Members have read that Report; I am quite sure that hon. Members below the Gangway have done so. Assuming that they have read that Report, and the portion of it which deals with the question of Boycotting and the question of combination, I am persuaded that they will have arrived at the conclusion that the Government are amply justified in the course they propose to pursue. Now, when the Government ask for these repressive powers, they are, of course, called Coercionists. An hon. Member, the other night, not only characterized the supporters of this Bill as Coercionists, but as Brummagem Straffords and bogus Castlereaghs. It seems to me that many hon. Members on this side of the House are suffering from Straffords and Castlereaghs on the brain. I am happy to say that the infection has not yet reached the Liberal Unionists, although I am bound to confess that I think my hon. Friend the Member for the Cirencester Division of Gloucestershire seems to be sickening for the complaint. The term coercion is an absolute misnomer, and I ask the House to consider who are the real coercionists in this matter; to my mind, and, I think, to the mind of anyone reading dispassionately the Report of the Cowper Commission, the real coercionists in this matter are the National League. [*Home Rule ironical cheers.*] Hon. Members cheer me ironically; but I do not hesitate to say that any combination that will not allow peaceable citizens and law-abiding people to go about their business without interference, is something very much like coercion indeed. What does the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) say? Last night he said that if this Bill be passed the people of Ireland would be slaves under it.

MR. DILLON (East Mayo): I rise to Order, Mr. Speaker. The hon. Member is putting into my mouth words I never used at all. I said the people of Ireland would be slaves if they submitted to this Bill peaceably.

MR. F. W. MACLEAN: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon, if I quoted his words wrongly, I do not, for a moment, wish to misinterpret the language he used; but it does not seem to make any difference in the argument I wish to submit to the House. The hon. Gentleman admits having said that, if the people of Ireland submitted to this Bill peaceably, they would be nothing but slaves. I venture to say that, at the present moment, many of the peasantry and tenantry of Ireland who are under the coercion of the National League are in little better position than that of slaves. The hon. Member for the Cirencester Division of Gloucestershire said—

> "No, that cannot be; for General Buller, in his evidence, said that the National League was the salvation of the people of Ireland."

But why? No one has ventured to explain why. The reason why the peasantry and tenantry of Ireland regard the action of the National League as the salvation of Ireland is that prominent Members of the League are always going about the country and instilling into the minds of the peasantry and tenantry that, if they will only support the League, they will get their rents very much reduced, and in a short time get their land for nothing. [Mr. MAC NEILL: Hear, hear!] An hon. Gentleman cries "Hear, hear!" I am very much obliged to him for the concession. That, I think, is not the language that hon. Members below the Gangway use in this House; but the language they use and the policy they propound here is very different to the language which is used by prominent members of the National League in the mountainous districts of Kerry and Clare. The National League has induced the peasantry and the tenantry of Ireland to arrive at the conclusion that the National League is their best friend, by trading upon the worst passions and the most assailable weakness of man—the greed and cupidity of human nature. I repeat that the real struggle upon which the House is entering is, whether the law of the Queen and of the country is to prevail over the unwritten law of the National League? I know I am only making use of a well-worn platitude. ["Hear, hear!"] Hon. Members have not heard it yet; they might, at any rate, be indulgent until they have heard the platitude. I know I only make use of a well-worn platitude when I say that the primary duty of a Government is to govern. If the Government have not the power to govern, I—and I think I speak for many Liberal Unionists—feel that such power ought to be given to them. There is an agitation, something very akin to a revolutionary agitation, going on in a very considerable portion of Ireland. A great deal has been said about the responsibility that will attach to various sections in this House if this measure be passed. I agree that there will be great responsibility upon the Government, upon their supporters, and a greater one, or, at any rate, as great a one, upon that Party in the House which is known as the Liberal Unionist; but I venture to think that a far greater responsibility will rest on the shoulders of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. For the first time during 50 years or more; for the first time during a great—and I admit it most frankly—a most eventful career—a career during which he has attained, in a great measure, the affection, if not the affection, at any rate the veneration of his countrymen—for the first time the right hon. Gentleman refuses to support Her Majesty's Government when they come to this House and say we require increased facilities for carrying on the Government of the Queen. Well, Mr. Speaker, why is this? Because he has, according to his views, his own panacea to remedy the ills of Ireland. I know there is no finality in politics; but I ask hon. and right hon. Gentlemen to bear in mind that, for the present, at any rate, the voice of the country as regards this particular remedy for these particular ills has been given against the policy of the right hon. Gentleman. [*Cries of* "No!"] Well, I am surprised to hear hon. Members cry "No!" How can they explain the position of the right hon. Gentleman on the Bench below me? Now, it does seem to me that the country having rejected the Home Rule policy of the right hon. Gentleman, the least we might have expected from the right hon. Gentleman would have been that he would have supported in the meantime the policy of Her Majesty's Government. Upon the Motion for leave to introduce the Bill, I do not propose to go at any length into the details of the measure; but there is one portion of the Bill to which I desire to call attention, if I may be permitted to do so, and that is that part of the Bill which deals with the change of venue, or the bringing over of prisoners charged with certain specified offences to England for trial. I am bound to say, Mr. Speaker, that it does occur to me that that is a provision of the Bill which will require the greatest and the gravest consideration. If I may respectfully urge upon Her Majesty's Government, I would certainly ask them, between this and the Committee stage of the Bill, to consider very carefully whether that portion of the Bill is to them of its essence and vital to its existence; or whether, possibly, some other scheme may not be contrived which may obviate the necessity for that which to some of us appears to be a rather detrimental part of the Bill. It is, perhaps, impertinent for me to make a suggestion; but, if I may, I would suggest the possibility of adopting the scheme which is in operation in Scotland, and thus get out of the difficulty which may arise in relation to this particular part of the Bill. However, Sir, that is a detail in reference to which I only venture to throw out a hint at the present moment, in the hope that that part of the Bill may meet with the earnest consideration of Her Majesty's Government. Well, under the circumstances I have stated, I, for my part, shall have no hesitation whatever in supporting the Government in the Motion that is now before the House. If it be, as I surmise, that the asking for these exceptional powers is only to be regarded as paving the way for those remedial measures which I have suggested—and I understand from the statements of the right hon. Gentleman opposite that it is merely as a paving of the way for remedial measures—then I urge upon the Government, with all respect, to proceed resolutely and firmly with their Bill. I am satisfied that, if they do, that bearing in mind the ulterior remedial measures which they have in view, that not only will they meet with the support of their Supporters who sit opposite, but they will certainly meet with the support of the Liberal Unionists, and that when they have to explain their position to the country, I am satisfied that they will obtain the support of the constituencies and the confidence of the country.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Bradford, W.): Mr. Speaker, the course taken by Her Majesty's Government promises for the House of Commons a Session of strife and barrenness. I should like to ask what has happened to entirely change the policy of Her Majesty's Government since the speech made at the close of the last Session of Parliament by the then Leader of the Conservative Party and the Leader of the House. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) gave no indication whatever that the first efforts of the Government, upon the reassembling of Parliament, would be the introduction of a severe measure of coercion. On the other hand, we were assured that it was the intention of the Government to indulge in great deliberation in regard to the provisions which should be introduced into Parliament, and the noble Lord gave every assurance that the result of their deliberations would be that there would be a series of measures with regard to local government submitted to Parliament, and that those measures would treat equally with the four parts of the United Kingdom, that there would be similarity, and, last of all, that there would be simultaneity in regard to the measure of local government. Now, in regard to this last and long word of the noble Lord, the only simultaneity that I can discover is the circumstance that the noble Lord has just returned to this House at the identical moment that the Government has thrown overboard every pledge it gave at the close of the last Session of Parliament, and has taken up the question of the renewal of coercion towards Ireland. I wish to say in general terms that we have before us a long and severe struggle upon this question. It is no longer a struggle in which the Irish Members, or a majority of the Irish Members of the House, will be opposed to an overwhelming majority drawn from both sides of the House. The hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. F. W. Maclean) who last addressed the House asked how it is that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) is no longer prepared to give his adhesion and support to the policy of coercion? My answer is that the right hon. Gentleman is not new to coercion; after an experience of 50 years, it has no charm or fascination for him. There are other Liberal Members of the House of Commons who have been induced at the call of their Leaders to listen to proposals for coercion. I was one of those unfortunate individuals who were cajoled by the statistics given as to the condition of Ireland to listen to proposals for coercion, and I looked with hope to the remedial legislation which was promised should succeed coercion. I do not hesitate to say that all those who have been for any time in this House, and who hope that the condition of Ireland will be improved by remedial legislation, must have abandoned all expectation of any permanent good arising to the country, or of any assistance being given to remedial legislation by this or any other form of coercion which may be submitted. It is very easy for a Government taking up the position the present Government has done to make out a case which shall be satisfactory to those who will only take a very limited view of the condition of society in Ireland. On the other hand, those of us who have turned our backs on coercion, and are resolved we will adhere to the policy of remedial legislation, base our position upon this consideration—that there is a condition of disaffection and discontent in Ireland which has been going on for generations; that there is in reality a civil war, although it may be altogether bloodless, in that country. A war of classes has been going on from generation to generation, and until we have terminated this struggle it will be impossible that the condition of Ireland can be such as will not afford some pretence for some short-sighted individuals to favour the policy of coercion. Now, the condition in which we find ourselves is very singular. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) is a highly respectable Member and a very able Member of this House; but only a fortnight ago he was Secretary for Scotland. He has been pitchforked into the Irish Office; he knows little or nothing of the condition of the country; he is literally unable to grapple with many of the suggestions which come from this or that side of the House; and yet we have the right hon. Gentleman, thus unarmed, presenting to us the case for coercion for Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman very wisely fought shy of the old method of making out a case for coercion for Ireland. In all past cases, facts and figures of such a grave character have been given to the House, and have led many Members to support the Government in passing measures of coercion. The right hon. Gentleman indulged in anecdotes, as he called them. He gave us little information that was based on any official or tangible ground—anything that could really be examined and refuted. On the contrary, he based his case mainly on the fact that there existed in Ireland a widespread system of Boycotting. I do not deny that this very obnoxious system does largely prevail in that country, and that it is one of the few weapons that are left to the discontented Irish people in their struggle with an exacting landlord class. The misfortune of Ireland has been that throughout her history she has been in the hands of the landlord class, and that the whole population has been under the lash of that class. Parliament itself is made up of the landlord class; legislation has always gone on lines that have favoured the landlord class and inflicted perpetual injustice upon the tenant class. At last, by the legislation of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, there came some mitigation of the situation; but owing to the failure of the harvests, and the depression of the prices of agricultural produce, the condition of the Irish tenantry is almost as bad as it was before 1881. Now, I maintain it is impossible to wrest from the hands of the Irish people these weapons of defence, so long as the weapons of offence and tyranny remain in the hands of the landlord class in that country. It is impossible by legislation to reach the root of the system of Boycotting. Besides, Boycotting is not altogether an Irish offence. It may vary in its forms; but it is as common in this country as in Ireland. The President of the great Wesleyan Society—a man who has had much experience of all parts of the country—has said that there does not exist in the thousands of parishes in this country the very elements of religious liberty; that there is a dominant class who interfere with the rights and privileges of those who happen to differ from them. You may go to other circles and find the same spirit, and the same bad habit prevails. What occurs in the appointment of the magistracy in this country? It is notorious that the system of Boycotting prevails in every part of the country. Boycotting is almost universal in the rural districts of England, and the towns are not free from it. I recollect that some time ago the Town Council of Bradford—one division of which town I have the honour to represent—sent up to the Lord Chancellor the names of 13 gentlemen whom they desired to be added to the borough Commission of the Peace. Amongst the 13 gentlemen there happened to be two Liberals. My brother was one of the two, and a highly respectable gentleman in Bradford was the other. The Lord Chancellor sent down the list with the two Liberals excluded—Boycotted. I do not hesitate to say that Boycotting must prevail in Ireland so long as you allow a small but powerful minority to ride roughshod over the rights and over the feelings of the people of that country. Now, Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the anxiety of the Government to carry this Bill, every Liberal Member is entitled to ask for the greatest deliberation in the consideration of the Bill. If ever there was a measure in regard to which Members were entitled to confer with their constituents, this is one of that character.

A proposal to take away the dearest and most cherished rights of 5,000,000 of Her Majesty's subjects is one in which the great mass of the people of the United Kingdom will take a lively interest, and therefore I appeal to Her Majesty's Government not to expect too rapid progress to be made with this measure. But, Sir, there is another reason why we are entitled to deliberate long and seriously and carefully upon this great question. This question of coercion was not submitted to the constituencies at the last Election. Proposals such as those referred to by the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. F. W. Maclean) who spoke last, and by other Unionist Members, were largely commented upon; but I do not know a constituency in which proposals of coercion were seriously advocated by any candidate, Liberal or Conservative, at the last Election. I am aware that the other day, when hon. Members were challenged upon the point, the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Eastern Division of Bradford (Mr. H. Byron Reed) said he really had won his election by the advocacy of coercion. The hon. Gentleman may have, in some way or other, mentioned coercion, but I am sure it was not a prominent topic in his address, and that it cannot be correctly said his election turned upon the question of coercion. But even if it were true in that solitary instance, it only proves the rule that the constituencies were not consulted at the last Election upon the renewal of a system of coercion towards Ireland. This being so, I think every Liberal Member has laid upon his shoulders the duty of conferring with his constituents with the view of learning what their mind is upon the question of coercion. We are approaching the Easter holidays, which would be a very convenient time for Members to go amongst their constituents and hold conference with them, and ascertain what is felt upon this great question. Now, I venture to predict that where the late Government, with its longer official experience, and with the power and the capacity of its Administrators, failed in carrying out coercion, right hon. Gentlemen opposite are sanguine indeed if they expect they will succeed. But we need not confine our examination to recent cases of coercion. Coercion has uniformly failed in Ireland. The experiment extending over 86 years, the experience of 86 Acts and Amendments of Acts, only shows to us that, assailed on that side, the Irish people are invulnerable. They have courage, they have heroism, they have resources, they have ingenuity; they have baffled every Administration in the past, and they will baffle every Administration in the future. It is easy to charge the Irish people with not being amenable to the ordinary laws of Great Britain. My answer is, and it is the outcome of some historic examination, that whatever virtues the Irish people have, they are their own, and they may glory in them; and whatever vices they have are of our creation and of our imposition, and we are now bearing the penalty and the cost. I venture to say that a very short time will elapse before the great majority of the people of Great Britain will condemn this proposal of the Government. They will see in it nothing but a barren effort to sustain a system which has been the curse of Ireland ever since the Union, and for centuries before. It is impossible that you can maintain your land system in that country and bring permanent peace to Ireland. But I want to put the case from another point of view. We have been reminded to-night that we have got 86 Members from Ireland sitting on this side of the House, an overwhelming majority of the Irish Members representing an overwhelming majority of the Irish people. I should like to know whether the Boycotting of these 86 Members is contemplated by the Government, as seems to have been suggested by the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope). The right hon. Gentleman, speaking at Spilsby in Lincolnshire, on the 15th of October last —I quote from *The Times* newspaper— said—

> "He remembered a very distinguished Member of the House of Commons saying that one thing had not been tried, and that was a steady and continuous policy. Year after year a policy that combined fairness with firmness, a policy that took no account of the Irish vote, but one of governing Ireland quite irrespective of what the Irish vote might choose to do. That policy they would press forward with vigour."

Now, if that really be the determination of Her Majesty's Government, and if the measures they are about to propose to Parliament are dictated by such a spirit as that, I do not hesitate to say that the Irish Members will be justified in proceeding to any lengths in baffling such a policy; because they are denied their Constitutional rights. What is the use of Ireland selecting her Representatives, and sending them to the House of Commons, if they are to be told by a Minister of the Crown that whatever they say or do will not be regarded when questions of Irish policy are to be submitted to Parliament? If that is the deliberate intention of the Government, all I can say is that the Irish Members will be justified in offering opposition to the very last point to this proposal for the coercion of their country. Not only so, Mr. Speaker; but I believe that the British constituencies will—when they come to understand the policy of Her Majesty's Government, when they come to understand the shilly-shallying which is going on with regard to measures of reform, and the hot haste with which measures of coercion are being pressed through this House—begin to see that Her Majesty's present Advisers are not about to produce results in Ireland which will be of any permanent benefit to the country; but that, on the other hand, they have really entered upon a policy which will delay all progressive legislation with regard to Great Britain, and will only tend to increase the alienation between the two nations. I only wish to say, in conclusion, that we are only upon a very early stage of this measure. The Bill has not yet been placed in our hands; but we know enough now of the spirit in which it has been presented, and of the hopes and fears which have compelled Her Majesty's Government to enter upon this reactionary line. I, for one, am prepared from my place in Parliament to do everything that lies in my power to delay and baffle legislation of this kind.

Mr. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Mac Neill.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

*Mr. Illingworth*

## *MOTIONS.*

## MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (BELFAST) BILL.

### LEAVE. FIRST READING.

Motion made, and Question, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to extend the Municipal Franchise of the Borough of Belfast,"—(*Colonel Saunderson,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Colonel Saunderson, Colonel King-Harman, Colonel Waring, Mr. T. W. Russell, and Mr. Lea.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 211.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be read a second time upon *Wednesday* 18th May."—(*Colonel Saunderson.*)

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): May I ask the hon. and gallant Gentleman whether he intends that the passing of this Bill shall depend upon chance, or whether he intends to ask the House to give facilities for the passing of the Bill?

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill to be read a second time upon *Wednesday* 18th May.

### ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I think I am entitled to an answer to the question I have just put to the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Saunderson). I am greatly interested in this matter, because I have for more than a year been endeavouring to obtain an extension of the municipal franchise of Belfast. Surely, I do not make an unreasonable request when I ask the hon. and gallant Gentleman whether he intends to trust to chance in passing this Bill, or to ask the Government to afford him some facilities for the consideration of the Bill?

Colonel SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.): I hope Her Majesty's Government will give facilities for passing this Bill, which I am just as anxious to pass as the hon Member himself.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

House adjourned at twenty minutes before One o'clock.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Wednesday, 30th March, 1887.*

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Leave*—Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) [*Third Night*], *debate further adjourned.*

*Ordered — First Reading* — Newspaper Libel Law Amendment * [212].

*Second Reading*—Mining Royalties * [23], *debate adjourned*; High Sheriff Disqualification (Ireland) * [85], *debate adjourned.*

*Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee* — Limited Owners (Scotland) * [8].

*Withdrawn* — Public Libraries Acts Amendment * [122]; Municipal Elections (Scotland) (Corrupt Practices) * [77].

## *ORDER OF THE DAY.*

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### CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT (IRELAND) BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE. FIRST READING.

ADJOURNED DEBATE. [THIRD NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [28th March],

> "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make better provision for the prevention and punishment of Crime in Ireland; and for other purposes relating thereto."—(*Mr. Arthur Balfour.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) said, he rose to discharge what he believed to be a responsible duty, to say, once for all, that the Party to which he had the honour to belong would resist to the utmost the Algerine code which the Government were attempting to force upon the people of Ireland. They believed that this code was unjustified by the circumstances, that it was calculated to sow dissension in Ireland between class and class, and creed and creed; that it was calculated, furthermore, to foster and nurture animosity between England and Ireland, to lower the national pride and hurt the national feelings of Irishmen, and to create discord between the people of the two countries. He would, at the outset, draw a strong distinction between Her Majesty's Government and the country which they were supposed to represent. He stated from his personal knowledge a fact for which, if untrue, he would deserve serious reprehension, that at the last General Election Her Majesty's Government had no mandate from the people of England to force coercion on Ireland. He could not but think of an incident which occurred on the very day on which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland rose to ask leave to introduce his Bill. Just as he was approaching the Table for the purpose a cheer, from below the Gangway greeted him. He did not understand that cheer. It was in recognition of the arrival of a new Member (Sir Walter Foster), who was returned by an immense majority because he professed to be opposed to coercion. He believed that they were backed up in their opposition to this measure not only by the people of Ireland, but by the sentiment of the majority of the people of England, Scotland, and Wales. The fact of the appointment of the right hon. Gentleman to his present position of Chief Secretary was the strongest argument against coercion. If Ireland was on the verge of social revolution, as had been represented—if it was in a state of rebellion and Boycotting—if things were reduced to chaos in that country, why was not an experienced statesman versed in the matter and having a knowledge of the Irish people appointed? Why was a Gentleman chosen for the post who knew less about Ireland than he himself knew about Central Asia? If that was the state of affairs in Ireland, he could not believe that the Prime Minister would have disposed of the Chief Secretaryship in the same way as he would dispose of a family living in his gift. Never in his experience had he witnessed a more pitiable spectacle than that presented by the right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench when asking leave to bring in this Bill. He was framing an indictment against a whole people to deprive them of their liberty, to send some of their Representatives—as some of their Representatives assuredly would be sent if this Bill passed—to prison, and to check public agitation, and yet he actually did not know his own case. He could not have properly digested or even read the evidence before him, for he could not tell the places or the circumstances. He did not even know the names of the Irish Judges whom he quoted. Mr. Justice Murphy was with him "Chief Justice Murphy," and agrarian outrage was "agricultural outrage." He called the charges of the Judges "reports," and the reason was quite plain. In England the Judges never delivered political charges, and the Chief Secretary thought that the Irish Judges were a higher class of policemen making reports. He (Mr. Mac Neill) declared that if the right hon. Gentleman were placed on a school board examination as to the ordinary and political circumstances of Ireland he would be deservedly plucked. The right hon. Gentleman had been bolstered up by all the calumnious tittle-tattle of the informers and police spies, paid hacks, and backstairs secret agents of Dublin Castle. It never occurred to him to investigate the truth of his stories. He spoke of the old man of 80 years of age, who wished to be kept on the jury panel that he might do a good turn to a friend. Why, he (Mr. Mac Neill) had heard that story at least eight years ago. It was the calumnious stories of the smoke-room of the Kildare Street Club that he was forcing on the people of England; but a club story had never before been used as an indictment against a whole nation. Then they had from him the midwife's tale. That showed the weakness of the Government's case—an old wife's tale. When asked for his authority and for names and dates, the right hon. Gentleman relied on his responsibility as a Minister of the Crown. That was what they complained of. They said he was not responsible to the Irish people. The statement of the right hon. Gentleman carried on its own face its thorough and perfect condemnation. The right hon. Gentleman expected to be the master of the Irish people. He would be nothing of the kind. He would only be their gaoler. He would be merely a puppet in the hands of the permanent clerks of Dublin Castle. The statements of the Irish Judges were mere *obiter dicta* in no way connected with the administration of the law. When the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland was preparing their Reports, why did he not give Judge Lawson's report of what took place at the Winter Assizes at Omagh, when Judge Lawson said the two Walkers should be found guilty of murder and nothing else? The jury there disagreed, and the Walkers were sent to Belfast to be tried safely and securely. Why did not the Attorney General give them Baron Dowse's report in Tipperary? Because this was not an investigation. This was a proposal to put the Government in power. They did not want to tell the people the real truth. They wanted to give a certain complexion for Unionist, or, rather, official ends. Why was Baron Dowse—an old friend and political supporter—omitted? That was not grateful of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland. When Baron Dowse stood for Derry the Attorney General was his counsel.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. HOLMES) (Dublin University): I deny that I ever was his counsel at Derry or anywhere else.

MR. MAC NEILL said, he accepted the correction. The Attorney General was, however, present at a banquet to commemorate the return of Baron Dowse, for Londonderry, in 1868. The learned Baron then defeated Lord Claud Hamilton, and inflicted thereby one of the greatest blows ever sustained by the Tory Party in Ireland, and the present Attorney General of the Conservative Government celebrated the happy event. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary said that the legitimate opposition was not in favour of coercion. What was the meaning of that? That this question of coercion—the question of the political life and death of the Irish people—was reduced to a Party question; and he said that the right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench had made it so. In 1885 the then Conservative Government announced its intention not to renew the Crimes Act. The arguments then used by the Tory Party were precisely the arguments which were now being used against them. The Attorney General for Ireland had accused Lord Spencer when Lord Lieutenant of Ireland of the wilful murder of the boy Giffen, who lost his life in an Orange riot. He said that the blood of Giffen was on Lord Spencer's head.

MR. HOLMES: I never made any statement imputing murder to Lord Spencer, and I never insinuated anything of the kind.

MR. MAC NEILL: What did you say?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. MAC NEILL said, he would pass that by. He might be wrong; but the right hon. and learned Gentleman made a distinct allusion to Lord Spencer in reference to Giffen.

MR. HOLMES: Certainly.

MR. MAC NEILL: Certainly. He came now to the tremendous difficulties which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had to encounter among his new friends lest he might wound their susceptibilities. He would refer to the Home Secretary, whom he would call the Home Rule Secretary. That right hon. Gentleman, now a supporter of coercion, had first got into Parliament by abusing and holding up to ridicule the administration of law in Ireland. He found in *The Times* of the 21st of November, 1868, the following statement:—

> "Mr. Henry Matthews is elected for Dungannon and ranks as a Liberal, but his Liberalism is a cross between Toryism and Fenianism."

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The career of the right hon. Gentleman or references of the sort which the hon. Member is now making, have nothing whatever to do with the introduction of this Bill.

MR. MAC NEILL said, he would submit to the Speaker's ruling, and would not pursue that subject further. He would now proceed to examine some of the provisions of this Bill. The abolition of trial by jury meant the entire abolition of the Constitution, and there was no evidence to justify it. It insured the determination of questions of fact by persons influenced by the Crown. Resident Magistrates who were to be substituted for a jury in certain cases were clearly subject to that influence; they held their positions at the pleasure of the Crown, and might be dismissed at any moment. They would simply be puppets administering justice with their eyes fixed on the Treasury Bench—the justice which would be dealt out by Dublin Castle. It was nothing more nor less than a blasphemous parody of justice. In 1852, Archbishop Whately, himself an Englishman, speaking of Ireland, said—

> "The Lord Lieutenant's days and nights are wasted on intrigues and Party squabbles, on the management of the press and the management of *fêtes*, on deciding what ruined gambler is to have this stipendiary magistracy, and what Repealer is to be conciliated by asking his wife and daughter to that concert."

These were the men who were to have the lives and liberties of the Irish people at their disposal. The proposal to change the venue and bring prisoners for trial to England was a step which would receive almost universal condemnation. Such a thing was unknown in England. The reason was that jurors were competent witnesses and might give evidence on a trial in which they were sworn as jurors. It was to enable a garbled tale to be told without detection that the expedient of changing the venue was to be resorted to. The proposal to bring over Members of the Irish Bar at the expense of the Government, for the defence of prisoners, was noteworthy. Lord Castlereagh was the first person who had assailed the independence of the Bar in Ireland. He writes—

> "We have good materials among the young barristers, but we cannot expect them to waste their time and to starve into the bargain. I know the difficulties, and shall respect them as much as possible in the extent of our expenditure, but I cannot help most earnestly requesting to receive £5,000 in bank notes."

It appeared on the face of the Cornwallis Correspondence that a member of the Bar who had appeared for most of the prisoners in the State trials of that time had sold the secrets of his clients to the Crown. Again, there was to be no limitation to the Coercion Bill, and Ireland was always to be in a degraded, inferior, and abject position. Charles James Fox once said—

> "I would rather see Ireland wholly separated from the Crown of England than kept in subjection by force. Unwilling subjects are little better than enemies."

Even Pitt, if he were alive to day, would scorn the proposals of the Government, for in his speech proposing the Union he said the two countries were to go hand in hand, and that the Union was to be the consolidation of a great Empire. They knew how lamentably and miserably that expectation had failed. It was not to the interest of right hon. Gentlemen opposite to have Ireland a contented, happy, and prosperous nation, for if the Irish difficulty were removed, the Liberal Unionist defection would be at an end, and their posts and places would be gone. Lord Brougham cautioned Parliament not to undertake to cure Irish distress by anything in the shape of penal enactments. He said—

> "The greatest mockery of all—the most intolerable insult—the cause of peculiar exasperation against which I chiefly caution the House, is the undertaking to cure the distress under which she (Ireland) labours by anything in the shape of

now penal enactments. It is in these enactments alone that we have ever shown our liberality to Ireland. She has received penal laws from the hands of England almost as plentifully as she has received blessings from the hands of Providence. What have these laws done? Checked her turbulence, but not stifled it. The grievance remaining perpetually, the complaint can only be postponed. We may load her with chains, but in doing so we shall not better her condition. By coercion we may goad her on to fury, but by coercion we shall never break her spirit. She will rise up and break the fetters we impose, and arm herself for deadly violence with the fragments."—(*Lord Brougham's Speeches*, vol. iv., p. 45.)

He asked were Her Majesty's Government, for considerations of Office, going to gamble in the flesh and blood of human beings. He believed the people of England would rise in the majesty of their might and prevent such an outrage. He and his friends were entering upon that contest with light hearts and strong courage; they had the people of England at their backs and the great Liberal Party on their side, and they would emerge from the fray a victorious, a self-governed, and a free people.

Mr. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Mid) said, that he was about to bring forward some serious charges, which, however, he thought himself justified in making, not only because he had his own important constituency at his back, but because he had unfortunately the honour at that moment to represent not only the Roman Catholic Tories of England, Scotland, and Ireland, but also the English, Irish, and Scotch Roman Catholic Unionist Liberals. He thought he should have no difficulty in demonstrating that, from his point of view, the Government had no other course open to them than to strengthen the law against lawbreakers in Ireland. He should confine his remarks to three authentic documents—the Report of Mr. Knipe, one of the Members of Lord Cowper's Commission, the general Report of that Commission, and the Papal Encyclical on the Christian Constitution of States. Hon. Gentlemen opposite claimed to represent the Roman Catholic Church; but he knew that he was stating the opinion of a great number of Irish Catholics when he said that that claim was totally unfounded; but, be that as it might, it was sufficient for him (Mr. De Lisle) if he could justify his vote to his own conscience and to his constituents. In Mr. Knipe's Report he stated that he believed the purchase of their holdings by the tenants would tend to the preservation of law and order; that the tenants themselves would organize to put down outrages; and then, on the authority of the District Inspector of Castleisland, he stated that the police were perfectly powerless to enforce the law and put down outrages in that district. Well, if the police were powerless in any part of the Queen's Dominions, he maintained that they had a right to call for an improvement in the procedure of the law. Then he found in the evidence of General Buller that he was asked, "Do you think that the improved state of the country is due to the fact that the power of the League has decreased?" He replied, "No," adding that if the League could it would prevent the payment of rents. General Buller said he believed that the improvement was because the tenants were getting abatements. He (Mr. De Lisle) contended that if the League prevented men paying their rents, then it was an illegal organization, and ought to be suppressed. If the Bill proposed to suppress the League it would have his support. He would next call the attention of the House to the statistics as to the depreciation in the value of Irish agricultural produce and of live stock. He found that the value of agricultural produce was, in 1855, £63,000,000; in 1881, £46,000,000; and in 1886, £31,000,000. The value of live stock was, in 1881, £51,000,000, and it was, in 1886, only £41,000,000. How could it be supposed that any political measure like Home Rule could give comfort and prosperity to a country which was suffering from such a depreciation in the value of its produce? The remission of every farthing of rent would not enable the people in many districts of Ireland to live. If the figures produced proved anything, they proved that there were two possible courses open to them. One was that the real remedy was a certain amount of protection to agriculture; but if this country would not have recourse to a certain amount of agricultural protection in order to enable the agriculturist to live and thrive, then there is no other alternative but emigration. He could not see anything disgraceful in emigration. He saw hon. Members opposite. He did not suggest that they should emigrate; but he should like to see them encouraging their friends to go to America, or our Colonies, make fortunes there, and then come back to buy properties and become good citizens of the United Kingdom. In the language of the Report which he had referred to, this subject was touched on in the evidence of Mr. Hamilton, who said that the West of Ireland could not be improved until it was brought within reach of civilization by railways; that that, if done at all, must be done by the State, and that the best remedy would be emigration, but that the people would not emigrate. Mr. Knipe did not agree with the other Commissioners on the subject of coercion. In his view, any attempt to meet agrarian crime by coercion would not only fail to secure tranquillity, but would aggravate disorder. But later on in his Report there was a passage which proved that the Government were right, because he there advocated the establishment of a Court of Assessors to fix rents which would and should have coercive powers both on bad landlords and bad tenants. So that it was merely a question of what coercion, and by whom it should be applied. If the National League would abandon that word "National," and state itself to be what it now professed itself to be, a Poor Tenant's Protection Society, or even an Aborigines' Protection Society, then they would have no quarrel with it. It was because it called itself "National," and because of the ulterior purpose which that name seemed to imply, that all the steps which it took were suspected and required to be watched with vigilance by the Government. And more than that, the action of the Government was not only justified by the Report of Lord Cowper's Commission, but that Report showed that the Government would be deserving the severest condemnation if they did not pursue the policy represented by the present measure; a policy in which he was certain that they would have the support of the electors of the United Kingdom if they only had the courage to act on their convictions. In page 7 of that Report he found a description of that new weapon of war—Boycotting. He regretted to say that Bishop Bagshawe, the most judicious Bishop of Nottingham, had in an address delivered on St. Patrick's Day, defended Boycotting if it were judicious—as if any amount of judiciousness could make a thing which was illegal to be right. Truly a judicious Bishop! He regretted that a Bishop of his Church still gave any support to a system of which it was said in that Report of Lord Cowper's Commission, that people were more afraid of being Boycotted than they were of the decisions of Courts of Justice. That was an intolerable state of things, and no Government would deserve to last for an hour which allowed people to be more afraid of private combinations than of the Courts of Justice. Then it was said that in certain districts the law was not supreme. That no Government could allow to endure. Further on in the same Report was a description of the sufferings of Boycotted persons, whose lives were said to be made a burthen to them, as none were allowed to supply them with the necessaries of life. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) seemed to think that as only 800 persons were Boycotted, so small a number of persons whose lives were rendered miserable had no claims to the protection of the Government. That, however, he denied, nor could he conceive anything more degrading to a Government than to allow the state of things which now existed in Ireland in reference to Boycotted persons to continue. If we could not enforce the law, better give it up altogether. What was the justification which had been put forward of the system of Boycotting? It had been characterized by hon. Members opposite as an innocent trade union intended to protect Irish tenants against excessive and unjust rents, and to compel bad landlords to reduce their rents. But he would not admit this assertion, which had, in fact, been successfully controverted by a letter in *The Tablet* newspaper of January 8 from, perhaps, the most eminent Catholic layman in Ireland. But be that as it might, it could not be denied that some 60 agrarian murders had followed the adoption of the practice of Boycotting; and a New York paper had advocated its enforcement by dynamite, by dagger, and by poison. He might say by way of parenthesis that there was no question here at stake between Protestant and Catholic—a Catholic might well support the policy of the Bill before them without incurring the censure of the Church. While upon that point he might call the attention of hon. Members to a passage from the letter already referred to, who maintained that the result of the struggle now going on in Ireland would be to separate the Irish Church of the future from the Irish Church of the past, to join it to the Jacobinical Societies of the Continent to defeat the demand for a religious education which statesmen must needs distrust, when they saw from what corrupted sources it proceeded, to substitute a hollow for a sincere Catholicism, and to hurry a revolutionary Ireland along the same path as revolutionary France. Returning to the Report of Lord Cowper's Commission, which favoured emigration as the best resource for Ireland if Protection was rejected, it would be seen that the last page but one of the Report showed that the Government were not only justified, but were compelled to take action on the lines of the legislation they were asking the House to adopt, for they said, that such steps were necessary in several parts of the country, and that in the interests of all classes, in order to maintain law and order, which were then grievously outraged. That disposed of the allegation which was sometimes made that in proposing this legislation the Government were disregarding the Report of the Royal Commission. On the contrary, they were acting in strict conformity with the recommendation of that Commission. They had been told that it was impossible for a Catholic to vote for this Coercion Bill, but on the strength of Mr. Knipe's Report and the Report of the Royal Commission, he felt justified in giving his vote for this measure. They were told that, in the face of the opposition of the Catholic clergy of Ireland, it would be impossible for any length of time to maintain the government of England in Ireland. Well, the object of the Supporters of the Bill was to restore peace, quiet, brotherly love, good feeling, and true citizenship in Ireland. [Mr. DILLON: They never existed.] If they never existed then their object was to create them; but he denied that the assertion made by the hon. Member for East Mayo was true. He had spent some pleasant weeks in Ireland in the year 1870, when he had many opportunities of observing and conversing with the poorest classes, and found that there was then no misery, but as much peace, prosperity, and contentment in Ireland as there was in England. He now approached the last division of his speech, and in entering upon it he might say that he was not about to attack the Holy See; but he maintained that he was justified in attacking any of the Queen's subjects if they appeared to be wanting in their allegiance to Her Majesty. He asserted that the Irish Catholic Bishops and Irish Catholic priests who opposed the administration of the law owed as much duty and loyalty to the Crown of England as the humble men-servants and maid-servants who swept the dust from those seats. In his opinion, by the course which they had taken, some of the Bishops and clergy of the Catholic Church in Ireland had, tried by this principle, committed serious aberrations from their duty; but he should not think himself justified in pointing out those aberrations, unless he could also suggest the remedy. He admitted, however, that if the Catholic clergy of Ireland were for ever going to use their influence in opposition to those who sought to restore law and order in that country, the efforts of the latter would be well-nigh hopeless. Cardinal Newman had pointed out that—

> "For three hundred years it has been the official rule with England to ignore the existence of the Pope, and to deal with Catholics in England, not as his children, but as sectaries of the Roman Catholic persuasion. Napoleon said to his Envoy—'Treat with the Pope as if he was master of 100,000 men.' I am entering into no theological question; I am speaking all along of mere decent secular intercourse between England and Rome. A hundred grievances would have been set right on their first uprising, had there been a frank diplomatic understanding between two Great Powers. The world's politics has its laws; and such abnormal courses as England has pursued have their Nemesis."

Well, the Nemesis which England was suffering from owing to her treatment of the Holy See, was the presence of Gentlemen opposite. As he, as an English Catholic, was going to vote in favour of this Bill, he thought that it was his duty to justify his conduct. [The hon. Member was then proceeding to quote the Papal Encyclical on the Christian Constitution of States in order to show how the Pope, if properly approached, would deem it his duty to secure the co-operation of the clergy in the maintenance of law and social peace, when——]

Mr. SPEAKER, interposing, said: The relations between the Catholic clergy and the Holy See and between this country and the Pope do not appear to me to be relevant in discussing the introduction of the Crimes Bill.

Mr. DE LISLE said, that in that case he would proceed to show that the conduct of the Catholic clergy in Ireland, which, by some, was thought to be a justification of the present state of things, was in truth a justification for the measure of coercion now before them. At a meeting held at Kilkenny, and reported in *The Kilkenny Journal* of September 29, 1886, at which more than a dozen priests were present, the Rev. Mr. Costigan spoke as follows:—

> "What do you propose doing? You talk a good deal about landlordism; but what do you determine to do before you separate—[A Voice: 'Kill the landlords']—I would not physically kill any man—[*cheers*]—but there is another way of killing a man. You can make his life a second death. I hope the citizens of Kilkenny will not physically kill anyone; but I will leave them to do as they like the other way. I hope you will understand me. ['We do.'] My opinion of the Nationalists of Kilkenny is very high. [*Cheers.*] I never thought that there could be such numbers as I see before me turned out at a moment's call. It was only yesterday that the notice was sent out, and you have come here in your hundreds to declare your undying hatred of landlordism—[*cheers*]—and to declare that while there is one drop of blood in your veins you will be true to the flag you have unfurled to-day, which means the total extinction of landlordism with all its cruelty and horror in this land. [*Cheers.*]"

That was the teaching of a minister of religion, and yet this gentleman had not received the censure of his Bishop, nor had his Bishop received the censure of the higher authorities of the Church. In another instance, at a meeting at which Mr. Sheehy, M.P., was present, another parish priest, the Rev. John Garry, said—

> "They had come there to-day to take a look at the ruined home of one of their fellow-tenants, and declare that they believed in the Plan of Campaign. They believed that the persons who devised that Plan were almost under Divine inspiration, for there was no other means by which the people of Ireland could be saved from extermination."

He would next call attention to a speech delivered on the 31st August, 1884, at a meeting held at Crosspatrick, by the Rev. Michael Duggan. This rev. gentleman said—

> "It had fallen to his lot to say a few words to them on land-grabbing and grass-grabbing. Evictions and processes of eviction were now the order of the day. Thanks to the Land League, land-grabbing had been put down to a great extent. Public opinion and the spirit of the people are entirely opposed to it; at least, the right-minded and the honest men of Ireland. What was the practice in early days? If one neighbour was breaking down, another neighbour was sure to keep a close eye on him, and would have a whisper with the bailiff and the agent. It often happened that both the agent and the bailiff were bribed, and a rack-rent was promised to the landlord to evict the tenant and give the farm to his grabbing neighbour. The bailiff, therefore, was the man they had to dread most. It was a common practice long ago to give them presents. He would not recommend any honest, upright man to be a bailiff or a local agent, because the spirit of the times was now such that any honest, upright man would not look on apathetically and see his neighbours and fellow-countrymen downtrodden and walked upon. He would not, of course, recommend them to Boycott them, because the Crimes Act was in being now; but he would tell them what they could do. They were not bound to walk with them, or to marry them; but he would tell them that they were bound in charity—to bury them."

This speech, the last sentence of which came near to an incitement to murder, was referred by a Roman Catholic gentleman, Mr. Thomas Eyre, to the head of the diocese, and then, receiving no satisfaction from him, he wrote to the late Cardinal MacCabe, the Archbishop of Dublin, who, in reply, said—

> "It is very humiliating to find priests so unmindful of their sacred obligations as to use the language attributed to the one you refer to. I have no authority to interfere in the matter; but I will forward to Propaganda, with my own observations, any document you wish to place in my hands."

That was done, and the matter was referred to Archbishop Croke, who replied—

> "I have just got your communication, dated 30th December, and really cannot gather from it what precisely you complain of on the part of Rev. M. Duggan, unless, indeed, it be that in common, as you say, with the speakers at the Crosspatrick meeting, he is alleged to have made some unpleasant remarks about bailiffs and Emergency men. Unfortunately, as you know, bailiffs have never been popular personages in Ireland, and I never heard anyone complaining of a speaker at a public meeting because he had denounced them, seeing that it is done every day, both in the Press and on the platform. Father Duggan made no special reference to your bailiffs, for he knew nothing of them; nor did he mention your name, for he did not know of your existence; and I do not, therefore, see what special *locus standi* you have in this matter. I should not hesitate to bring Father Duggan to order had he said or done anything to injure or insult you."

The moral guilt of Boycotting ceased to exist, in the opinion of Archbishop Croke, because Boycotting was practised every day. He never heard of such theological debauchery before. He had detained the House at some length, and had said some things which other Catholics said in private, but did not say in public. He had been accused and vilified by the Nationalist Press of America and Ireland because he said in public what he said in private. He said in public what he said in private because it suited his nature to do so; and if a higher justification of his nature in this particular matter were required, he need only quote from the Encyclical Letter on the Christian Constitution of States the words of Leo XIII.—namely, "Likewise it is unlawful to follow one line of duty in private and another in public." He (Mr. De Lisle) would give his vote for the Bill, and he would do everything he could to assist its progress until it was carried triumphantly through the House. He would do so in the firm and earnest conviction that under its provisions no honest, no loyal, no law-abiding Irishman would suffer the slightest diminution of his rights and liberties; and he would do so with the fervent hope and prayer that it would be a terror and a stumbling-block to every evil-doer.

VISCOUNT KILCOURSIE (Somerset, S.), in opposing the Motion, said, that in a speech made on a former occasion (Friday last), and which had not yet been replied to, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) had asked whether they had confidence in the administration of the law by juries in Ireland, and had told them that if they had not they could not deny that the moment had come when the Government must deal with this matter, and restore to Ireland that fair administration of the law which should receive the confidence of the public generally. He (Viscount Kilcoursie) would now ask, what did the right hon. Gentleman mean by fair administration of the law? Did he mean the just administration of a fair law, or the fair administration of an unjust law? If the former, then he answered the question of the right hon. Gentleman strongly in the affirmative, but not otherwise. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that the Members of the Liberal Party were strongly desirous of the just administration of a fair law; but the case was different if the right hon. Gentleman, in using the words "fair administration of the law," meant the fair administration of an unjust law. He did not know what course the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) might pursue in reference to the question under consideration; but he was very clear in his own mind of the vote he should give, if that right hon. Gentleman, great as his name was, were to bring forward a measure of coercion preceding remedial legislation. By every single word that he had uttered in that House, and by every action he had ever done in that House, the right hon. Gentleman had shown, not only that force was no remedy, but that the remedy must in every case precede force. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said the Bill was intended to protect the people of Ireland. Who were the people of Ireland whom the Bill would protect? The people of Ireland he understood to be the 5,000,000 persons who lived in that country—not a class, but every class in Ireland. But it was, according to Sir Redvers Buller, to the National League, and not to Coercion Bills, that the great majority of the people of Ireland looked for their salvation and protection. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had also said that the Bill was to break down the oppression under which the people of Ireland were suffering. If by that he meant the breaking down of the landlord oppression of which Sir Redvers Buller spoke, then he (Viscount Kilcoursie) should see some reason for the Bill. But he failed to see that the Bill offered any adequate protection to the tenants of Ireland, compared with the protection that at that moment was being offered to the landlords of Ireland. Referring to the quotation made by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian, of Sir Redvers Buller's words, to the effect that the law in Ireland looked after the rich and did not look after the poor, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that those were dangerous words to be quoted by his right hon. Friend, unless he intended to endorse them, or to differ from them; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer taunted his right hon. Friend with having been principally in power for many years, and therefore with being chiefly to blame if the law was not equal with reference to the rich and poor in Ireland. All he (Viscount Kilcoursie) had to say, as one who had been a humble follower of the right hon. Gentleman for the last quarter-of-a-century in that House, and before he entered it, was, that he should never have been his follower for a single moment if his right hon. Friend had acknowledged that the laws in Ireland were equal as between the rich and the poor. It was because the right hon. Gentleman had acknowledged that they were not equal that he had followed him —it was because during the whole course of the time he had been Prime Minister his right hon. Friend—although he had not accomplished all that he could wish —had endeavoured to alter the laws of Ireland so as to make them more and more equal between rich and poor. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had made an amusing remark with reference to the Celtic music which was so sweet in the ear of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. He (Viscount Kilcoursie) presumed the Scottish music which the Chancellor of the Exchequer heard when he was in Edinburgh was not very much to his taste; and, possibly, the English music which the right hon. Gentleman heard not long ago at Liverpool was also not particularly to his taste. But if the right hon. Gentleman were to go to Ireland, he might hear some of that Celtic music to which he had alluded, which would be still less to his taste. He would call the attention of hon. Gentlemen to several passages in the evidence given before the Royal Commission by Sir Redvers Buller, especially that in which the witness declared his belief that, in one part of the country, they could never have peace unless they created some legal equipoise, or equivalent, that would supply the want of freedom of contract which now existed between landlord and tenant. Why was it that there was a disturbance when hon. Members on the Irish Benches went down into the country? He was justified in his contention that what was passing in Sir Redvers Buller's mind was that these districts never would have been disturbed at all had there been an equipoise between the landlords and tenants. What were the forces against which the Government were contending? They were contending against forces which no Government before had ever encountered when bringing in a Coercion Bill. They were contending not only against the great majority of the Members from Ireland, but against the Archbishops and Bishops, against men of well-known standing in the Catholic Church —men beyond suspicion in their character—against the whole Liberal Party in this House, which was something, and against the whole Liberal Party outside that House, which was more. They were contending against the opinion of the whole civilized world, in America, Canada, and Australia. Even if the Coercion Bill were approved in America, Canada, and Australia, the mode in which it was brought in, before, instead of after, remedial measures, would condemn it in the opinion of every civilized human being, East, West, North, and South. It might be said that the great majority of the Irish tenants were poor, ignorant, and misled; but then they were misled by those whom they respected most. It was possible, even probable, that they might be misled by the lowest class of agitators in Ireland, persons who had no business in Ireland at all, persons who, if the late Government had its way, would not be in Ireland now. He was not going to enter into the question of Home Rule; he simply said that those men had no business to be there. But there was a class of lecturers, whom hon. Gentlemen opposite called agitators, but whom he preferred to call lecturers, composed of Members below the Gangway, Archbishops, Bishops, and priests. What were their arguments? The first strong argument which these lecturers used against the Bill was, that this was the 86th Coercion Bill since the commencement of the century, and that every one of those Bills was a failure. Nay, more; they said that the last of these Bills, which was supposed to be a success, had been proved by Lord Salisbury to be a failure. What was it Lord Salisbury said at Newport? He said—

> "The effect of the Crimes Act has been very much exaggerated. While it was in existence there grew up a thousand branches of the National League, and it is from them that these difficulties proceed with which you have to contend."

Then they were told that—

> "The provisions in the Crimes Act against Boycotting had a very small effect." "I have seen it stated," added Lord Salisbury, "that the Crimes Act diminished Boycotting. It is not true."

Would the present Crimes Bill be more successful in diminishing Boycotting? Then Lord Salisbury said that the Crimes Act "did not diminish outrage." They had in Ireland a population four-fifths of whom were Catholics, and what was the proportion of the magistrates? The great majority were Protestants, and, in spite of the fact that they were Protestants dealing with Catholics, they had to come there to obtain augmented power for the Protestants over Catholics. Next there was the case of the two men sent to Ireland, and there was a suspicion amounting to belief that Lord Carnarvon, Sir Redvers Buller, and Sir Robert Hamilton had gone to Ireland with preconceived notions in favour, to a great extent, of the class with which they were associated; but they had left that country with very different feelings. One of them remained, however, in evidence, a standing rebuke to right hon. Gentlemen opposite. He had read in the leading Sunday journal—

> "Let the truth be brought home to Irishmen that England has put her foot down and the agitation for Home Rule will die away."

Put her foot down on what? On the necks of the Irish people? He could imagine nothing more calculated than that, read from an Irish pulpit, to arouse the passions of the Irish people. A more insulting and impudent paragraph he had never read. The fact that the Coercion Bill had been brought in before the remedial measures had awoke in America an amount of enthusiasm which could never die out. There had been some letters in *The Times* with regard to *Parnellism and Crime.* With regard to these letters let him say this—They might be true, and for the sake of argument, and for the sake of argument only, he would suppose now that every one of the statements was true. It ought to have been the policy of the Government not to have united the regular Opposition with those whose hands were stained with blood, if they were really so stained; it ought to have been the policy of the Government to have separated the Opposition from those of whom it was said that they were in a greater or lesser degree responsible for the crimes that had been committed. But what had the Government done? They had joined the Opposition hand in hand with those of whom some professed to believe that they were steeped in crime. Thus were joined together the Home Rulers and the anti-Coercionists of to-day, the Irish Members below the Gangway and the Opposition Members above it, with the exception of those Members of the Opposition who constituted a small minority. Great as was his objection to the Bill, it was as nothing to his objection to the clause for changing the venue of the trials from Dublin to London. It was a great misfortune that the view which would be taken of crime in this country in the future would not be the same that it had been in the past. Hitherto, crime had been condemned by both sides of the House because it was crime, and because it was felt that the laws were equal to all. We had not stopped to ask how a jury was constituted, and who were the members of it. We had simply asked what was the evidence, and whether a man was guilty on that evidence. With the change of venue to England, the question in the future would be not "What was the evidence?" but "Who formed the jury?" and it would be a most unfortunate circumstance that we should ever be brought to ask such a question. By that proposal the Government had carried politics into the Criminal Courts of this country. He could not be accused of being mealy-mouthed with reference to crime and outrage. He was one of the first persons to write in one of the most popular daily newspapers to condemn the language used by an hon. Member who sat below the Gangway; and in consequence he had exposed himself to no small measure of misrepresentation and obloquy. What he went through in consequence of those letters was known only to himself; but he could assure the House it was no small infliction. Under similar circumstances, he would write similar letters; but the position had now very greatly changed, for the Chief Secretary, by his language and manner in that House, had menaced the Irish Members, and the Government had menaced the Opposition by introducing a Crimes Bill at that time before attempting remedial legislation. If the Government had first attempted, by a remedial measure that was adequate, to abolish dual ownership in Ireland, and if they had then come to the House and said, "We have done our best, and we have failed," they would have a fair ground for appealing to the Opposition to support a Coercion Bill, and he would have supported them, so far as was in his power; but, by pursuing an opposite course, they had placed the hands of Opposition Members in the hands of the Irish Members below the Gangway. If, through the conduct of the Government, language were used which he disapproved, and if outrages were committed, however great his regret and that of others might be at their occurrence, they could not condemn the parties engaged in them, for the action of the Government placed both him and them in a position in which they could only shrug their shoulders, and throw the blame on the Ministry. The Bill was uncalled-for; it was doomed to failure; it was un-English, and the "eternity" written upon and claimed for it would be measured by the duration of Her Majesty's Government.

MR. DALRYMPLE (Ipswich) said, that though the Government would, perhaps, best be served by the continued silence of its independent supporters, yet the country was entitled to hear what some of them had to say in support of the policy the Government had thought it their duty to inaugurate. He would bring no charge of unfairness against the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Kilcoursie), neither would he follow him with quotations from Sir Redvers Buller's evidence. Taking from its context an answer of Sir Redvers Buller here, and another there—for you might make his evidence prove anything you like—you might show that Sir Redvers Buller held that Irish tenants have suffered many ills, and it cannot be denied they had. It might be shown that Sir Redvers Buller expressed an opinion that the tenants suffered under oppression, and so they did. The Government said—and he (Mr. Dalrymple) strongly supported the statement—that the oppression was that of the National League. The noble Viscount had explained, in the remarkable speech to which the House had just listened, how it was for a number of reasons he had supported the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), and he said he held with the latter, that the laws in Ireland, as they affected rich and poor, were unequal. If so, it was the obvious commentary upon that, that it was to the right hon. Gentleman and his Government that we, in a large proportion, owed the legislation of recent years; and it was strange that, holding such a sense of the inequality of the laws, he made no effort to remedy the evil. The noble Viscount, in citing the opposition to the Government measure, claimed opposition from the whole of the civilized world—a wide and general statement difficult to accept. He quoted Bishops and Archbishops; and certainly there was the charm of novelty in hearing, from the other side, the opinion of an Archbishop put forward as a convincing argument. The noble Viscount went further, and made a statement that in consequence of the action of the Government a very different view would be taken of crime in the future than had been taken in the past. The House was familiar with the allegation that violence and outrage, connected with agrarian disputes, were not crimes; but the House was scarcely prepared for the declaration from the Front Bench that hereafter, if crimes and outrages were committed, they would be met only with a shrug of the shoulders. He only regretted that the usual occupants of the Front Opposition Bench were not present, so the House could not judge by their manner if they accepted the statement of the noble Viscount. He (Mr. Dalrymple), however, trusted it was not generally shared by them. From some of the speeches delivered from the other side, it would seem that there was no cause whatever for action on the part of the Government; but by what was by courtesy called the regular Opposition—though a more irregular Opposition never existed—there was no denial of the fact that there was interference with the exercise of legal rights; that to some extent, indeed, there was a condition of anarchy and crime in Ireland; but they said—"The laws are to blame, and you would not accept our particular panacea of Home Rule." But, as he had said, the responsibility for the state of the law rested with those who made such a failure as the legislation of 1881 has been. It was a curious and extraordinary doctrine to lay down, that because the laws were said to be unjust, therefore they were not be obeyed and enforced. He could hardly conjecture the state of things that would rise should such teaching acquire general acceptance. Last night the House had from the hon. Member for West Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) a defence of Boycotting, on the ground that it existed in England, instancing the Church of England as Boycotting those who did not belong to it, and that his brother was excluded from the magistracy of Bradford. To hear the remarks of the noble Viscount, it might be supposed that, had the Government introduced remedial legislation first, repressive legislation would have received careful consideration at the hands of the regular Opposition.

Viscount KILCOURSIE: In regard to remedial legislation, what I said was if I considered it adequate.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: A judicious qualification to apply to it; and probably the right hon. Gentleman the late Prime Minister would have added other qualifications. But right hon. Gentlemen opposite condemned the proposed legislation of the Government before they had an idea what it was; and it was perfectly certain they were quite prepared to condemn any legislative proposal of the Conservative Government. There had been contemptuous references to the opinions of the Judges; but hon. Members might remember with how much impressiveness the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), whom nobody expected to find consistent, had, not two years ago, in July, 1885, denounced those on that (the Ministerial) side of the House for not accepting the opinions of Judges; and it was his duty, at all events, he said, not to allow the Judges and juries of Ireland to be thrown over by the Government of the Queen. It was not, however, the Government that had thrown over the Judges now; but it was what was called the regular Opposition. He sometimes wondered what these right hon. Gentlemen would have said had the Government not brought forward some such measure as was now before the House. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian would have compassed sea and land to make one proselyte against them. Who knew what stores of vituperation had been lost to the country, because the Government had taken the present step? There was no knowing what would have happened in the circumstances had not the Leader of the Party opposite and other right hon. Gentlemen become what they were now—Home Rulers, and allies of the hon. Member for Cork. The House was familiar with the prejudices caused by the word "coercion;" but he held that the word, as misrepresented on the other side of the House, was grossly misused for the purpose of prejudice, exaggeration, and mere irritation. The word "coercion" was freely used; but this was not a Bill of coercion, but of protection. There would be no coercion to men who obeyed the law, any more than the new Rule of the House would affect any Member who desired to place his knowledge, information, or even humour at the service of the House. The Rule would only affect those who transgressed the rule and principle of debate. Last summer, standing upon an eminence overlooking the town he had the honour to represent, he had some of the prominent buildings pointed out. "What is that red brick building far below?" he asked. "Oh," said his informant, "that is the Coercion House." That was a use of the word that conveyed the truth; but there was no Coercion House or Coercion Bill for law-abiding subjects. There was, however, coercion of the strongest kind for those who broke the law, and infringed with violence their neighbour's rights. There had been a diminution of crime in Ireland, it was contended, and anyone who cared—and all must care—for the welfare of Ireland would rejoice if that were true; but when it was stated that, for crime, there had been substituted agitation of a Constitutional sort, that he absolutely denied. Admitting the diminution of crime, yet the condition of the country was such that un-Constitutional influences were at work preventing the exercise of public and private liberty. Again, Unionists were constantly told that the great majority of the Irish people were against them. When so much stress was laid upon the National representation in the House he sometimes doubted whether there was liberty enough to allow of a real representation of Irish opinion. The fact was sometimes overlooked that the minority against the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) was a large one. The Return of the Elections for 1885 showed that, out of 575,000 electors, in round numbers only 295,000 supported the hon. Member for Cork, the remainder voting against him, or abstaining from voting, so that only a little more than half the electors were actually supporters of the hon. Member. They had had many recantations recently, such as they had from the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries (Mr. R. T. Reid) the other day, and last night the hon. Member for West Bradford recanted the support he had given to repressive legislation; and it was in reference to the latter that he recalled a statement of a mischievous character. The hon. Member said that in 1882 repressive legislation was hurried on, and the Party supported it because of the sad calamity of that year in Phœnix Park; but let the House and the country recollect that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bury, Lancashire (Sir Henry James) had said, and his words made a great impression, that he saw the draft of the measure that was proposed simultaneously with the occurrence of the sad event referred to, showing that its preparation was quite apart from the murders, nor was it hurried thereby. The truth was, the hon. Member for West Bradford was one of those Members of the House never in the wrong. He supported strongly a particular policy when proposed by his own Leader, which he condemned when it was proposed by his political opponents; because meanwhile his Leader had adopted a policy of Home Rule, or some later nostrum for the pacification of Ireland. Those who opposed the measure now incurred a great responsibility. It was a matter of supreme importance. It was no mere Party demand, though he held strongly that that Party would gain most in the long run who most completely effaced itself for the common welfare at a moment of common peril to all.

MR. BROADHURST (Nottingham, W.) said, it was not a frequent thing for him to intrude himself on the notice of the House; but he felt that the important nature of the proposal made to Parliament by Her Majesty's Government fully justified the humblest among Members in taking part in the debate, to state to the House, and through the House to their constituents, some reasons why he, and those with whom he acted, should oppose with all their force the measure the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. A. J. Balfour) desired to introduce. From speakers supporting the Government, he often heard charges made against right hon. and hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of inconsistency. They were taunted with recantation, and changing their opinion and their policy; but if some of the hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House were led against their inclination to support a policy of coercion in 1881 and 1882, he held it to be no disgrace to any of them to declare that they would return to the natural policy of their Party in opposing coercion, after experience had shown them its utter and constant failure. By what means, through what influences, was the policy of the Government in 1881 and 1882 obtained, and what induced hon. Members sitting below the Gangway to support the Ministry of the day? One reason was that they had the utmost confidence in the integrity, the intention, and the determination of the Ministry of that day to apply remedial as well as coercive measures to Ireland. That faith in the intention of the Government was not misplaced. It was fully and amply justified by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone)—the policy he proposed to apply to Ireland during the Session of last year. And why were they so suspicious of the policy of the present Government; why had they so little confidence in the proposed remedial measures which it was understood were to follow the introduction of the Coercion Bill? It was perfectly fresh in the memories of hon. Gentlemen who sat in the House in the last Parliament that the Conservative Party, when occupying the Opposition Benches, were goading the Ministry of the time with all their influence, clamouring constantly for coercion; but when the Government proposed their measures of relief, then it was seen that the steam of the Conservative Party had spent itself in coercion. Delay and debate on every clause and line of the remedial legislation then introduced was the order of the day with Members of the Opposition. What reason had they to believe that the Government would recant from their ancient policy of coercion without relief? They had no evidence whatever of it. They had a description given of the Bill by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland; and he (Mr. Broadhurst) should say it was a Bill which for its severity had never been equalled. ["No, no!"] He had yet to learn that any Ministry had ever before proposed to suspend the liberties of a nation in a permanent form. Even the worst of all previous Coercion Acts had been limited in time; but the Government proposed that for their present Bill there should be no limit whatever. What confidence could they have that the Government, having obtained the power to coerce a nation, would show equal industry and equal anxiety to produce and bring forth their measures of relief? They were told that a measure of relief to the Irish tenants for some of the oppression which now weighed upon them was to be introduced some time this week in "another place." The very fact of a measure of relief being introduced in "another place" was sufficient to at once condemn that measure. What measure of relief could they expect to emanate from the place across the way? ["Oh, oh!"] They knew that the treatment of measures of relief by the House of Lords, whenever such measures had left the portals of that House, was that all shape, all form and power for good, had usually been removed from them; and, therefore, they had no confidence whatever in that House as a place to pass measures of relief for the people. What did the Government mean by asking the House of Commons to give them every facility for passing a strong measure of repression, before they introduced into that House some evidence of their earnestness to redress the wrongs of the Irish tenants. He took down, at the time the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was speaking, some of the words in which he described what his Bill was to be when it saw the daylight. If he (Mr. Broadhurst) were correct in his notes, he understood the right hon. Gentleman to be quoting from the terms of the measure itself, and not to be generally describing it. The right hon. Gentleman stated that the Lord Lieutenant—or, at least, so he (Mr. Broadhurst) understood him — was to have the power of deciding what were dangerous associations, and then to apply to Parliament to issue regulations and control with regard to them. What were dangerous associations? The Lord Lieutenant would have to define what a dangerous association was. There were very few Lord Lieutenants that he (Mr. Broadhurst) knew anything about into whose hands he should like to trust the definition of what was a dangerous association. Why, there was not a Radical political association in the country but what was looked upon as a dangerous association by the Conservative Party.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Dangerous associations will be defined in the Bill by the purposes for which they exist.

Mr. BROADHURST said, they would not be able to tell how far the power of the Lord Lieutenant was weakened, or controlled, or lessened, until the measure of the Government saw the daylight. At present, he could only discuss the Bill by the scanty information which it had pleased the Chief Secretary for Ireland to submit to the House of Commons. Now, he would remind the House that there was a dangerous association in this country in 1832, when the Dorsetshire labourers met in council to declare that 6*s.* per week wages paid to them by the landowners of that part of the country were insufficient to maintain themselves, their wives, and families; and that was considered to be a dangerous association. And what followed the meeting of the dangerous association? Its victims were sent by the Government of the day into penal servitude for a great number of years. He (Mr. Broadhurst) had that day the great pleasure and satisfaction of knowing that he had been for 30 years a member of what, for more than 20 years out of that time, was described as a dangerous association, and one which was controlled by the law of the land. That dangerous association had since become a part of the Constitution of the country, and to-day its members were protected by the law; but how had they won that protection? It was by persisting in the policy of carrying on agitations which were, under the old law, described as illegal and dangerous to the well-being of the community. And how did they know that the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland would not, in Ireland, give the same liberal interpretation as to what were dangerous associations — aye, even a much wider interpretation—to that which was given in the case of trades unions in England? And then the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland also told the House that one of the chief features of his proposed Bill was to deal with and destroy intimidation in Ireland. What was intimidation? Who was to describe and define what constituted intimidation? So far as he (Mr. Broadhurst) knew, there had never been any very clear definition of what constituted intimidation. He knew that, during the period before the trades unions of this country became lawful associations, for one man to sneeze at another was liable to be construed into an act of intimidation; and for looking at one another, for speaking to another man and woman, the wives of workmen in this country were imprisoned under the detestable law. Was it possible that the Government could expect that friends of his, who were at the heads of their respective trades unions, could agree for one moment to any such proposals as were contained in their Bill, which sought to re-establish in Ireland all the worse features of the old laws of this country, and which were passed to restrain workmen from exercising their just rights and their full liberties as citizens? What his experience of prosecutions for intimidation amounted to was this—that, in the case of disputes between capital and labour, they very frequently enabled what were called the wastrels of society to concoct cases against honest workmen, and, by persecution and prosecution, to send honesty to gaol, while laziness and worthlessness were at large. That was the net result of his experience of the law as to intimidation during its reign in this country. What were the consequences of freeing the people, of making combinations and associations of all kinds perfectly free and open? The result had been this—that whereas, previously to that measure of freedom, prosecutions were constant, since freedom had become the law prosecutions were exceedingly infrequent, and they scarcely ever heard of any of the so-called offences being committed. The most serious part of the Bill of the Chief Secretary for Ireland to his mind, however, after the proposal that all these combinations or associations between the people should be illegal, was the proposal to transfer trials of the victims into a country and among a people who had no knowledge of the sentiment, who had no knowledge of the people, and who, therefore, to the best of the belief of the Government, might be safely relied upon to find verdicts of guilty. When that part of his Bill was unfolded by the right hon. Gentleman, hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on the Opposition side suggested that the cases should be sent to Aldershot for trial. But he thought the Government would be doing much better, and coming much nearer the old and ancient laws of the dark ages, if they ordered the trial to take place at the Old Bailey, a name associated with prosecutions, and prosecutions of the worst and most infamous description. Therefore, the Old Bailey was the most natural place to try Irish prisoners if they were to be brought to London at all. But he would like to ask the Government whether they imagined that London jurymen were going to constitute themselves the executioners of the victims of rack-renting landlords in Irelands? He believed the Government would find out their mistake if they attempted to pass that part of their measure into law. They would then find that they had been grievously mistaken, and that jurymen of London would repudiate being called on to do the dirty work of Dublin Castle, and to carry out oppression as instituted in Ireland. The fact was that the people of this country were heartily sick of the gory work of Irish oppression. He was there to confess that he did vote for measures of coercion under circumstances which he had previously described. But he had already stated the reason which led him so reluctantly to follow a great Minister in that policy, and had fully justified the course he and others took upon that occasion; and he, for one, at any rate, had the less cause to regret the policy to which he was then a party, since the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian had inaugurated a policy of freedom and equality for the Irish nation. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Haddington (Mr. Haldane), speaking the other night of the severity of the measure introduced by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, expressed the opinion that the Government could pass the Bill as it stood. He (Mr. Broadhurst) did not think so. Its members were falling away in an unmistakable manner. The hon. and learned Member who sat for the Woodstock Division of Oxford (Mr. F. W. Maclean), speaking on Tuesday night, had described the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian as being like the tide when it was ebbing fast away. That appeared to be quite contrary to the facts. The tide of the right hon. Gentleman was rising fast throughout the country. In five bye-elections since the General Election Liberal Members had been returned by vast and increasing majorities. [An hon. MEMBER: St. George's, Hanover Square.] He was surprised at any hon. Gentleman alluding to a constituency like that of St. George's as gauging the measure of popular opinion in this country. He (Mr. Broadhurst) would as soon think of going to the House of Lords, and asking for the registration of public opinion on the Land Question, on the Church, or on the privileges of birth, as he would think of going to St. George's, Hanover Square, to test the public opinion of the country upon any great popular question. He said the tide was rising in favour of the Liberal Party, and the tide of the Government was receding. While the majorities of the Opposition were increasing, those of the Government were decreasing. In that House they had seen hon. Gentlemen not recanting, but returning to the fold to their first faith, to their natural position, and that would be found to go on increasing. The Government knew, as well as any of the Opposition knew, that some of the main features of their Bill must be cut out before they could hope to secure for it a second reading. The Government knew the significance of the meeting which was announced to take place to-morrow (Thursday) of what were called the Liberal Unionists. The Government knew very well that whatever the orders of that meeting were, they would have to obey them. That order, he felt sure, would be that the Government must lighten their measure, and cut out many of its objectionable provisions; and, unless they at once agreed to adopt those conditions, they and their measures too would have to change places within a very short time. He apologized for troubling the House so long; but on a measure of such an extraordinary character, such unheard of severity, as that which had been introduced by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, it was the duty of every hon. Member of the House, no matter how humble or obscure he might be, to make his opinion and the opinions of his constituents clearly and forcibly known, to declare that he would, to the best of his ability, prevent such a measure ever being passed into law.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.) said, he agreed in the view that it was the duty of even the humblest Members of the House to express their opinions against the measure proposed by Her Majesty's Government. He felt certain that the very large majority of his constituents would endorse his opinion that the measure was useless and unnecessary, and was being forced through the House with indecent haste. The landlords themselves were fairly content with the manner in which their rents were coming in. One of his friends met returning from the Continent a week ago a noble Lord who had property both in England and in Ireland, and who said his Irish rents had only been reduced by 20 per cent, while he was not receiving his English rents at all. There was no abnormal condition of crime in Ireland, and the statistics given by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) were not of a character to cause special alarm. They represented a state of things which could be met by ordinary legal proceedings. In looking for the reasons which had induced the Government to propose this measure, they would see the handiwork of the hon. and gallant Member for Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) and his brother Colonels. Those men of "blood and iron" were perpetually urging their counsel upon the First Lord of the Treasury, and he never heard the hon. and gallant Member for Armagh addressing the House without thinking of the scene in *Hamlet* where Hamlet's uncle was pouring poison into the ear of the King. If hon. Members could not imagine the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) arrayed in the Royal purple, they might recall the play of *Faust*, and see in the scene between Mephistopheles and Martha a picture of what took place in that House. It was to the pernicious counsels of the military contingent sitting behind the First Lord of the Treasury that they owed, to a great extent, the introduction of this measure; but the Liberal Unionists were also largely responsible for it. No such measure could have been brought forward by the Government without the consent of the Leaders of the Liberal Unionists, who might be described as the Tory Members of the Conservative Party on the Opposition side of the House. Upon them rested a serious responsibility, for which the Government would call them to account. Some of the followers of the Government seemed to have a very vague and foggy notion of why they would support the Bill. If, as one of them alleged, the Irish tenantry could not earn a livelihood even were they relieved from all rent, was it not unnecessary, cowardly, and dastardly for any Government to bring in a measure of coercion? As they all knew, the severe fall in prices had caused rents to fall into arrear; evictions had followed, and outrages ensued upon evictions. Before the French Revolution, in exactly the same way agrarian outrages took place, and in every country where the peasantry were alienated from the possession of the land it was always found that until they righted themselves such deplorable occurrences would reproduce themselves. In a passage which had been frequently quoted, Sir James Caird had said that if the prices of agricultural produce in February, 1886, were continued the economical rent would disappear from the holdings of 538,000 tenants in Ireland. There had, however, since been a very considerable fall in those prices, and therefore the tenants were much worse off. The falls in prices were as follow:—Barley, which in 1886 cost 13*s.* 1½*d.* per barrel of 224lb., was this year 12*s.* 7½*d.*; beef, 52*s.* 6*d.* per cwt. in 1886, was now 46*s.* 3*d.*; pork, 41*s.* 3*d.* in 1886, 38*s.* In 1887 hay had fallen from 3*s.* 2*d.* per cwt. to 2*s.* 6*d.*, straw from 2*s.* 9*d.* to 2*s.* 1*d.*; while butter, which had been 90*s.* in 1886, had through accidental circumstances risen this year to 103*s.* With regard to the "anecdotal" remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), and his instances of Boycotting in Ireland, he (Mr. Schwann) would like also to be allowed to give the result of his first experience of this offence. Being at one time in Fermoy, he was asked by his Loyalist friends to attend a sitting of the Court there, the inducement held out to him being that he would hear a case of Boycotting, which would give him some insight into Irish character. He accordingly attended the Court, and he heard a person named Punch charged by a certain Captain St. Leger Barry—who was a magistrate—with having refused to serve him in his shop the week before. Mr. Punch was a grocer, and, as was often the case in Ireland, combined that trade with the business of liquor selling. Mr. Punch absolutely denied the statement, and summoned Captain Barry for perjury. No attempt was made at defence, but it was unnecessary to say that Captain Barry was not committed to the Assizes for perjury. The offence had been committed in Captain Barry's own Court when application for renewal of his licence was made by Mr. Punch. That was a sample of the manner in which the law was administered in Ireland, not only by the present Government, but by all Governments. They all used the engine of the law to promote their own political ends. There was in Ireland—as Sir Redvers Buller had stated—one law for the rich and another for the poor. In fact, the laws there were principally for the rich. No doubt there were cases of Boycotting in Ireland, but offences of that nature were not unknown in England, as those who were familiar with the operations of the Primrose League were aware. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Yes; that was a melancholy fact, and he knew no reason why hon. Gentlemen should not hear it stated, however unpleasant it might be to them. He complained that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, in giving his cases of Boycotting, had often referred to the offenders being "drunken fellows," and pointed out that the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) would experience great difficulty in converting the Captain Barry to whom he had alluded to teetotal principles. With regard to the proposal of the Government to transfer the venue of Irish trials from Ireland to England, he agreed that it would be an insult to the Irish people if it were carried out, and held that it was one which they should resent in the highest degree. It would be going back to the legislation of the middle ages, and he thought the Government had taken a most unfortunate step in embodying such a proposal in their measure. They would have to retract it, he believed; in fact, he was convinced that when the Bill came out of Committee—if it ever did come out—it would bear a very feeble resemblance to the scheme which originally went into Committee. The Government were taking a false step in bringing in a measure for coercion at the present moment. They were attempting to interfere with the legal rights of the Irish people, and this action would unquestionably be resented by the country at large. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had appealed to "liberty." Well, they were becoming accustomed to that sainted name being used in the House in support of measures which one would have thought it would have been impossible to vindicate. The closure, forsooth, had been promoted by the Government in order to foster "liberty of debate," and now coercion was proposed as a means of advancing the liberty of action of our Irish fellow-subjects. But he believed there were happier times in store for Ireland, and that no very great period would elapse before a true union would be cemented between the two peoples. He believed that the remedial measures of the Government would be small, and would be found altogether unsatisfactory. However, ere long Ireland would receive real liberty, and some Irish patriot—the hon. Member for Cork, the hon. Member for Mayo, or the mighty Davitt—would be able to raise a statue to Liberty in Ireland, and in unveiling it would be able to say, with President Cleveland—

> "This is a statue of Liberty, no longer grasping in her hand the thunderbolts of terror and death, but holding aloft the light of liberty which illumines the way of man's enfranchisement."

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): Sir, I think that hon. Gentlemen who spoke from the opposite Benches must have felt some inconvenience in their endeavours to discuss the provisions of a Bill which is not before the House. The hon. Member for West Nottingham (Mr. Broadhurst) said it seemed to him that the object of the Bill is to subject to pains and penalties all those who, like himself, had been connected with trades unions. The hon. Member admits that he voted for the Coercion Bill of 1882, and I assume that the hon. Member had at that time as much regard for trades unions as at this, and I can assure the hon. Member that he and his friends and all connected with those associations will be just as free to carry on their operations as under the Act of 1882. There seems to be a great difference of opinion whether or not the Government have made out their case for the introduction of this Bill. I wish, in the few observations I shall make to lay before the House the facts concerning which there is no dispute on either side, and I shall be perfectly ready then to leave the House, and, if necessary, the public outside, to draw their own conclusions from those facts. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) asserted that we had not substantiated the shadow of a case. But what the right hon. Gentleman and hon. Members below and above the Gangway opposite forget is what last year the right hon. Gentleman, in moving the second reading of his Home Rule Bill, distinctly gave as the foundation of his measure. What was the argument that pervaded and permeated that Bill and the speeches which he made in introducing it? The right Gentleman said over and over again that the first and primary duty of any Government that came into Office was to restore social order in Ireland, and he admitted that everyone was agreed on that point. I will take just one passage from many that he used to show how clearly he laid that proposition before the House. He said—

> "The Bill is proposed in order to meet the first necessity of civilized society. Social order is not broken up in Ireland, it is undermined, it is sapped, and by general and universal confession it imperatively requires to be dealt with."

He then described his remedy, which he preferred to ours because it dealt not only with symptoms, but with causes, and he concluded thus—

> "We all agree upon this, that social order in Ireland imperatively requires to be dealt with; but when we come to the method, then, unfortunately, our differences come into view."—(3 *Hansard*, [305] 596.)

What were the proposals by which the right hon. Gentleman sought to restore social order in Ireland? He proposed to restore social order by handing over the whole of the administration of justice and of law to those who he admitted had brought the law into disrepute; and in making those proposals he and the right hon. Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley)—who knew what they were about—made provision for the consequences of that peculiar method of restoring law and order, because in the Bill there was a special clause by which all those civilians and Judges who were connected with the administration of justice were to have special facilities and precautions taken for getting out of the country; and the right hon. Member for Newcastle himself admitted that special precautions would have to be taken with reference to the police records, because if the names of those who had assisted the police in detecting crime were known, their lives, under the new system that was to have been set up, would not have been safe there. The right hon. Gentleman gave us distinctly to understand that he would not commit or entrust the police records to the new authorities. All of us took a certain part in popular meetings during the last Elections, and I contend that of all the proposals which the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian made, there was none that was found to be so repugnant to the just instincts of the working classes of this country as the proposal to hand over the whole administration of law and justice in Ireland to the enemies of both. [*Cheers and Home Rule dissent.*] That proposal, therefore, is dead and buried. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] I say it is practically dead. The hon. Member for South Donegal (Mr. Mac Neill), who opened the debate to-day, said that the Government were, without pretext, proposing an Algerian Code for the Irish people. When the present Government came into Office we were perfectly aware of the difficulty of the Irish problem; and, acting on the advice of his Colleagues, my right hon. Friend the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) undertook an arduous and thankless task, because it was admitted by hon. Members on both sides of the House that there was not one man in the House who had greater knowledge of Irish affairs, or who was more likely to be able to carry on the government of that country to a successful issue without recourse to anything beyond the ordinary powers of the law. My right hon. Friend spoke twice upon the subject this Session, and informed this House and the country that he believed it would have been possible to dispense with this measure if it had not been for the action of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite. A Member of that Party well capable of representing it went over to Chicago—I mean the hon. Member for North Wexford (Mr. J. E. Redmond)—who, whenever he speaks in this House, speaks with ability on behalf of his Party. That hon. Member the other night did not dispute the quotation from his speech at Chicago, in which he laid it down as a fundamental proposition that not only was the government of Ireland by England impossible, but that it was the duty of Irishmen to make it impossible. The hon. Member for North Wexford, following up that proposition, addressed an audience in December last in a speech that was reported in *The Enniscorthy Guardian* of December 11, and conveyed it to his audience as tidings of great joy. He said—

> "We have every reason to congratulate ourselves to-day on what is nothing short of a most important victory for our people and our cause."

What was that victory? Why, that the hon. Member and his Friends had so conducted themselves as to render it necessary for the Government to introduce a Coercion Bill. The hon. Member said—

> "When Mr. Gladstone was defeated in England last year, and when the Tories came into power, they boasted that they could govern Ireland by means of the ordinary law. . . . . Home Rule was defeated at the last Election in Great Britain, and I say advisedly that if in the face of that defeat the Tories had been able to rule Ireland with the ordinary law the result would have been in England and Scotland to throw back our cause perhaps for a generation, and to give the lie direct to the prophecy of Mr. Gladstone. . . . . We have been able to force the Government to give up the ordinary law and fall back once more on coercion. . . . . I believe that the day they propose a Coercion Act, that moment shall be their death-knell, and will herald Mr. Gladstone's opportunity to power once more."

[*Cheers.*] Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite who cheer that sentiment are annoyed with the Liberal Unionists because they are at one with us. Is not that speech an explanation of why they act with us? That agitation in Ireland was not carried on for the benefit of the poor tenants, but that the Government which might discharge the primary duty of maintaining social order in Ireland might be torn to pieces, and that the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian might be able to resuscitate the policy of his Government which was emphatically repudiated by the country six months before.

MR. J. E. REDMOND (Wexford, N.): I am sure the noble Lord would not wish to misrepresent me. I would ask him—Did I not express in that speech my appreciation of the conduct of the people in preserving social order, and did I not say that the triumph of our policy lay in the fact of the utter absence of lawlessness and crime?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I did not say that the hon. Member incited to crime and outrage.

MR. J. E. REDMOND: I am sorry to interrupt the noble Lord again. What I understood him to say was that I had congratulated the people on an important victory, that victory being that we had conducted ourselves so as to render a Coercion Bill necessary.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Yes; and the agitation was managed so cleverly as that there should not appear to be an increase of outrages. [*Laughter.*] Those who laugh will understand why the Government do not rest their measure entirely on the amount of crime included in the statistics. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian the other day said that no case was ever presented to the House on such unsatisfactory and meagre statistics of crime; and he proceeded to draw an elaborate analysis between the amount of crime perpetrated last year in connection with agrarian offences and the amount committed this year. He complained, and perhaps with some justice, that the figures had been substantiated to the House by which he could draw a comparison off-hand between the two years—that he had been compelled to do so himself, and the result of his calculation was that there was an increase of agrarian crime, independent of threatening letters, of only six offences in the past year over the preceding year. Now, I have looked into the matter, and I am afraid that in his calculation he has fallen into a serious blunder. He has over-estimated the number of threatening letters in 1886, and under-estimated those in 1885; and the result is this—that the number of offences, other than threatening letters, in 1885 was 489, and in 1886 it was 607. It will be generally found that of the offences connected with agrarian outrages about 50 per cent can be taken to represent threatening letters. The agrarian offences in the past year were 1,025. Since 1869 there are only four years in which agrarian outrages have been greater in number than they were in 1886—namely, the years 1870, 1880, 1881, and 1882. In every single one of those years the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian was in Office; in every one of those years he either demanded from Parliament, or had in operation, a stringent Coercion Bill. But he says you must rely on criminal statistics, and that this House has never assented to a Coercion Bill unless it has full and satisfactory statistics before it. Now, the one year in which the amount of agrarian crime was smallest in the whole annals of Ireland was 1867. There were then 87 agrarian offences, of which 32 were threatening letters; and, therefore, if there was a year in which it would have been impossible to obtain the assent of Parliament to a Coercion Bill it was that year. In that year the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian came down and demanded the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, the greatest interference that can be made with the Constitutional liberty of the subject; and he carried the Bill through all its stages in a single Sitting.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): Was not that in connection with the Fenian rising?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Yes; it was in connection with Fenianism; but does the hon. Member tell me that Fenianism is dead now? No one will dispute that the Land League and the National League are the same; their organization is the same; their leaders are practically the same, except that a certain number were who were associated with the Land League were compelled to leave the country when the Crimes Act was in operation. The right hon. Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) has changed his opinions; but he has left a valuable record of the statements of fact he made as Home Secretary, and of the reasons he gave why the Government, of which he was a Member, were bound to consider and to take action on them. On the 9th of March, 1881, in Committee on the Peace Preservation Bill, the right hon. Member for Derby said—

> "I do not accept the view of hon. Gentlemen opposite, because they say that there is no Fenianism now. My case is that the present movement is nothing else than Fenianism. We have evidence abundant and complete that it is nothing but Fenianism under another name. Its objects are precisely those of the Fenian conspiracy. The reason why we adopt summary jurisdiction without reference to juries in Ireland is that we consider, in the present state of Ireland, summary jurisdiction should be exercised, as it was under the Act of 1870, without the alternative of trial by jury, as under the Act of 1875."—(3 *Hansard*, [259] 676-7.)

On the third reading of the Bill on the 11th of March, 1881, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "Am I right or wrong in saying that this Land League organization is really Fenian and Fenian in its character? I say exactly what I believe about the matter. It is perfectly true, as the hon. Member stated, that the Fenian organization endeavoured in former times to attack the English Government by open force; but, having found that that course could not be successful, it is my firm conviction that exactly the same object has been, and is being, prosecuted by other and more indirect methods. The hon. Member for Tipperary (Mr. Dillon) said that the Land League had three objects in view—first, to paralyze the Government; secondly, to obstruct Parliament; and, thirdly, to supersede the action of the law. But if they had accomplished these objects, they would have done all that the Fenian organization contemplated—they would have overthrown the Constitution as much as if they had attacked it successfully by open force."

And in the same speech the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I speak of the hon. Member for Tipperary. I have no right to say that he has any connection with the Fenian organization. I do not know it, and I cannot prove it; but his language in Ireland was precisely that which was used by the Fenian organization. We have been told that the Land League is a vigorous movement for Constitutional purposes. If that were so, I should strongly condemn any man or any Government that would interfere with it. But is that so? When we see men seeking the support of arms to assist their purposes, and find members of the Land League in communication with Communism in Paris, and Fenianism in America, then, I say, the maxim applies—'*Noscitur ex sociis.*' Can anyone be blind to these facts? I did not intend to detain the House so long; but when the hon. Member asks us why it was that the Liberal Party came to the conclusion that these measures were necessary, and necessary, too, to press them forward through the House of Commons by means which I regret as much as any man can do, I say it was because they were convinced that the state of things in Ireland was not for the welfare of the country, and I may add because the Liberal Party never has had, and never will have, anything in common with Communism or with Fenianism."—(3 *Hansard*, [259] 842-3-4.)

Not only are these the avowed objects of the National League, but the very argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle has been that the League is likely to obtain its object, and therefore we had better give way at once. I do not say that Fenianism occupies now the same position that it did formerly, but it is a factor which has to be taken into consideration. It is asserted that the object of this measure is not to restore social order so much as to enable landlords to exact impossible rents. That statement is accepted, if I may judge by the silence with which it is received. I do not wish to go at length into the Land Question. I have always said that the agitation in Ireland was agrarian and not political, and if you can eliminate the agrarian element from it agitation will succumb. This is the only agitation which has lasted, and it is because it is associated with the Land Question. When remedial proposals are made it is essential that we should understand what are the difficulties of the Land Question in Ireland. They do not arise from defects of the law, as far as occupying tenants are concerned, because the law is more favourable to them than it is in any other country in the world. But they arise from the physical and economical conditions which surround the agriculture of Ireland. There are two sides to the Land Question in Ireland, and we in this House only get one of them. In the hilly districts there is much moor and barren land under cultivation; and in the valleys and other parts there is as rich grazing and pasture land as is to be found in any country in the world. It is on the barren soil of the mountainous districts that you have a prolific and congested population. The object of the Land League in the Plan of Campaign has been to utilize the indigence of the tenants in the poor districts, to force the tenants in the richer districts not to pay the rents they otherwise could pay, and, having thus amalgamated the interests of those who live on the rich lands with the interests of those who live on the poor and barren lands, to utilize the Land Question as a lever to raise a political agitation, and in obtaining national independence. Therefore, when any proposal is made to deal satisfactorily with the Land Question, hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway naturally object, because it deprives them of a fulcrum by which they hope to overthrow the

Union. We are asked why we do not deal with the Land Question first. In answer I will quote a sentence from page 7 of the Report of the Royal Commission—

> "The people are more afraid of Boycotting, which depends for its success on the probability of outrage, than they are of the judgments of the Courts of Law. This unwritten law in some districts is supreme."

Will anyone dispute that? Turning to page 8 I find it asserted—

> "The decision of that Court (the Land Court) is absolutely binding on the landlord, but public opinion in many parts of the country does not recognize any binding effect of such a decision on the tenant, who, if dissatisfied, may join a combination for the purpose of obtaining a still further reduction."

So long as that is the state of affairs, it is useless to set about amending the law in Ireland until the Government has secured that the law, whatever it is, shall have more attention paid to it than at present. That is the reason why we were compelled to introduce this measure first. It is asserted that there are landlords in Ireland who will endeavour to make use of the powers which the Bill confers for the purpose of evicting their tenants. There may be bad landlords who may attempt to utilize a stringent law. The Government, therefore, propose to introduce immediately into the House of Lords a Bill which will render it almost impossible that any increased facilities for landlords acting harshly towards tenants can be claimed under this Bill. We further propose, later on, to introduce a larger measure for the purpose, if possible, of settling the Land Question. It is sometimes assumed that landlords and all connected with them uphold the existing system in Ireland. I, myself, have never been enamoured of the existing system. It may be described in a sentence. You have 35 tenants to one landlord. In discussing the system the tendency is to cultivate popularity rather than a sense of justice. A demand is made in certain quarters to reduce the rents fixed by the Land Courts because prices have fallen. Yes; but will you propose to raise reduced rents if prices should rise? [An hon. MEMBER: No, no!] The hon. Member who says "No" is not guided by a sense of justice; and so long as you have 35 tenants to one landlord there is, to my mind, a very serious obstacle to the smooth working of the land system in Ireland. I believe that the system of large estates in England has worked well for agriculture, although, possibly, it has not produced very good results to the owners. But a system of large estates, to my mind, can only work well when the holdings are of such a size that the landlords can make the permanent improvements. In Ireland many holdings are so small that it is impossible for the landlords to do that. This is one of the great difficulties of the problem. That which is of advantage to the single holding is not unfrequently detrimental to the whole estate. Then there is unnecessary friction between landlords and tenants, and this is not for the public good. Therefore, I have always held that it was for us, as the only practical conclusion, to devise some system by which the present system of land tenure should be put an end to. This result may be desired by the hon. Member for Cork and his Friends, but it is obstructed by the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. I am sorry to introduce anything of a personal character into this debate, but a practice has arisen amongst certain hon. Members which I think is contrary to the practice of the House—and almost an abuse of its forms—of making attacks on individuals without giving notice. The hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) the other night attacked different landowners, and among them myself and my family. He said—

> "It was believed that the Hamiltons were anxious to have a Coercion Act because without such an Act they could not levy their rents. They were regarded by their own tenants and by the Ulster farmers as rack-renters."

The hon. Member went on to speak of what he regarded as the unhappy relations between the Duke of Abercorn and his tenants, and to wish for some means by which this unfortunate state of affairs could be put an end to. The hon. Member for East Mayo was distressed, not for the first time, at the relations between the Duke of Abercorn and his tenants, and he objected not because the relations were bad, but because they were so good. [An hon. MEMBER: Prove it.] I am going to prove it. Before the Redistribution Act of 1885 was passed North Tyrone constituted a separate constituency, and the tenants of the Duke of Abercorn formed a large proportion of the voters in that constituency. On behalf of these rack-rented and down-trodden tenants first appeared the present hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy). Another distinguished Member of that Party took his place—the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon)—who then made exactly the same statement as he had made in the House of Commons, and all these tenants, so far as they knew, voted against him. These Gentlemen spoke in ignorance of the condition of these tenants. They were all well-to-do, independent men. At the Election in 1886 fresh tactics were resorted to. It was no use starting a full-blown Nationalist, and so a hybrid article was produced in the shape of a gentleman whose one claim to the recommendation of the tenants was that he had been a Sub-Commissioner, and in the course of his duty had somewhat favoured the tenants.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Mr. Speaker, I rise to Order. I wish to know whether an attack on Judges in this House is in Order? Whether the noble Lord is in Order in saying a Judge of the Land Court was in favour of the tenants?

MR. SPEAKER: I do not gather that the noble Lord makes any reflection on a Judge of the Superior Court. The Sub-Commissioner is not a Judge of a Superior Court.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I wish to ask whether it was allowable to attack a Judge of an inferior Court in this way?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I am not making any attack; I am merely stating what is a fact—that Mr. Wylie was recommended as an Assistant Commissioner who had been a friend to the tenants. But the rack-rented, down-trodden tenantry supported the brother of their landlord. But why was this charge made? It is simply ridiculous to say that my brother or my family want a Coercion Bill to assist them in obtaining their rents. There is no property in the North of Ireland in which tenant-right is higher in value. This charge was made in order to hold up to public obloquy those whose public duty it is to support this Bill by suggesting that they are actuated by personal motives. The hon. Member for East Mayo told us in plain language what he intended to do, and in so doing he furnished the strongest personal argument that could be advanced in support of this Bill. He informed us that he intended to promote the Plan of Campaign, and that, if he was put in prison, upon the Chief Secretary would rest the responsibility for any outrages that ensued. Can any Government tolerate such action, by which the laws are defied, and when Judges attempt to enforce their jurisdiction their messengers are maltreated? The hon. Member asked how he could be expected to take any interest in Imperial affairs when his country was going to ruin. The part in which it is going to ruin is that in which his authority is supreme. Strong unconscious testimony has been given by an hon. Gentleman opposite below the Gangway as to the situation resulting from the repudiation of contracts. The hon. Member for North Donegal said that tens of thousands of writs of merchants and shopkeepers were rotting for want of service. [*Cries of* "Why?"] Do you suppose that repudiation of contracts can be confined to contracts made with landlords? The reason given for the statement was that so many police were engaged in the assistance of the landlords. That is exactly my point. When you teach the people to repudiate their obligations to the landlords you will find they will repudiate their obligations to other people. Hon. Members of the House have little idea of the kind of terror under which hundreds of people in Ireland had now come. They have no notion of the sort of tyranny exercised by some of these Land League Courts. The Central Land League has set certain forces in operation throughout the country, and now in many cases it finds it cannot control those forces. In the answer to Question No. 18,592, there is a reference to a case in which the hon. and learned Member for West Donegal (Mr. O'Hea) appeared as counsel for one of the parties to the suit. The case is stated in these terms in the answer—

> "A farmer let a forge to three men, smiths, on these terms—they were to make a money payment and to shoe his horses. This occurred at Ovens, a place within a few miles of the City of Cork. The man was Boycotted and the smiths refused to work for him, and no smith would work for him, although he was a member of the Land League himself. He was then obliged to send his horses into Cork to be shod. Then he brought a process against the smiths for breach of contract, and the damage done to him by being obliged to send his horses into Cork. In the case he told us how he came to be Boycotted.

> He said there was a property in the Court of Chancery and a receiver was appointed, and the receiver put up the grazing of some of the land to let, and there were four proposals sent in for the grazing by four members of the Ovens Land League. One was put in by the cousin of this man, and thereupon his brother Leaguers got him Boycotted, and they refused to allow any one to speak to him, and the plaintiff in the case before me was Boycotted because he spoke to his cousin who was Boycotted."

In this case the hon. Member for West Donegal appeared to protest in the strongest manner against the tyranny of the local League. This shows that a local institution has been set up which cannot be restrained. Hon. Members can have no case against the Government when the Government asks for power in certain localities to put down local associations which make so abominable a misuse of their power. In another case a tenant paid his rent but asked for a writ of eviction, offering to defray all the legal expenses, "Because," he said, "if it is known that my rent is paid my life will be in the greatest danger." To show how iniquitous this system of intimidation is, I may mention another case, reported in *United Ireland,* where a branch of the Land League in the County of Tipperary passed a resolution to the effect that they would retain their present Poor Law Guardians in office if they pledged themselves that in future when the interests of the League were involved they would be guided by the decision of a majority of the branch. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian endeavoured the other night to draw a distinction between the National League and the Land League, and he asserted that the difference between the two was that the Land League had advocated the payment of no rent, whereas the National League merely advocated a reduction of rent; and the right hon. Gentleman laid great emphasis upon this distinction as justifying him in giving a support to the National League, contrary to the action which he took in regard to the suppression of the Land League. But I will remind the right hon. Gentleman that the hon. Members for Cork and East Mayo were not put in prison for issuing the "No-Rent" manifesto. That manifesto was issued afterwards; but that which in the opinion of the late Prime Minister justified him in putting those hon. Members in prison was, that they stood between the people of Ireland and the beneficial legislation which he had passed, and that they did so by advocating the doctrines of public plunder. The object of the Plan of Campaign is to substitute for rents which the tenants have covenanted to pay, or which the Land Courts have settled that they should pay, such rents as they may agree upon themselves. What is the operation of this grievous and bad system? We cannot have a better illustration of it than what occurred in the case of Lord Lansdowne's tenants. Lord Lansdowne has two properties, one in Kerry and the other in Queen's County. The conditions of these two properties are the reverse of one another. On one estate the tenants are very poor and the holdings small, while on the other the holdings are large and the tenants may be described as country gentlemen. On the first-named estate great reductions of rent were made, whereupon the tenants on the other estate refused to pay the rents unless the same reduction was made in their case. Lord Lansdowne very properly refused to grant this demand, and among the tenants who allowed themselves to be evicted was one gentleman who owned racehorses, and who had been a magistrate. All that the Government contends for is that the conditions which surround the contract between landlord and tenant shall be even. I think I have shown that there is a system of intimidation and terrorism existing in certain parts of Ireland which threatens to engulf social order throughout Ireland unless it be stopped. As to the administration of justice, I heard the hon. Member for East Mayo ask how he could expect a fair trial if the jury was composed of his political opponents. But how could he expect a fair trial if the jury was composed of his political adherents? We are taking measures by which we hope to be able, to a certain extent, to maintain the jury system, and, at all events, to insure that decisions shall be given in accordance with the evidence tendered in the Courts of Law. We are told that the proposed legislation will fail. We are told that we are unwise to bring in this measure, and we are also told that, since the Union, 87 Coercion Acts have been passed. But the reason why so many Coercion Acts have been allowed to lapse between the years 1800 and 1887 is that, in most instances, they were passed for a temporary purpose, and that, having done their work, they were allowed to lapse. Hitherto it has been the practice of the Opposition, when an appeal is made to them to enable the Government to carry out law and order, to respond to that appeal. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian based his refusal to respond to the present appeal upon one precedent alone, and I will ask hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway to look carefully at that precedent. It is that of the action of Lord John Russell in 1846, who refused to grant the powers which the Government of the day asked for, and who came into Office in consequence. Within a few months Lord John Russell and his Colleagues asked for and passed exactly the same measure which they refused to pass the year before.

MR. T. M. HEALY: That is what the Tories did last year.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: In the second year they passed another similar Act; in the third year they suspended the Habeas Corpus Act; and, lastly, they put on their trial and convicted a considerable number of the Irish Members through whose co-operation they obtained Office. We are told that we want this Bill in order to abolish all personal and Constitutional liberty in Ireland. Sir, we ask for these powers because we believe we had a mandate at the last Election. We were put into Office in order that we might maintain the union between the two countries. The present attack upon the Union is subtle and insidious. It is hoped that social order and the authority of the law may be engulfed in the agitation which is now going on, so that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian may ultimately be able to appeal to the country and to say that Ireland is so demoralized that there is no hope or help except by repealing the Union. One hon. Gentleman to-day said that our only object in bringing in this Bill was to retain Office; he said that was the sole motive which led us to refuse to allow them a separate Parliament in Ireland. If the hon. Gentleman had looked into the composition of this House, he would have discovered that, if any single thing could give the Tory Party an absolute majority in this House, it would be the adoption of the measure of last year. If we were actuated by those personal motives which are attributed to us, we ought to take action exactly the reverse of that which we are taking. Our object is not to take away Constitutional liberty from the Irish people, but to restore it to them. We have associated with this measure others which are remedial in their operation, and we hope, with these materials, to renovate and restore social order in Ireland and from that foundation work out the prosperity of Ireland and the unity of the Empire.

MR. COLERIDGE (Sheffield, Attercliffe) said, the claim of the Tories and of the Unionists, when they went to the country at the last General Election, was that they intended to deal with all parts of the United Kingdom with fairness, impartiality, and equality; but now the Government had disregarded all those promises and pledges, and come to the House with a measure deliberately prepared for the purpose of depriving one portion of the United Kingdom of those liberties which the other portions enjoy, and which the Government dare not take from them. And, further than this, they proposed not only to deprive the present inhabitants of Ireland, but their sons and grandsons for generations yet to come into the world, of those advantages and liberties which they dared not propose to deprive the inhabitants of the other portions of the United Kingdom. That was a strong order to ask the House to consent to, and he thought a proposal of that sort ought to have been supported by better arguments than the miserably weak and contemptible *tu quoques* which had been laid before the the House. There were many Liberals in House now-a-days who were too young to be tarred with the coercion brush; and it was no argument to tell them the Liberal Party, or some Liberal Leaders, had in other days—happily past and gone—and under other circumstances, advocated and carried out measures of coercion. That, Sir, was no argument at all to hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House, for the spirit which animated them and the spirit which animated Tories and Coercionists was wholly different. The principle which animated Liberalism was the principle of growth and progress, whilst the principle of Toryism was a principle which stood still. He should be glad to see those Liberals who formerly advocated coercion coming forward with candour, acknowledging their past errors, and saying—"We are not going to go wrong again as we did in the past." When they were asked to grant this extreme measure of coercion for Ireland, it should first be proved that it was necessary; but when they asked for means for an examination of the crimes upon which the Government founded the necessity of their Bill, they were told that the Government did not stand upon the number of crimes committed, and that that was not the point upon which the demand for coercion was to be argued out. A wretched little list, however, of what he might call slightly exaggerated Primrose League cases was produced, mostly from quarters which were open to considerable and reasonable suspicion; and then they were favoured with remarks of Irish Judges. But for Englishmen to understand the value of the remarks quoted from the charges of Irish Judges, it was necessary that they should first of all understand the difference between the *data* upon which English and Irish Judges founded their charges. English Judges charging English Grand Juries did so upon the authority of the list of crimes before them in the calendar, and of the depositions which they had before them, giving full particulars of all those crimes; but the charges of Irish Judges were, he understood, not based upon a similar state of facts, but upon the hearsay statements of Irish officials, placed before them under the seal of secrecy and confidence. It was upon such flimsy pretexts as those that the House was asked to deprive the Irish people of their liberties. When it was proposed to deprive a people of their liberties, the country would naturally like to know what was the motive power which was forcing on this measure of coercion, and he had no hesitation in saying that the motive power was the landlords, who had found it difficult to collect their rents, and who hoped to make use of these coercive proposals to carry out their own purposes, and to extract higher rents from their tenants. He opposed any measure of coercion, and he confessed he had no belief in the remedial legislation which they were told was to follow. Last Session they were told by the Government that they admitted that there was a case for inquiry, that an inquiry should, therefore, be made, and if the allegations made by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) turned out upon inquiry to be true, nothing should stay the hands of the Government in applying a remedy. He did not speak without authority on the matter. The right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), after denying the accuracy of the statements made by the hon. Member for Cork, went on to say—

> "I quite agree that, if the hon. Member for Cork had proved his case, Parliament ought to interfere to maintain the tenants in their holdings, and that neither the season of the year nor our own labours ought to excuse us from dealing with the subject."

But in the face of that statement what did the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary do? He denied the fall in prices, and he opposed the Bill of the hon. Member for Cork, which, he characterized as "an act of gross injustice and confiscation to the landlords of Ireland." But it having been proved by their Commission of Inquiry that the statements made by the hon. Member for Cork were true, and his proposals just, the Government now tell the House that they proposed to deal with the subject in a Bill about which the House knows nothing, and in "another place" about which they knew too much. But if the Government were in earnest in proposing that remedial legislation, what would become of the assertion that the proposals of the hon. Member for Cork would inflict gross injustice upon the landlords? Could it be believed that they were in earnest, and that they intended to pass a remedial measure carrying into effect the ideas of the hon. Member for Cork? The answer appeared to him to be found in the fact that there never had been a single suggestion made for remedying, for improving, the condition under which Irish land was held by the tenants that had not been invariably either maimed, mutilated, or rejected totally by the other House to which it was now proposed to give the initiative in the Government legislation. They threw out the Bill framed upon the Report of the Devon Commission—

a landlord Commission—in 1813. A similar Bill was introduced in 1853 and rejected, and a well-known Tory statesman then said it was notorious that the House of Lords would pass no such measure of reform of the Land Laws, and that the Government who introduced such a measure and pretended that they were going to pass it, was guilty of an imposture and a sham, and he (Mr. Coleridge) had now no hesitation in saying that to tell the country now that the other House was going to pass the remedial measures foreshadowed for Ireland was an imposture and a sham. There was, however, one Liberal, or so-called Liberal, who had found salvation in that "other place." The right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Joseph Chamberlain), to the surprise and horror of his former associates, had expressed his faith in the other House passing a satisfactory remedial measure for Ireland. Well, faith had been falsely and irreverently defined as trying to believe what you know to be untrue; and he (Mr. Coleridge) thought that at the present time that definition might, without injustice, be applied to the faith held by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. The right hon. Gentleman believes that a good and thorough remedial measure is going to pass that "other place," when he knows very well that it is not—when he knows it to be untrue. The right hon. Gentleman must be a different person to the Mr. Joseph Chamberlain who made a speech some time ago, in which he said of that "other place"—

> "They have mangled or postponed, or thrown out from the first to last, from the time of the Union to the present day, every Bill which was intended to secure to the Irish tenant his fair interest in the land which he tilled, and to give him some guarantee for the product of his industry and his thrift."

It was now said that the law, just or unjust, must be maintained before any remedial measure could be carried out; but that was said originally in our contest with our American Colonists, and with what results? Lord Mansfield thus explained his position in the House of Lords, while admitting that the impolicy of the taxes imposed in 1767 had been the cause of the trouble and confusion which he then deplored—

> "Proceed then, my Lords, with spirit and fairness. When you shall have established your authority it will then be time to show your lenity."

The Government of those days entered upon a contest in which they were defeated. He (Mr. Coleridge) never disguised from himself the fact that it was practically possible to govern a country by a policy of "Thorough." They might make a desert around them and call it peace, and might produce a temporary and sullen tranquillity; but to carry out that policy there must be no faltering. They might depend upon it, that if the effects were to be produced in Ireland which were produced by the old Cromwellians—if those effects were to be reproduced in the 19th century, hon. Members opposite and the Government must devote themselves to the work with the same merciless spirit, thoroughness, brutality, and indifference to bodily suffering and liberty which distinguished the Cromwellian statesmen and soldiers. The effects produced by Cromwell could not be produced unless they should display again the temper and spirit of Cromwell. Well, he asked, had the Government fully considered the matter? Had they resolved to treat the Irish people consistently and continuously with the same sternness as the Cromwellians did? What were they going to do, for instance, with those tenants who defended their homes and refused to leave their farms, or if, after having been turned out and driven from them, crept back again? In the Cromwellian days they could be sold into slavery or hung. That was the real policy of "Thorough," and it was carrying such a policy to its only logical conclusion; but were the Government of to-day prepared to carry out their policy of "Thorough" to the same conclusion? Were hon. Members prepared to see this Bill carried out to the same logical conclusion? It should be remembered that in Cromwell's days England had to deal with a country ruined by faction, and far less powerful and civilized than it was now. To-day not only was Ireland better educated and more civilized, but there was a large Irish Party in the House of Commons, and a large number of supporters in the British Colonies, in America, and in England. Moreover, the Government, besides dealing with the Irish Party, would have to deal with the vast majority of the masses of the English people. There was a curious old book which he came across the other day, and the writer found fault with the Cromwellians because they were not "Thorough" enough. He said—"If they have a dram of rebellious blood in them, you cannot believe that the Irish will be driven like geese by the mere wagging of a hat upon a stick." Therefore he was confident that they had now happily come to a time when the policy of "Thorough" could no longer, by any possibility, be carried into effect. In the Cromwellian days the Government went to the extremity of taking away the discontented people from Ireland and replacing them by people of an English race; but even that extreme and detestable policy failed, for the sons of the Englishmen who were sent over to replace the banished Irish people became the strongest opponents of the tyrannical Teutonic rule. They had now, however, come to a time when men could not be banished and others substituted, although, if they could, past experience did not encourage a trial of the experiment; and he believed the Government would find that in proposing this Coercion Bill they were forging a weapon which would break in their own hands; it would prove to be a mere cardboard weapon, like their Paper Union. Irish Members in that House had been sneered at on the ground that they were representing, not their constituents in Ireland, but people in other countries; but if he were an Irishman, he should consider it one of the most glorious boasts of the Irish race that, spread over the world, in whatever country they might be, they changed the sky and not their home, and that the pulse of Irish nationality beat as high at the extremities as at the heart itself. If the Government were to carry this measure out to its logical consequences there must be no parleying with their General Bullers or Captain Plunketts; there must be no County Court Judges exercising discretionary powers; there must be no prisoners carried to gaol escorted by cheering crowds and consoled by applauding Archbishops. The Government must pursue the policy they had begun to the bitter end. They must be stern, merciless, pitiless. What a helpless, hopeless policy! They had allowed the landlords to mount the box, and the landlords must drive the coach of the Government over any roads, through any mire. When all was done the Government would find Ireland in a state of ferment and exasperation. That was a policy which he should oppose with all his energy, because it was the policy of an impotent, a resourceless, and a class-ridden Government.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Labouchere,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

## MINING ROYALTIES BILL.—[BILL 23.]

(*Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Mason, Mr. Burt, Mr. Abraham, Mr. Borlase, Mr. Blake.*)

### SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Conybeare.*)

Debate arising;

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, he would take a Division against the Motion.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, that the only effect of a Division at that hour (nearly 5.45) would be to prevent the House from going through the Orders and to interfere with the Bills of private Members. He therefore hoped the Motion would be agreed to.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *Wednesday* 27th April.

## HIGH SHERIFF DISQUALIFICATION (IRELAND) BILL.

(*Mr. Alderman John O'Connor, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Peter McDonald, Mr. Cox, Mr. John O'Connor.*)

### [BILL 85.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. John O'Connor.*)

Debate arising;

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. De Lisle,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *Wednesday* 20th April.

## *QUESTION.*

### WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

In answer to Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER,

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I am sorry to say that it will not be in the power of the Government to proceed with the Financial Statement on Monday; the Government feel themselves under the necessity of going on with the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill.

## *MOTION.*

### NEWSPAPER LIBEL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Jennings, Bill to amend the Law relating to Civil Actions for Newspaper Libel, and to restrain vexatious proceedings against the Proprietors of Newspapers, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Jennings and Mr. Addison.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 212.]

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

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# HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

## VOLUME CCCXII.

## THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1887.

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### EXPLANATION OF THE ABBREVIATIONS.

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When in this Index a * is added to the Reading of a Bill, it indicates that no Debate took place upon that stage of the measure.

When in the Text or in the Index a Speech is marked thus *, it indicates that the Speech is reprinted from a Pamphlet or some authorized Report.

When in the Index a † is prefixed to a Name or an Office (the Member having accepted or vacated office during the Session) and to Subjects of Debate thereunder, it indicates that the Speeches on those Subjects were delivered in the speaker's private or official character, as the case may be.

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Bankruptcy Offices (Sites) Bill
(*Mr. David Plunket, Mr. Jackson*)
*c.* Ordered; read 1°* *Mar* 15 [Bill 197]
Read 2°, and committed to a Select Committee of Five Members, Three to be nominated by the House and Two by the Committee of Selection *May* 21, 1123

*Bankruptcy Offices* (*Sites*) [*Consolidated Fund*]
*c.* Order for Committee read; Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" (*Mr. Plunket*) *Mar* 25, 1587; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Matter considered in Committee
Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the grant, out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom, of a sum to meet any deficiency which may arise in the payment of the expenses of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Works and Public Buildings incurred under the provisions of any Act of the present Session for the acquisition of property and the provision of new buildings for the Bankruptcy Department
Resolution reported *Mar* 28

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Parliament—Palace of Westminster — Palace Yard—A Glass Shelter, 1781

*Belfast Main Drainage Bill*
*c.* Moved, "That the Lords Amendts. be now considered" (*Mr. Dodds*) *Mar* 29, 1767; Moved, "That the Debate be adjourned till Thursday next" (*Mr. Sexton*); after short debate, Motion agreed to; Debate adjourned

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BRADLAUGH, Mr. C., *Northampton*
- Ireland—Law and Justice — The Riots at Youghal—Coroner's Warrant, 1222
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*Capital Punishment—Report of the Royal Commission*
  Question, Mr. Brookfield ; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr Matthews) *Mar* 24, 1348

*Ceylon—The Colombo and Kandy Railway*
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*China—German Protectorate over Islands of Chusan*

Questions, Mr. F. S. Stevenson ; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Mar* 18, 726

**Christchurch (Southampton) Charter (Correction of Error) Bill**

*c.* Read 1° * *Mar* 28 [Bill 209]

CHURCHILL, Right Hon. Lord R. H. S., *Paddington, S.*

Parliament—Divisions of the House (Pairing)—Divisions on the 21st March, 1787

**Church Patronage Bill** [H.L.]

(*The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury*)

*l.* Committee *Mar* 15, 336 (No. 26)

Report *Mar* 22, 1127 (No. 44)

**Church Sites (Compulsory Powers Repeal) Bill** [H.L.] (*The Lord Bishop of Lichfield*)

*l.* Read 2ª, after short debate *Mar* 14, 168

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee on the said Bill" *Mar* 22, 1131 ; after short debate, on Question ? resolved in the negative (No. 22)

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*Coal Mines Regulation Bill*
*c.* Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Mar* 21, 857

*Coast Defences and Coaling Stations—The Protected Barbette System of Fortification*
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Mar* 14, to leave out from "That" add "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the best way of utilising the protected barbette or disappearing system in coast defences and coaling stations" (*Colonel Duncan*) *v.*, 233; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

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*Representation of Malta*, Question, Earl De La Warr; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (The Earl of Onslow) *Mar* 22, 1126
*Australian Opinion*, Question, Sir Samuel Wilson; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Sir Henry Holland) *Mar* 25, 1473
*The Royal Commission on Imperial Defence*, Question, Mr. O. V. Morgan; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Sir Henry Holland) *Mar* 25, 1474

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*Colonies (Naval and Military Services)*
Moved for, "Address for Report of the Committee appointed last year to consider the position of officers in receipt of pensions and desirous of entering upon military or naval service in the Colonies; also the Correspondence resulting from that Report between the Committee and the Lords of the Treasury" (*The Viscount Sidmouth*) *Mar* 28, 1595; after short debate, Motion agreed to
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*Tenant Purchasers*, Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 21, 845

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*A Commission Court, Co. Wexford*, Question, Mr. J. E. Redmond; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 28, 1605

*Land Purchase (Ireland) Act—Applications for Advances*, Questions, Mr. Mac Neill; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 14, 173

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*The Evidence*, Questions, Colonel Hughes-Hallett, Mr. Hanbury; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 11, 38

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*Evidence as to Evictions*, Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 14, 195

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*Mr. James A. Irwin, National School Teacher*, Question, Mr. P. O'Brien; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 21, 843

*National Board of—Examinations for Workmistresses*, Question, Mr. M. J. Kenny; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 28, 1598

*National School Teachers*, Questions, Mr. Tuite; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 15, 369

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*Pupil Teachers*, Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 21, 838

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*Arklow Harbour Works*, Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *Mar* 29, 1773

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*Elections in Cootehill—The Returning Officer*, Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 28, 1608

*Election of Poor Law Guardians to the Mallow Union*, Questions, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 17, 513

*Election of Poor Law Guardians—Claims to Vote*, Question, Mr. Hooper; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 18, 719

*Guardians—County Court Judges*, Question, Mr. Maurice Healy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 28, 1602

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*Improved Postal Service at Kinsale*, Question, Mr. Hooper; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Mar* 18, 732

*Postal Arrangements at Enniskillen, &c.* Question, Mr. H. Campbell; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Mar* 11, 11

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*Wages, &c. of Limerick Postmen*, Questions, Mr. H. J. Gill; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Mar* 29, 1777

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*Post Office at Grangegeith*, Questions, Mr. O'Hanlon; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Mar* 24, 1349

*Mullingar Post Office*, Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Mar* 18, 724

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*Jurors—Return*, Question, Mr. Chance; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 18, 709

*Trials by Jury—The Return*, Questions, Mr. J. E. Ellis, Mr. Sexton, Mr. John Morley; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 25, 1476

*Grand Juries—Co. Down*, Questions, Mr. M'Cartan, Colonel Waring, Mr. W. Abraham (Limerick, W.); Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 28, 1600

*The Maamtrasna Trials—Pat Joyce*, Questions, Mr. M'Cartan; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 18, 712

*Arrest of Father Keller, Youghal*, Questions, Viscount Lymington, Mr. Lane; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour); Question, Mr. Lane [No reply] *Mar* 14, 185; Question, Observations, The Earl of Camperdown; Reply, The Lord Privy Seal (Earl Cadogan) *Mar* 22, 1133;—

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*Robert Kelly and Thomas Scully*, Questions, Mr. Gilhooly, Mr. Mac Neill; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) *Mar* 29, 1770

*Prosecution of District Inspector Milling, Royal Irish Constabulary*, Questions, Mr. Chance; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) *Mar* 14, 175

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*Vacant Coronership of Donegal*, Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 29, 1772

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*Mr. Cecil Roche, R.M., Boyle, Co. Roscommon*, Question, Mr. O'Kelly; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) *Mar* 21, 820

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*Police at Tobermore, South Derry*, Questions, Mr. Chance, Mr. Lea; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 18, 708

*Mr. Ferriter, of Dingle*, Question, Mr. Conybeare; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 28, 1607

*Arrest of John Malone and Richard Magee*, Questions, Mr. J. E. Redmond; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) *Mar* 29, 1778

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*Expenditure—Discrepancy in Amounts*, 1886, 1887, Question, Mr. H. J. Wilson; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 24, 1328

*Force in Milltown*, Questions, Colonel Nolan; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 24, 1322; *Mar* 29, 1772

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*Sergeants Johnston and Brady*, Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 21, 852

*Mr. J. M'Nulty, of Loughglynn*, Question, Mr. J. E. Ellis; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 24, 1323

*Detective Constable Peter Monohan*, Questions, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 15, 349; *Mar* 21, 852

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*Proclaimed National League Meeting at Ashgrove, Co. Cork—District Inspector Smith, of Macroom*, Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 14, 191

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*Convict Prison at Galway*, Question, Mr. Pinkerton; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 21, 824

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*Mr. James Simms, Drumlane, Co. Derry*, Questions, Mr. M'Cartan; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 15, 350

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*Mr. Wallace M'Hardy, Chief Constable of Lanarkshire — Printing his Report*, Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) *Mar* 28, 1620

*Charges of Judge O'Brien to the Grand Juries*, Question, Mr. Chance; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 18, 710

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*Telegram from Captain Plunkett, Divisional Magistrate*, Questions, Mr. Lane, Mr. Seager Hunt, Mr. Chance, Mr. P. O'Brien, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour); Question, Mr. Fox [no reply] *Mar* 15, 362; Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 21, 836

*The Attack on the Police*, Questions, Mr. Lane; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour); Question, Mr. Clancy [no reply] *Mar* 17, 537

*Letter of Dr. C. Ronayne, J.P.* Question, Mr. Lane; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 18, 728

*Committal of Constable Bulmer*, Questions, Mr. Chance, Mr. Conybeare, Sir William Harcourt; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) *Mar* 21, 854

*Coroners' Inquests*, Questions, Sir John Swinburne, Sir William Harcourt, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes); Question, Mr. P. O'Brien [no reply] *Mar* 22, 1146

*Coroners' Warrant*, Questions, Mr. Chance, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) *Mar* 23, 1221; Question, Sir John Swinburne; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour); Question, Mr. Maurice Healy [no reply]; Questions, Mr. E. Harrington, Sir William Harcourt, Sir Charles Russell, Mr. Chance, Mr. Lane; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) *Mar* 24, 1337; Questions, Mr. Chance, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 25, 1470

*The Inquest on Hanlon*, Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) *Mar* 23, 1279

*Death of Hanlon—Arrest of District Inspector Somerville and Constable Ward*, Questions, Mr. Lane, Mr. Mac Neill, Mr. Chance; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) *Mar* 24, 1339;

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*Mr. John Frost, Co. Clare—Travelling Expenses of the Police Force,* Question, Mr. P. M'Donald ; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) *Mar* 11, 8

*Lifford Assizes—Trial of Hannah O'Donnell,* Questions, Mr. O'Doherty ; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 24, 1326 ; Question, Mr. M'Cartan ; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 28, 1609

*Notice to Relieving Officers,* Question, Mr. Gilhooly ; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) *Mar* 14, 179

*Relation of Landlords and Tenants—Alleged Circular to the Police,* Question, Mr. O'Doherty ; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 21, 825

*Evictions at Enniscorthy—Employment of the Constabulary—A Point of Order—Altering Questions,* Observations, Mr. J. E. Redmond ; Reply, Mr. Speaker ; Questions, Mr. J. E. Redmond ; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 14, 188

"*Stormy Evictions in Mayo,*" Question, Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien ; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 18, 726 ; Questions, Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien, Dr. Tanner ; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 21, 846

*Evictions on the Marquess of Downshire's Estates, Co. Down,* Question, Mr. M'Cartan ; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 25, 1470

*The Marquess of Lansdowne's Estate, Queen's Co.,* Questions, Mr. Lalor, Mr. Dillon ; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 28, 1599

*Mr. S. E. Shirley's Farney Estate, Co. Monaghan,* Questions, Mr. P. O'Brien ; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) *Mar* 21, 844 ; Question, Mr. P. O'Brien ; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 22, 1152

*Ireland (City of Limerick)—The Asylum Rate*

Moved for, "Correspondence between the Irish Government and the Mayor of Limerick with reference to the rate ordered to be levied upon the City of Limerick for the maintenance of lunatics in the city and county asylum" (*The Earl of Camperdown*) *Mar* 17, 500 ; after short debate, Motion agreed to

*Irish Land Law Bill*

Question, Mr. T. W. Russell ; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 21, 860 ; Question, The Duke of Abercorn ; Answer, The Lord Privy Seal (Earl Cadogan) *Mar* 28, 1590

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**Isle of Man (Customs) Bill**

(*Mr. Jackson, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*)

c. Resolution agreed to, and reported *Mar* 17, 702 [Bill 199]
Read 2°, after short debate *Mar* 21, 1124
Committee * ; Report *Mar* 25
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l. Read 1ª * *Mar* 29 (No. 56)

Jackson, Mr. W. L. (Secretary to the Treasury), *Leeds, N.*

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- Parliament — Business of the House — Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland), Motion for Urgency, Res. Motion for Adjournment, 1438, 1477, 1537, 1538
- Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure)—Rule 1 (Closure of Debate), Res. 57, 105, 396

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*Licensing Act—Dogs*
- Question, Mr. Montagu ; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Mar* 24, 1335

**Licensing Laws Amendment Bill**
(*Mr. Houldsworth, Colonel Bridgeman, Mr. Samuel Smith, Mr. Whitmore*)
- *c.* Considered in Committee ; Resolution agreed to, and reported ; Bill ordered ; read 1°* *Mar* 25 [Bill 207]

LICHFIELD, Bishop of
- Church Patronage, Comm. *cl.* 2, 339 ; *cl.* 6, Amendt. 341 ; *cl.* 22, Amendt. 347 ; Report, *cl.* 2, Amendt. 1128, 1129 ; *add. cl.* 1130
- Church Sites (Compulsory Powers Repeal), 2R. 168 ; Comm. 1131

**Limited Owners (Scotland) Bill**
(*Mr. Haldane, Mr. Asquith, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Ferguson*)
- *c.* Read 2°,* and referred to a Select Comm. *Mar* 30 [Bill 8]

LINGEN, Lord
- Electric Lighting Act (1882) Amendment, Comm. *cl.* 1, 809

*Literature, Science, and Art—The National Gallery—The New Rooms*
- Question, Mr. W. H. James ; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) *Mar* 17, 504

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- Meteorological Official Report—Weather Forecasts, 1325

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- *Loans Authorized in* 1886-7, Question, Mr. Stanley Leighton ; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *Mar* 15, 351
- *Multiple Appointments in Bampton District, Oxfordshire*, Question, Mr. F. W. Maclean ; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *Mar* 11, 12
- *The Ilkley Local Board—Reduction of the Quota of Members*, Question, Mr. Barran ; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *Mar* 15, 373
- *Local Taxation—Assessment of Chapels and Schools at Hayle, Cornwall*, Question, Mr. Conybeare ; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *Mar* 25, 1474

**Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Carrick-on-Suir) Bill** [H.L.]
(*The Lord Privy Seal*)
- *l.* Committee* ; Report *Mar* 15 (No. 30)
- Read 3ª* *Mar* 17
- *c.* Read 1°* *Mar* 18 [Bill 200]
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**Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Limerick Water) Bill** [H.L.]
(*The Lord Privy Seal*)
- *l.* Presented ; read 1ª* *Mar* 14 (No. 42)

LOCKWOOD, Mr. F., *York*
- Ireland—Law and Justice—Arrest of Father Keller, Motion for Adjournment, 750
- Parliament — Business of the House — Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland), Motion for Urgency, Res. 1274

LONDON, Bishop of
- Church Patronage, Comm. *cl.* 2, 338, 340 ; *cl.* 17, 344 ; Report, *add. cl.* 1129, 1130

*London Coal and Wine Duties Continuance Bill*
- *c.* Question, Colonel Hamilton ; Answer, The Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) *Mar* 18, 732
- *Public Park in Tottenham*, Question, Mr. J. Howard ; Answer, Sir Robert Fowler *Mar* 22, 1147

*London Corporation* (*Charges of Malversation*)
- Select Committee nominated ; List of the Committee, *Mar* 11, 4

Long, Mr. W. H. (Secretary to the Local Government Board), *Wilts, Devizes*
Metropolitan Open Spaces Act (1881) Extension, Comm. *cl.* 3, Amendt. 1734; *cl.* 4, Amendt. 1735; *add. cl.* 1737, 1743

Lord Advocate, The (*see* Macdonald, Right Hon. J. H. A.)

*Lord Ashbourne and Home Rule*
Observations, The Lord Chancellor of Ireland (Lord Ashbourne) *Mar* 17, 501

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland — Chief Secretary to the (*see* Balfour, Right Hon. A. J.)

Lubbock, Sir J., *London University*
Metropolitan Open Spaces Act (1881) Extension, Comm. *cl.* 1, 1731; *cl.* 2, Amendt. 1734, 1736; *add. cl.* 1744

**Lunacy Acts Amendment Bill** [H.L.]
(*The Lord Chancellor*)
*l.* Read 3ª *Mar* 17, 493; after short debate, Bill passed

Lyell, Mr. L., *Orkney and Shetland*
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McArthur, Mr. A., *Leicester*
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McCalmont, Captain J., *Antrim, E.*
Admiralty—Shank Palliser Screw Bolts, 840, 1465

McCartan, Mr. M., *Down, S.*
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McCartan, Mr. M.—*cont.*
 Parliamentary Elections—North Antrim Election—Malicious Injury to Property, 181, 182
 Post Office—Delivery of Letters at Newtownards, &c. 1153; — Manorhamilton District, Co. Leitrim, 1144
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Ireland — Crime and Outrage — Riots at Belfast—Mr. Wallace M'Hardy, Chief Constable of Lanarkshire—Printing his Report, 1620, 1621
Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons—Fees for Admission, 1769
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 Arbroath Police Court—James Bennett, 1140
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McDonald, Mr. P., *Sligo, N.*
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**Macdonald**, Mr. W. A., *Queen's Co., Ossory*
Parliament—Business of the House—Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland), Motion for Urgency, Res. 1520, 1521
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**McGarel-Hogg**, Sir J. M. (Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works), *Middlesex, Hornsey*
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**McKenna**, Sir J. N., *Monaghan, S.*
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**Mackintosh**, Mr. C. **Fraser-**, *Inverness-shire*
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**McLaren**, Mr. W. S. B., *Cheshire, Crewe*
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**Maclean**, Mr. F. W., *Oxford, Woodstock*
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**Maclean**, Mr. J. M., *Oldham*
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**Mac Neill**, Mr. J. G. S., *Donegal, S.*
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**Mc Neill**, Mr. J. G. S.—*cont.*
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Parliament—Business of the House (Rules o Procedure)—Rule 1 (Closure of Debate) Res. 787

*Madagascar—Recall of Mr. Pickersgill, Her Majesty's Vice Consul at Antananarivo*
Question, Mr. M'Arthur; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Mar* 25, 1467

**Makins**, Colonel W. T., *Essex, S.E.*
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**Manners**, Right Hon. Lord J. J. R. (Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster), *Leicestershire, E.*
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**Mappin**, Sir F. T., *York, W.R., Hallamshire*
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**Marjoribanks**, Right Hon. E., *Berwickshire*
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure)—Rule 1 (Closure of Debate), Res. 471

*Marriage Act—Nonconformist Marriages—Leominster*
Question, Mr. T. Blake; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Mar* 11, 5

*Marriage Law (England and Wales)—Marriages in Dissenting Chapels—Re-marriage*
Questions, Mr. T. Blake; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Mar* 21, 821

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**Mason, Mr. S.,** *Lanark, Mid*
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Navy Estimates—Victuals and Clothing for Seamen and Marines, 951

**Matthews, Right Hon. H. (Secretary of State for the Home Department),** *Birmingham, E.*
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  Police—Daylight Robberies in the Streets, 12
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*Mauritius, The—Constitution of the late Commission*
Questions, Mr. O'Kelly, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Sir Henry Holland) *Mar* 24, 1333

**Mayne, Admiral R. C.,** *Pembroke and Haverfordwest*
Admiralty—Questions
  Coaling at Home Ports, 723
  Dockyards — Construction of Sheers at Pembroke, 724
  Expenditure—Cost of Construction, 627
Harbours of Refuge, 1614, 1615
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**Menzies, Mr. R. S.,** *Perthshire, E.*
Parliament — Business of the House — Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland), Motion for Urgency, Res. 1377

**Merchandise (Fraudulent Marks) Bill**
(*Mr. Mundella, Mr. Acland, Sir Charles Russell, Mr. Bernard Coleridge, Sir Frederick Mappin, Mr. Henry H. Fowler, Mr. Henry Wilson*)
*c.* Read 2°,* and referred to Select Comm. on Merchandise Marks Act (1862) Amendment Bill *Mar* 14 [Bill 179]

**Merchandise Marks Act (1862) Amendment Bill** (*Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Attorney General*)
*c.* Read 2°,* and referred to a Select Comm. *Mar* 14 [Bill 142]

*Merchandise Marks Acts Consolidation*
Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 11, 39

**Merchandise Marks Law Consolidation and Amendment Bill**
(*Mr. Attorney General, Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Stuart-Wortley*)
*c.* Ordered; read 1°* *Mar* 11 [Bill 194]
Read 2°,* and referred to Select Comm. on Merchandise Marks Act (1862) Amendment Bill *Mar* 14

*Merchant Shipping*
*Boats and Life-Saving Apparatus on Passenger Ships,* Question, Captain Price; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) *Mar* 14, 183
*Accidental Loss of Life—Inquiry,* Question, Mr. Lees; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) *Mar* 18, 731
*Pilot Certificates to Foreign Subjects,* Question, Mr. C. H. Wilson; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) *Mar* 24, 1332
*Shipping—Report of the Royal Commission,* Question, Mr. Thomas; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) *Mar* 14, 184
*Wreck of the "Flamingo,"* Question, Mr. C. W. Gray; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) *Mar* 11, 17
*The Wreck Commission—Return of Inquiries,* 1885, Question, Mr. W. F. Lawrence; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) *Mar* 24, 1331

**Merchant Shipping Act (1854) Amendment (No. 2) Bill**
(*Mr. King, Sir Edward Birkbeck, Mr. Lacaita, Mr. White, Mr. Puleston, Lord Claud Hamilton, Admiral Field, Mr. Bond*)
*c.* Committee*;—R.P. *Mar* 17 [Bill 184]

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*Merchant Shipping Act* (1854) *Amendment* (*No.* 2) *Bill*—cont.

Question, Mr. O. V. Morgan; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Mar* 18, 730

**Merchant Shipping (Fishing Boats) Acts Amendment Bill**
(*Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Jackson, Sir Herbert Maxwell*)

*c.* Read 2° * *Mar* 14 [Bill 168]
Committee; Report *Mar* 17, 700
Read 3° * *Mar* 21
*l.* Read 1ª * (*Lord Stanley of Preston*) *Mar* 22 (No. 51)

*Meteorological Official Report — Weather Forecasts*

Question, Mr. Llewellyn; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) *Mar* 24, 1325

METROPOLIS (*Questions*)

*Coal and Wine Dues*, Question, Mr. Dixon-Hartland; Answer, The Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) *Mar* 22, 1145;—*The Blackwall and Greenwich Tunnel*, Questions, Mr. Lyell, Mr. Webster; Answers, The Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) *Mar* 11, 21

*Distress in the Metropolis — The Conference*, Question, Captain Colomb; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) *Mar* 17, 532

*Guy's Hospital*, Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Mar* 21, 828

*Magnitude of the Metropolitan Debt*, Question, Mr. Wootton Isaacson; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 17, 536

*Open Spaces — Burton's Court, Chelsea*, Question, Mr. Whitmore; Answer, The Financial Secretary, War Department (Mr. Brodrick) *Mar* 11, 22

*Police — Daylight Robberies in the Streets*, Question, Mr. Knowles; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Mar* 11, 12

*Roadways and Streets — Canterbury Road, Camberwell*, Question, Mr. Baumann; Answer, The Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) *Mar* 22, 1141

*Wandsworth Common — Victoria Patriotic Asylum for Girls*, Question, Mr. Kimber; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) *Mar* 21, 837

**Metropolis Management Acts Amendment (Westminster) Bill**
(*Mr. Burdett-Coutts, Mr. John Talbot, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Seager Hunt*)

*c.* Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 28 [Bill 209]

*Metropolitan Board of Works—Sewage Precipitation Works at Barking*

Question, Mr. Salt; Answer, The Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) *Mar* 11, 24

**Metropolitan Open Spaces Act (1881) Extension Bill** (*Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Dalrymple, Sir Charles Forster, Mr. Houldsworth, Mr. Reid, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Salt*)

*c.* Committee *;—R.P. *Mar* 14 [Bill 171]
Committee—R.P. *Mar* 28, 1730

**Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill** (*Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Secretary Matthews*)

*c.* Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 25 [Bill 208]

*Metropolitan Railway Bill*

*c.* 2R. deferred *Mar* 25, 1464

MIDLETON, Viscount

Africa (South)—Affairs of Swaziland, 1280

MILLTOWN, Earl of

Land Law (Ireland) Acts—Report of the Royal Commission, 1596
Pharmacy Acts Amendment, 2R. 491
Railway and Canal Traffic, Comm. *cl.* 7, 1754

MILVAIN, Mr. T., *Durham*

Parliament — Business of the House — Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland), Motion for Urgency, Res. 1244, 1246

**Mining Leases (Cornwall and Devon) Bill**
(*Mr. Acland, Sir John St. Aubyn, Mr. Courtney, Viscount Ebrington, Mr. Bickford Smith, Mr. Seale-Hayne*)

*c.* Bill withdrawn * *Mar* 25, 1589 [Bill 146]

**Mining Royalties Bill** (*Mr. Conybeare, Mr. Mason, Mr. Burt, Mr. Abraham, Mr. Borlase, Mr. Blake*)

*c.* "Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 30, 1932; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Tomlinson*); after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Debate adjourned [Bill 23]

MOLLOY, Mr. B. C., *King's Co., Birr*

Navy Estimates—Victuals and Clothing for Seamen and Marines, 1007, 1008
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure)—Rule 1 (Closure of Debate), Res. 66, 70, 388, 399
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MONTAGU, Mr. S., *Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel*

Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts—Dutch Cattle, 1612

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**Morgan, Right Hon. G. Osborne**, *Denbighshire, E.*
Law and Justice—Colonial Judgments—The Colonial Conference, 1780
Parliament — Business of the House — Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland), Motion for Urgency, Res. 1384
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure)—Rule 1 (Closure of Debate), Res. 56

**Morgan, Mr. O. V.**, *Battersea*
Admiralty—Vacancies—Circulars, 1350
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Merchant Shipping Act (1854) Amendment (No. 2), 730
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**Morley, Right Hon. J.**, *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*
Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland), 858
Ireland—Trials by Jury—The Return, 1476
Parliament — Business of the House — Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland), Motion for Urgency, Res. Amendt. 1158, 1178, 1415, 1417

**Morley, Mr. A.**, *Nottingham, E.*
Parliament—Divisions of the House (Pairing)—Divisions on the 21st March, 1787, 1790

**Morrison, Mr. W.**, *York, W.R., Skipton*
Dwellings for the Working Classes—The Peabody Trustees—The Property Tax, 1603

**Mowbray, Right Hon. Sir J. R.**, *Oxford University*
London Corporation (Charges of Malversation), 3

**Mulholland, Mr. H. L.**, *Londonderry, N.*
Parliament — Business of the House — Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland), Motion for Urgency, Res. 1380

**Mundella, Right Hon. A. J.**, *Sheffield, Brightside*
Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland), Motion for Leave, 1823
Customs House—Foreign Goods bearing British Trade Marks, 719
Poor Law (England and Wales)—"Boarding-out" of Pauper Children, 360

**Municipal Elections (Scotland) (Corrupt Practices) Bill** (*Mr. Lacaita, Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Shiress Will*)
c. Bill withdrawn * *Mar* 30 [Bill 77]

**Municipal Franchise (Belfast) Bill**
(*Colonel Saunderson, Colonel King-Harman, Colonel Waring, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. Lea*)
c. Motion for Leave (*Colonel Saunderson*) *Mar* 29, 1876; Question put, and agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1° * [Bill 211]
Moved, "That the Bill be read 2° upon Wednesday 18th May" (*Colonel Saunderson*); Question put, and agreed to

**Murphy, Mr. W. M.**, *Dublin, St. Patrick's*
Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure)—Rule 1 (Closure of Debate), Res. 55

**Navy** (*Questions*)
*Statement Explanatory of the Navy Estimates*, 1887-88, *and of the Policy Embodied Therein*, 539

*Admiralty Expenditure—Cost of Construction*, Observations, Mr. J. M. Maclean; long debate thereon *Mar* 17, 619
*Coaling at Home Ports*, Question, Admiral Mayne; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 18, 723
*Contract System of the Admiralty—The Royal Commission—Irregular Publication of Evidence*, Personal Explanation, Sir William Plowden; Reply, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood) *Mar* 11, 27
*Dock Accommodation at Bombay for Her Majesty's Navy*, Questions, Admiral Field; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) *Mar* 17, 502
*Drawings supplied to Foreign Powers*, Question, Sir Henry Tyler; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 21, 834
*Public Officials—The Dockyards—Betrayal of Trust*, Questions, Mr. Hanbury; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 11, 20; Questions, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), 26
*The Channel Squadron at Lisbon and Gibraltar*, Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 14, 171
*The Indian Troopship "Jumna,"* Question, Sir William Crossman; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 24, 1335
*Vacancies — Circulars*, Question, Mr. O. V. Morgan; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 24, 1350

Personnel
*H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught—Inspection at Aden*, Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Sir John Gorst) *Mar* 29, 1782
*Sir William Palliser (Armour Bolts)*, Questions, Captain M'Calmont; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George

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  Hamilton) *Mar* 21, 840; Question, Captain M'Calmont; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood) *Mar* 25, 1465
  *Employment of Marines on Private Service,* Question, Mr. Gilhooly; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 11, 7
  *Lieutenants and Sub-Lieutenants,* Questions, Mr. De Lisle; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 17, 523; *Mar* 21, 851
  *Promotion of Chief Gunners and other Non-Commissioned Officers,* Question, Mr. E. Robertson; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 17, 519
  *William Roper, an Artizan of Devonport Dockyard,* Question, Mr. Mac Neill; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 17, 515
  *Widows of Seamen and Marines,* Question, Captain Price; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 17, 524
  *Celebration of the Jubilee Year of Her Majesty's Reign—The Naval Review—Royal Naval Reserve and Royal Naval Artillery Volunteers,* Questions, Sir Samuel Wilson, Mr. Addison; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 21, 841

  The Dockyards
  *Chatham Dockyard—Mr. Young Terry,* Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 28, 1614
  *Haulbowline, Dockyard Works at—Discharge of Workmen,* Question, Mr. Hooper; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 17, 536; Questions, Mr. J. O'Connor, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 22, 1142
  *Pembroke, Construction of Sheers at,* Question, Admiral Mayne; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 18, 724

  *Dockyard Officials—Lord Brassey's "Naval Annual,"* Question, Mr. Dwyer Gray; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 28, 1606

*Navy—Ships of War* (*Designs*)
  Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Mar* 17, To leave out from "That," add "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the designs upon which ships of war are now being built, and how far they are in harmony with the transition in Naval construction and tactics, and also the necessity for an organized system of harbour and coast defence" (*Mr. Gourley*) *v.*, 589; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put, and agreed to

Neville, Mr. R., *Liverpool, Exchange*
  Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland), Motion for Leave, 1854

**Newspaper Libel Law Amendment Bill**
  (*Mr. Jennings, Mr. Addison*)
  *c.* Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 30 [Bill 212]

Noble, Mr. W., *Hastings*
  Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 1027

Nolan, Colonel J. P., *Galway, N.*
  Army Estimates, 1887-8—Land Forces, 326, 330
  Defences of the Empire—Coast Defences of Great Britain, 312
  Ireland—Questions
    Royal Irish Constabulary—Milltown, 1322, 1772
    Seed Supply Act—Issue of Seed, 1769;—Repayment of Loans, 171, 1336
  Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure)—Rule 1 (Closure of Debate), Res. 110, 415; Amendt. 430, 434, 785
  Navy Estimates—Sea and Coast Guard Services, 699, 700
    Victuals and Clothing for Seamen and Marines, 959, 961, 967, 992, 1005
  Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 1033, 1079

Nolan, Mr. J., *Louth, N.*
  Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure)—Rule 1 (Closure of Debate), Res. 93

Norris, Mr. E. S., *Tower Hamlets, Limehouse*
  Poor Law (England and Wales)—"Boarding-out" of Pauper Children, 359
  War Office—Coast Defences—Martello Towers, 526

Northcote, Hon. H. S. (Surveyor General of Ordnance), *Exeter*
  Army Contracts, 1343
  Coast Defences and Coaling Stations—Protected Barbette System of Fortification, Res. 236
  Imperial and Colonial Defences—Hong Kong, 1337
    Singapore, 1342; — Coaling Harbour at, 732
  War Office—Official Statement—Alleged Deficiency of £635,735—Naval Ordnance, 1339
    Ordnance Department—Contract for Cartridges, 24; — Messrs. Kynoch & Co. 187; — Messrs. Latimer Clark, Muirhead, & Co. 1344

*North Sea Fisheries — Depredations by Foreign on English Fishermen—The Report of the Committee*
  Question, Sir Savile Crossley; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) *Mar* 29, 1768

Norton, Lord
  Glebe Lands, Report, *cl.* 3, Amendt. 496, 498

O'Brien, Mr. J. F. X., *Mayo, S.*
  Egypt (Finance, &c.)—Land Tax, 1143
  India—Madras—Questions
    Discontent in Madras, 512
    Frauds on the Revenue, 1611
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*The Half-Past Twelve o'Clock Rule—Blocking*, Question, Mr. Howard Vincent; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 28, 1621

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Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" *Mar* 18, 802; Question put, and agreed to

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Akers-Douglas*) *Mar* 25, 1589; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" *Mar* 29, 1876; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

*BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE AND PUBLIC BUSINESS*

Questions, Sir William Harcourt, Dr. Cameron; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 18, 733;—*The Navy Estimates*, Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 11, 37;—*The Estimates*, Questions, Mr. Childers, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), Mr. Speaker *Mar* 15, 376

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*Palace Yard—A Glass Shelter*, Question, Mr. W. Beckett; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) *Mar* 29, 1781

*Parliament—Business of the House—Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill—Motion for Urgency*

Moved, "That the introduction and several stages of the Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill have precedence of all Orders of

[*cont.*

*Parliament—Business of the House—Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland) Bill—Motion for Urgency*—cont.

the Day and Notices of Motion, including the Rules of Procedure, whenever the Bill shall be set down for consideration by the Government as the first business of the day" (*Mr. William Henry Smith*) *Mar* 22, 1158

Amendt. to leave out from "That," add "this House declines to set aside the business of the Nation in favour of a measure for increasing the stringency of the Criminal Law in Ireland, whilst no effectual security has been taken against the abuse of the Law by the exaction of excessive rents" (*Mr. John Morley*), 1174; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Debate adjourned

Debate resumed [Second Night] *Mar* 23, 1223; after long debate, Debate further adjourned

*Debate on the Motion for Urgency*, Observations, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), Mr. W. E. Gladstone, Mr. Parnell *Mar* 23, 1277

Debate resumed [Third Night] *Mar* 24, 1352; after long debate, Debate further adjourned

Debate resumed [Fourth Night] *Mar* 25, 1477; after long debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Parnell*); after further short debate, Motion withdrawn; Original Question put; A. 349, N. 260; M. 89

Division List, Ayes and Noes, 1579

Main Question again proposed, 1584

Amendt. to add, at end, "except on Friday" (*Mr. Labouchere*); Question proposed, "That those words be there added;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn; Main Question put, and agreed to

*The Division*, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 28, 1623

*Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure)—Rule* 1 (*Closure of Debate*)

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Main Question, as amended; Question again proposed, "That the words 'and also if a Clause be then under consideration' stand part of the Question;" Debate resumed [Eleventh Night] *Mar* 11, 40; after debate, Question put; A. 154, N. 95; M. 59 (D. L. 58)

Amendt. in line 10, leave out "with the consent of the Chair, as aforesaid," insert "the assent of the Chair, as aforesaid, not having been withheld" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*), 64; after short debate, Amendt. agreed to

Amendt. in line 11, after the first word "That," insert "certain words of the Clause defined in the Motion stand part of the Clause, or That" (*The Marquess of Hartington*), 69; Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted"

Amendt. to proposed Amendt. leave out "or That" (*Mr. Staveley Hill*); Question proposed, "That 'or That,' &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 257, N. 134; M. 123 (D. L. 59)

[*cont.*

*Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure)—Rule* 1 (*Closure of Debate*)—cont.

Question proposed, "That the words 'certain words of the Clause defined in the Motion stand part of the Clause, or That,' be there inserted," 95; after short debate, Question put; A. 278, N. 100; M. 178 (D. L. 60)

Amendt. in line 12, after "Debate," insert "Provided that whenever the Chair does not withhold its assent to a Motion of Closure which, if carried, would withdraw from consideration any Amendment of which Notice has been given, the Chair shall declare whether such an Amendment is an abuse of the Rules of the House, or has been sufficiently discussed under some other form" (*Mr. Childers*), 106; Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted;" after short debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Labouchere*); after further short debate, Question put; A. 94, N. 223; M. 129 (D. L. 61)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there inserted;" Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Picton*), 121; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Amendt. (*Mr. Childers*) withdrawn

Main Question, as amended, again proposed; Debate further adjourned

Debate resumed [Twelfth Night] *Mar* 15, 379

Amendt. in line 12, after "Debate," insert "Provided, That whenever the Chair does not withhold its assent to a Motion of Closure which, if carried, would withdraw from consideration any Amendment of which Notice has been given, the Chair shall declare whether such an Amendment is an abuse of the Rules of the House, or has been sufficiently discussed under some other form" (*Mr. E. R. Russell*), 383; Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted;" after debate, Question put; A. 146, N. 215; M. 69 (D. L. 62)

Amendt. in line 12, at end, insert "Provided always, That in Committee of Supply, when a Vote is under consideration, and to the particular items of which more than one Notice of Amendment has been given, if, after discussion on one of such items, the Rule for closing that discussion is put in force, the fact of its adoption shall not be held to apply to Amendments to the other sub-items of that Vote" (*Mr. Dillwyn*), 395; Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted"

After debate, Amendt. to said proposed Amendt. to leave out from "consideration" to end add "it shall not be competent for a Member to make any Motion to bring to a decision any Question already proposed from the Chair for the granting a whole Vote, in case any Member proposes to move the reduction of the Vote by omitting or reducing a sub-head thereof, the omission or reduction of which has not been previously moved" (*Mr. Chance*), 423; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after further short debate, Question put, and agreed to

Question put, "That the words 'Provided always, &c.' be there inserted;" A. 130, N. 216; M. 86 (D. L. 63)

[*cont.*

*Parliament — Business of the House (Rules of Procedure)—Rule* 1 (*Closure of Debate*)—cont.

Amendt. at end of line 12, insert "Provided, That no Motion for a Closure of the Debate may be made on a Tuesday or a Wednesday" (*Colonel Nolan*), 432; Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn

Amendt. in line 13, after "That," insert "Questions that the Question that certain words of any Clause defined in the Motion stand part of the Clause, or that any Clause stand part of or be added to the Bill be now put, shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear by the numbers declared from the Chair that such Question has been supported by a number of Members at least twice the number of the Members voting against it, and that other" (*Mr. Parnell*), 436; Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted;" after short debate, Question put; A. 49, N. 191; M. 142 (D. L. 64)

Main Question, as amended, again proposed, 444; Debate adjourned

Debate resumed [Thirteenth Night] *Mar* 16, 445

Amendt. in Rule 1, line 15, leave out from "by," to end, add "a majority which consisted of not less than One Hundred Members, and which bore to the minority the proportion of three or more to two" (*Mr. Gedge*), 454; Question proposed, "That the words 'more than,' &c.;" after debate, Question put, and agreed to

Amendt. in line 16, leave out "Two Hundred," insert "Three Hundred" (*Mr. T. P. O'Connor*), 467; Question proposed, "That 'Two Hundred,' &c.;" after short debate, Question put; A. 222, N. 120; M. 102

Division List, Ayes and Noes, 475

Amendt. at end, add "Provided always, That this Rule shall be put in force only when the Speaker or the Chairman of Ways and Means is in the Chair" (*Mr. William Henry Smith*), 478; Question proposed, "That those words be there added;" after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

Amendt. at end, add "Provided that the Member who shall claim the application of this Rule shall inform the House that he has previously had no communication with the Chair, direct or indirect, as to the propriety of making such Motion" (*Mr. T. P. O'Connor*), 480; Question proposed, "That those words be there added;" after short debate, Question put; A. 55, N. 304; M. 249 (D. L. 66)

Amendt. at end of Rule 1, add "Provided also, That any number of Members exceeding Ten, who shall be dissatisfied with such decision, shall be entitled, at the next Sitting of the House, to make a collective protest in writing, which shall be recorded in the Journals of the House" (*Mr. Parnell*), 487; Question proposed, "That those words be there added;" after short debate, Debate adjourned

Debate resumed [Fourteenth Night] *Mar* 18, 783; after short debate, Question put; A. 60, N. 281; M. 221 (D. L. 68)

[*cont.*

*Parliament — Business of the House (Rules of Procedure) Rule* 1 (*Closure of Debate*)—cont.

Amendt. at end, add "Provided also, That in any such Division the votes shall be taken by secret ballot" (*Mr. M. J. Kenny*), 793; Question proposed, "That those words be there added;" after short debate, Question put, and negatived

Main Question, as amended, again proposed, 797; after short debate, Question put; A. 262, N. 41; M. 221

Division List, Ayes and Noes, 798

Moved, "That this Resolution be a Standing Order of the House" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*), 800; after debate, Question put, and agreed to

*Parliament—The New Rules of Procedure* (1882)—*Rule* 2 (*Adjournment of the House*)—*Matter, Arrest of Father Keller*

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Dillon*) *Mar* 18, 731; after debate, Question put; A. 88, N. 226; M. 138

Division List, Ayes and Noes, 781

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*Mar* 14—The Earl of Chesterfield, after the death of his father

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*New Writ Issued*

*Mar* 14—*For* Derby (Ilkeston Division), *v.* Thomas Watson, esquire, deceased.

*New Member Sworn*

*Mar* 28—Sir Balthazar Walter Foster, knight, *Derby* (*Ilkeston Division*)

*Parliamentary Voters, Registration of—Legislation*

Question, Mr. Chance; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Mar* 28, 1622

PARNELL, Mr. C. S., *Cork*

Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland), Motion for Leave, 1632, 1634, 1822

Ireland—Law and Justice—Arrest of Father Keller, Motion for Adjournment, 776, 778, 780

Parliament—Adjournment, 1589

Parliament — Business of the House — Criminal Law Amendment (Ireland), Motion for Urgency, Res. 1178, 1279, 1438; Motion for Adjournment, 1571, 1575, 1579

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**Pauper Lunatic Asylums (Ireland) Superannuation Bill**

(*Mr. Chance, Mr. William Corbet*)

c. Read 2° *Mar* 21, 1125 [Bill 62]

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PEASE, Sir J. W., *Durham, Barnard Castle*
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PEEL, Right Hon. A. W. (*see* SPEAKER, The)

PELLY, Major-General Sir L., *Hackney, N.*
Africa (South)—Pondoland, 849

Pharmacy Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl of Milltown*)
*l.* Read 2ª *Mar* 17, 491 (No. 28)
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Report * *Mar* 22
Read 3ª * *Mar* 24
*c.* Read 1º * (*Dr. Farquharson*) *Mar* 28 [Bill 210]

PICKERSGILL, Mr. E. H., *Bethnal Green, S.W.*
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PINKERTON, Mr. J., *Galway*
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*Post Office—Universal Penny Postage*
  Moved for, "The fourth letter written by Mr. Henniker Heaton, M.P., to the Postmaster General on the subject of the universal penny postage" (*The Earl of Crawford*) *Mar* 11, 3; Motion agreed to

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  Parliament—Business of the House (Rules of Procedure)—Rule 1 (Closure of Debate), Res. 75

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**Probation of First Offenders (No. 2) Bill** [H.L.] (*The Earl of Erne*)
*l.* Order for 2R. discharged *Mar* 25, 1450 (No. 20)

**Public Libraries Acts Amendment Bill**
  *Formerly—*
**Free Libraries Acts Amendment Bill**
(*Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Arthur Cohen, Mr. Collins, Sir John Kennaway, Sir Lyon Playfair*)
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  Questions, Mr. Hanbury; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 11, 20; Questions, Mr. Caldwell, Mr. T. P. O'Connor; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) *Mar* 11, 26

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(*The Lord Stanley of Preston*)

*l.* Read 2ª, after debate *Mar* 14, 125 (No. 32)

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*Railway and Canal Traffic Bill*

Moved, "That the prayer of the petition of the South Eastern Railway Company, presented on Friday last, praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill, be complied with" (*The Lord Bramwell*) *Mar* 28, 1591; after short debate, Motion disagreed to

*Railways (England and Wales)—Toton Sidings on the Midland Railway*

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(*The Lord Chancellor*)
*l.* Presented; read 1$^{a}$ * *Mar* 22 (No. 50)

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(*The Lord Stratheden and Campbell*)
*l.* Presented; read 1ª * *Mar* 14 (No. 43)

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c. Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [28th February], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" (for Committee on the Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) Bill); Question again proposed; Debate resumed *Mar* 24, 1438; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Committee—R.P.

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**Tithe Rent-Charge Bill**
(*The Marquess of Salisbury*)
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**Tollemache**, Mr. H. J., *Cheshire, Eddisbury*
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**Tomlinson**, Mr. W. E. M., *Preston*
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**Truck Bill** (*Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Warmington, Mr. John Ellis, Mr. Arthur Williams, Mr. Howard Vincent, Mr. Esslemont*)
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